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ΑΓΙΩΝ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΗΤΩΝ

**NEWSLETTER –
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SOME QUOTES FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS ABOUT THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF GOING BACK TO "NORMAL" AFTER THE LOCKDOWN...



"It is an unusual situation for everyone. Now creativity is more than ever asked."

- Aila Cavkic (Austria), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers

"Welcome to the period of recovering from the pandemic and start living the "new" normality.

I'm dreaming of a world free of masks, extreme disinfections and social distance. May the people handshake, hug each other again soon, and feel the power of connection..."

- Amalia Michail (Greece), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers

"How good is it to be back on the street and at this "new normal"?! Being able to feel free again is a priceless feeling and having to sacrifice something, however heavy and boring it may seem now, is a small price to put your nose out of the house. Now it is up to us and our common sense to follow the rules to let this end as soon as possible!"

- Sara Costaglioli (Italy), Unity - iOS: Education Volunteers

*"I believe the inverted commas surrounding the word **normality** are essential here since the world has taken a turn and won't go back to the way it was. And anyway, in my opinion, humanity, even before this pandemic, could never be qualified as *normal*. In this time of transition, I feel excited, optimistic, reassured but still worried irresponsible and oblivious at times."*

- Lilliana Paez Civico, (Belgium), Unity – iOS: Education Volunteers

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VOLUN-TEARING UP: DON'T CRY BECAUSE IT'S OVER, SMILE BECAUSE IT HAPPENED...

A cheesy title cannot quite describe the emotions following the realization that this project is over. But, instead of moping and being sad about it, I would like to share what it was that I did in Greece and encourage more young people to embark on an ESC journey.



Choosing to go and volunteer in Greece was one of the most random decisions I ever took... and one of the best too. Before arriving in Athens, I had no expectations whatsoever, only the wish to turn a new leaf in my life and to spend time to figure out some things about myself. I am glad to say that not only this was more than I expected, but I left Greece having made a new family and new friends and having felt valued by these people.

ESC PROJECT: NON-FORMAL ACTION II - 6 MONTHS IN ATHENS

The project lasted 6 months during which we were hosted in Athens in the NGO Hellenic Youth Participation. I was part of the group of long-term volunteers, but we did have the chance to meet a lot of other really interesting and kind people coming to volunteer for short periods of time in the same organisation as us.

I got used to speak in the plural as being part of a team was really important during this project! Together with Anastasia from Russia, Carmen from Spain and Jérémy from France we formed a really strong team from the beginning until the end of the project.



We got acquainted with the workings of non-formal education, we organised workshops on the topic of Human Rights together; we volunteered twice a month in a local municipality, organising workshops for the teenagers there.

Moreover, we had the chance to participate in two trainings organised by the National Agency of Greece: the on-arrival training in Corinth and the mid-term training in Patras, where we got to learn more about the ESC programme and other Erasmus+ opportunities while meeting other volunteers hosted in Greece.



Part of this volunteering project was also the collaboration with three other organisations. Mosaico House-a shelter for women and children in vulnerable situations, Streetlights-a social space for the youth of Kypseli and Second Hand Shop-a shop employing people suffering from psycho-social issues. Personally, I visited Mosaico House once a week to organise activities for the children hosted there, something that proved to be a fun and enriching activity at the same time.

I was also a volunteer in the Second Hand Shop, assisting in the workings of the shop and raising awareness about mental health problems. It might seem that there was a lot going on during those 6 months, in terms of working and training. Nevertheless, we had a lot of fun doing it and as I said before, the most important part of this project was being part of a team. Together with the other three long-term volunteers we developed a really tight friendship. We lived, cooked, went out, travelled across Greece and had all kinds of fun together.

We created bonds that will be there for life. Sometimes we faced difficulties, we had issues, but we were there for each other and we overcame our problems together. I am really grateful that I was a part of this and I cannot say it enough:

if you have the chance, do it too!! Lastly, I would like to thank my sending-organisation, Cultural Workshop Ayion Omoloyiton for the support during the project.



