

International longterm voluntary service with Friedenskreis Halle e.V.
profile place of assignment
within the program: weltwärts, EVS



Clara Zetkin e.V.

www.kinderheimclarazetkin.de



Clara Zetkin e. V. (Clara Zetkin r.a. = registered association) is an independent supporting organisation in the field of child and youth welfare service. It is operating in the field of support in education. It has as its goal to counter dangers by which children and adolescents are impaired in their physical, emotional, mental and/or social development.

The association mainly operates in Halle-Süd. This social room is marked by (in relation to Halle and its environment) a relatively high unemployment rate, partly poverty, partly educational disadvantages and a higher proportion of people with a migratory background.

Clara Zetkin e. V. addresses children, adolescents and families subjected to different forms of impairment. With its offers it aims at safeguarding the quality of life of children, adolescents and families. Through professional, systemic, intensive support, the family system should be sustained and a placement out of home avoided.

The different (support-)offers of the association are either stationary, partly stationary or ambulant. Actual offers (status: January 2015) include: seven living groups, one day group, one project addressing (chronic) truants and different offers of support for families. All offers orientate at the individual needs of the people searching for help and follow a holistic approach.

Field of engagement and activities of the volunteer within place of assignment

The voluntary service at this poa mainly is social work with children and youth!

The volunteer will mainly be engaged in the living groups and the day group. In the (chronic) truants project and in the field of support for families a punctual engagement might be possible dependent on the composition of the groups, the family situation and the skills of the volunteer.

Living groups: Eight children and teenagers are living together in apartments of Clara Zetkin e. V. – accompanied by two to four pedagogical workers. They have a fixed day plan including dinner times, educational- or school time, free time and shared activities. Each one has (household-)tasks s/he is responsible for, depending on age and skills. Further there are some established traditions such as a group meeting every Monday to discuss activities for the next week, problems etc.

The volunteer will support all occurring activities at the living groups and the day group:

- assistance at and supervision of homework
- escort to official appointments

- support with tasks in the household and other daily activities
- (co-)organisation from and participation at celebrations, ceremonies, holidays and day trips
- support with cultural, artistic, manual and sportive offers
- further supervision and assistance in the free time.

It is possible and desired that the volunteer brings in own ideas, interests, skills and activity-offers.

Besides that the volunteer will participate at all team activities (meetings, trainings, etc.).

Please be aware:

- You work afternoon hours and sometimes Saturdays!
- Only few clients and staff members speak English!
- You will have a quite fixed duty-roster!

Volunteers profile – Specific for this place of assignment

- should be 20 years and older
- should have pedagogical experiences or education
- must have empathy in regard to children and youth
- should be communicative and creative
- should be authentic, alone standing, responsible, punctual, open, honest and flexible
- should have cultural, artistic, manual and/or sportive interests and/or skills
- should have willingness to learn German fast and should have some basic knowledge at the start of the service
- need a certificate of good conduct without any entries

Volunteers profile – General

- 18 to 28 years (weltwärts, exceptions can be made, when reasonable) resp. 18 to 30 years (EVS)
- (high) school graduation or comparable personal suitability
- basic knowledge of English and willingness to learn German starting in home country
- motivation: voluntary service as an opportunity to learn in different fields and to get involved with (civil) society (voluntary service as learning and peace service)
- openness to the special structure of a voluntary service with Friedenskreis Halle, that is: willingness to participate in the accompanying educational program, to develop and implement one or more small project(s) and to get occupied and engaged with topics and activities of (local) civil society,
- interest in European (EVS) resp. global (weltwärts) relationships and peace politics as well as education on these topics
- preferable already dedication in civil society in the home country, willingness to get involved in civil society in the home country after returning

Motivation of poa

Der Clara Zetkin e.V. möchte aus folgenden Gründen Einsatzstelle für einen internationalen Langzeit-Freiwilligendienst sein: Der Clara Zetkin e.V. hat vor dem Hintergrund des eigenen Selbstverständnisses in den vergangenen Jahren immer wieder Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen aus dem Ausland die Möglichkeit geboten, sich an der gemeinnützigen Arbeit in der Betreuung von benachteiligten Kindern und Jugendlichen zu beteiligen. Auch wenn dieses Engagement außerhalb organisierter internationaler Freiwilligendienste stattfand, so haben wir diesen jungen Menschen nicht nur die Möglichkeit gegeben, die immer wichtiger werdenden sogenannten `soft skills` zu verbessern, vielmehr konnte deren interkulturelle Kompetenz, deren Selbständigkeit und Unabhängigkeit gestärkt werden. Nicht zu vergessen sind die mitunter verborgenen Talente und Fähigkeiten, die der ein oder andere junge Erwachsene im Rahmen seiner Tätigkeit entdecken und im Arbeitsalltag ausprobieren konnte.

Reports of former volunteers

Ornela, flat 2, 2016-17, final report



For almost a year before I started my volunteer work at Friedenskreis e.V. (Germany) I volunteered in Bosnia. So, before I came to Germany I had an idea what it means to volunteer. Based on that I had my expectations for Germany, that were wrong. I believed that there would be a casual “work” atmosphere, without many rules and regulations. Germany, in that sense is different from Bosnia. At the beginning of my work in Germany I was a bit confused, first and foremost by the seriousness of the work itself. Luckily I had the opportunity to talk to some of the young German people that have explained to me that volunteer work in Germany was basically real, serious work.

Realising this I adapted, changed my opinion and took the work seriously.

Now, nearing the end of my yearlong volunteer work in Germany, I can say that I have learned a lot of things, met a bunch of different people, different culture and a way of life of this country. Today I feel richer by this new experience that will stay with me forever.

(...) Work atmosphere was very nice and comfortable and so was the relationship with my colleagues. All of my work colleagues were very approachable and helpful, especially when I had trouble communicating because of the language barrier. My mentor was the person I talked to the most, whatever I needed he was there. I am most grateful for my kids, the kids from my group. They helped me the most, with my German, and also when I felt homesick they were there to cheer me up. To make my days fun and beautiful.

At the beginning it was difficult for me to adapt to this new situation I was in, but with time everything fell in its place. The new country, new culture and way of life, different language are all of the things that made my experience wonderful.

The best thing about this project is my volunteer group. We stuck together during the rough times, and the nice times. We supported each other all the time. Throughout this time we had great relationships, made new friends that I hope will last a long time after Germany. We became a family.

Looking back at the 11 months at Halle I see that I gained a lot. Now I communicate in German far better than I did at the beginning. I learned about German culture and customs, met a lot of great people. It's much better to live it compared to hearing or reading about something.

I saw how difficult it can be to be away from loved ones. They were my biggest support throughout this project.

(...)

Ornela, flat 2, 2016-17, in between report

My name is Ornela Alijagic and I come from Bosnia and Herzegovina. My volunteering work began with the trip to the unknown, with the people I didn't know. It began 4 months ago. I had no idea what to expect, all I knew that I will work with children in Clara Zetkin e.V. Today these children are the reason for a smile on my face. They help me with my German and we have a lot of fun when I am at work.

Children are from 8 to 18 years old. In my group the kids have their daily schedules which I also accepted. In the beginning it was difficult for me to get used to new rules, new approach to the work, but I am getting used to it. In the mornings the kids are at school. After they arrive, then have lunch and do their homework. I am helping younger children with homework, explaining things they need

help with and when they do their German homework I use this chance to improve my knowledge. Sometimes I feel bad because my level of German is stopping me from explaining everything I want to them but because the kids are the best teachers and we quickly understand each other and get over it. In their free time we go outside to play and have a good time.

People at Clara Zetkin are very nice and they help me with everything that is new to me. I am very grateful for this. When the work day is over I go home to my roommates. We are hanging out all of our free time. It would be impossible not to mention them. Life with complete strangers now has turned to a life with friends without whom my life would be unimaginable. They are there for when I feel homesick, when I'm missing the people I love the most. Our conversation is some Bosnian-Macedonian mix, it works great! I am extremely happy to have met them, to be living with them, having good and bad times with them. I'm kind of scared to think about the time when this project would finish and we would have to part ways. This trip to the unknown has turned into a new and wonderful and unforgettable experience

Ademir, day group, 2016-17



If you ask me how my one working day looks like I can start with saying that you don't need to get up really early to go to work. Since it's called „Tagesgruppe“ (daily group) you will only work with children who are coming to CZ after school and leaving home when day is ended. Children are not coming before 11 AM, so be sure that they are excited when meeting new staff and workers so you will get into a game as soon as your day starts. If weather is fine you will probably be spending time outside on football court, and if not you will be indoor where there is a lot of games and toys that children can play with. Card games, board

games, billiard, darts, puzzles and much more for everyone to have a good time. After that there is a lunch break that is usually around 13:00 where everyone from the group sit and eat together, you can bring your own lunch or eat what children are eating, that is entirely up to you. When lunch is finished, you will observe if all children have brushed their teeth, check on their homework (don't worry about the language, you will always have help from the staff). Children also have their cleaning activities, so it's your job to see if they are respecting their responsibilities (cleaning the rooms, bathrooms, hallway, staircases...). When children finish their assignments, they are free (and you of course) to continue playing and keeping each other safe and respectful. By the end of working day, usually around 17h, we evaluate children behaviour during the day with „pluses“ and „minuses“ but you will know about that more if you fulfill this place of assignment. To summarize, everyday is different, children are friendly and playful and staff will make you feel welcomed. I'm pretty much enjoy my working days and don't worry about the language – your best teachers could be children.

... a little more in detail:

When applying to this project, there was numerous places of assignments that you can choose and I think it is very important to research and read about those places. Those place will be essential for your work, experience, volunteering and overall mood during this project. While reading about POA, most interesting place for me was Tagesgruppe in Clara Zetkin Kinderheim. The reason why I chose this POA is because I have done volunteering service in Tagesgruppe (Daily Care Center) in my own country, so I thought it would be interesting to compare those places and to see if there is any similarities and so on. Besides that, my experience while volunteering in my own country in this kind of place was very good and useful and I've thought that it could only be better working similar job somewhere else, especially in Germany. And guess what? I was right. I've find the perfect fit and during this voluntary service I can

say that I have enjoyed my time there and there were a lot of positive things to bring back to my country.

My mentors were very helpful and they made me feel integrated and comfortable since the first day I have arrived in Tagesgruppe. I will never forget my first day when I have arrived, although I had a little prejudices about my work like will the people (coworkers) take advantage of me, will the children take advantage of me (since I did not know any german), how will children feel about someone who is suppose to be their educator and mentor and I don't even speak their language nor I am coming from the same country. The first day when I have arrived I was overwhelmed, all of the children came to say hello, and asked me questions, and wanted to know me – I was so suprised. I remeber one of the twins immediatly asked me „Spielen si Fussball?“. Since the majority of kids are males, football is of course one the most important things in their life and since I also love football , even though I am not so great football player, almost everyday we were playing football together and it was always funny and interesting.

Tagesgruppe is a part of Clara Zetkin Kinderheim where children age from 8 to 12 years old go every day after school to improve themselves, improve their behaviour, to study, do their homework and of course make friends and have fun. Everyday is mostly planned out, so when they got to tagesgruppe after school they are playing until the lunch, when the lunch is over they are brushing their teeth and do their homework. After the homework is done, additional education and work is done with them if needed, they all have their chores in terms of cleaning the rooms, bathrooms and stairway. Every child has their own assignement that they should do during the day. When that part of the work is done, they are free to play (football mostly) and right before the end of the workday they do what they call „Auswertung“ – sort of evaluation method measured by pluses and minunes for their behaviour and chores. Child with the most pluses receive some sort of gift by the start of next week. During my year I could see that the children have mostly good relationship with one another and that they are respectful toward their mentors and elders. Each and every one of them is very special, and they will achieve great things in life, and from my point of view they are not nearly problematic as some of the children I have seen in my life experience. Pretty much they see to me as normal children who can of course misbehave sometimes. But nothing extreme or out of the ordinary.

As time passed, children grew fond of me, and I have improved my relationship with them. Especially when you started to learn more german, and they are so happy when I ask them to tell me things that i do not know in german. For example I remember when i did not know how to say the word „stone“ in german, so I asked this kid, I've pointed at the stone (rock) and asked him to say it in german. He immediatly said „Der Stein“ and I could see that he was glad when he was able to teach the elder something. I was suprised that they did not laugh at my german and every one of them gladly helped me to learn new words. They were also interested in learning some of the Bosnian words. One thing that I could say that was exhausting is when you travel with them on „Ferienfahrt“ and when you have to keep their eyes on them 24/7 – that could be really exhausting since you don't have any real time for yourself. So for the future volunteers If you like working everyday with children, and can cope with that kind of stress and especially if you like playing sport games – this is the perfect POA for you. We also went to the movies, to the Zoo and during Ferien we went to the Saline (local public pool) almost every day. I really enjoyed my time there and one part of me is really saddened to be leaving them. Most of the children said that they want me to stay longer and so I am proud of my relationship with them and I have achieve my goal here, my work was not exhausting at least for me and I had a lot of fun. As for working stuff I can say that my mentors were really helpfull and understanding and I didn't feel any unnecessary pressure while working with them. I have done pretty much the same things as they did everyday.

My work in Tagesgruppe was very valuable experience and one of the reasons that this year was amazing. I could feel my self as valuable part of the team and it was purely volunteering work and the working colleagues really appreciated my position there and there is always enough working staff (even from other groups in CZ Kinderheim) to help you whatever you need. I wish for future volunteers to have at least the same experience that I've had there, and I could definitely see myself working this kind of job at least for a few years. You also need to know that if you don't know English or if you are not

willing to learn German things would be kind of difficult. My mentors have knowledge of English, but you are expected to make a progress with your German while you are because some of the other working staff and the kids are not speaking English at all. I wish I knew even better German so that I could have improved my relation with children and other workers, because if you can't handle the pressure of everybody speaking a different language than you, you could get lonely and feel a little bit outcasted, but hey, children can be the best teachers.

Samra, 2015-16



My working schedule, with the fact that I'm working in children's home, depends mostly of activities of kids. That means that my working schedule is very flexible. The most common situation is when kids are going to school, because that happens the most of the days in this year of my volunteering service. According to that situation, I could describe my working day like:

10:00 Arriving to work. Kids are already at school, so I help my colleagues with some things, like shopping, cleaning, helping with

preparing the lunch, or mostly drinking coffee if they have already done all this household stuff earlier.

12:30 – 13:30 Kids are arriving from school and eating lunch.

14:00 – 15:00 Homework time. At this time I help kids with homework (as much as I can according to my Deutsch-knowledge), and that is one of my „main“ activities .

15:00 – 16:00 Kids are resting from homework and eating some sweets, desert, or fruit or something else.

16:00 – 17:30 Kids have free time/playing time so at this time I play some games with kids, which is also one of my main activities as a volunteer, or if some kids have doctor's appointments or somewhere else I'm going with them.

17:30 – 18:00 Dinner time. I'm usually finishing my working day at this time, because after dinner kids are cleaning, preparing stuff for tomorrow, taking a bath and going to sleep, so there is nothing much to do for me .

Now, when kids have school vacation, activities at work are more relaxed, kids are not going to school, so there is no homework, so most of the time they spend playing or doing some planned activities like picnics, bike tours, going somewhere to swim etc. Of course, all colleagues can propose some activities, which includes me as well.

I think that my colleagues and kids in Clara Zetkin accepted me and treated me with a respect. Nobody used the fact that I'm volunteer, almost like „cheap or free worker“ to give me just house work to do like cleaning or something, things that they should do, but they don't want, because I'm there, so why wouldn't I do that. In my opinion my colleagues and me are working quite similar stuff in this „household“ works, except administration work which I can not do, because I didn't finish school for that. But I can say that still they are trying to show me this administrative work, so I can see how the whole system is working. I can say that all of this what I have before written is little bit different from my expectations which were little bit sceptic und pessimistic in the way that my integration in job tasks and communication with colleagues and kids will go slowly and harder. In the way of my job tasks, tasks of volunteer indeed, I think that things between description of tasks what is volunteer supposed to do and things what volunteer is actually doing are now more specific and I think that for future volunteers will be even more easier, because my colleagues now know better in which direction they should refer a volunteer, because the fact is that I'm the first international volunteer in Clara Zetkin in the last maybe ca. 10 years.

... and a little different in German:

Hallo Leute,

Ich bin Samra Kadušić, aus Bosnien Herzegowina, und ich bin Freiwillige hier in Halle, in Kindersheim Clara Zetkin. Meine koordinierende Organisation ist Friedenskreis und ich schreibe diesen Bericht für sie und für alle, die es wird gelesen, Dank an Friedenskreis.

Zuerst ich will euch sagen, dass ich kannte Deutsch bevor meiner Ankunft nicht, und jetzt, nach 4 Monaten Arbeit mit Kinder in Heim ich kenne besser Deutsch. Das ist, glaube ich, das wichtigste Ziel in diesem Dienst, weil ohne Deutsch man kann nicht mit Kinder und Mitarbeiterinnen kommunizieren. Also, wie ich bereits sagte, ich arbeite in Kinderheim Clara Zetkin in Halle, mit Kinder zwischen 8 und 16 Jahre. Es freue mich, dass arbeite ich mit Kinder jenen Jahren, weil sie sind sich bewusst meine Situation und sie sind meine wichtigsten Deutschlehrer.

Kinder in Heim haben ihren Tagesplan, sie gehen morgens zur Schule, dann kommen sie von der Schule um 13 Uhr, essen, dann haben sie Hausaufgabenzeit von 14 bis 15, um 15 Uhr ist Zeit für Süßigkeiten, danach haben sie frei bis um 17 wenn es an der Zeit reinigen. Jedes Kind reinigt sein Zimmer, sie haben auch Reinigungsplan, und am 17:30 oder 18 Uhr ist Abendessen... Das ist gewöhnlich Tag in Heim.

Am Anfang hatte ich weniger Verpflichtungen mit Kindern (weil Sprache), so mein Tag auf Arbeit war nur mit Kindern Karte spielen, oder raus gehen. Manchmal mache ihre Essen warm.

Jetzt ist besser und mehr interessant für mich. Ich kenne besser Deutsch so kommuniziere ich mehr mit Kinder, und ich kann etwas vorschlagen (etwas wie was können wir machen ein Tag) weil ich kommuniziere mehr mit meine Kollegen. Jetzt gehe ich mit den Kindern, wenn sie einen Arzttermin haben oder andere Verpflichtungen, wie Projekte. Vor ein Paar Tagen ich ging mit drei Kindern von meine Gruppe ein Projekt auf, und das gab mir neue Idee für meine eigene Projekt, und auch Ich traf Menschen, die mit Kindern arbeiten, aber durch unterschiedliche Konzepte. Das war sehr interessant. Alle Kollegen in Heim versuchen immer für Kinder interessante Atmosphäre machen, insbesondere in den Ferien, die für jeden Tag eine Aktivität entwickeln. Ich mag ihre Kreativität. Es hat sich fast zu einer Tradition geworden. Es gibt immer einige Partys (mit Masken, Weihnachtsfeiern, Neues Jahr feiern, wann Kinder sind am Ferien, jedes Jahr Theater und manche andere Sachen wie Werkstatt, tanzen, klettern..).

Kurzum, ich bin zufrieden mit mein Freiwilligendienst (im Friedenskreis und Clara Zetkin), Ich könnte sagen, dass meine Erwartungen sind mehr als erfüllt, und ich muss zugeben, dass bin ich ein wenig gebrauchte Google Translate, aber nicht für jeden Satz.

