

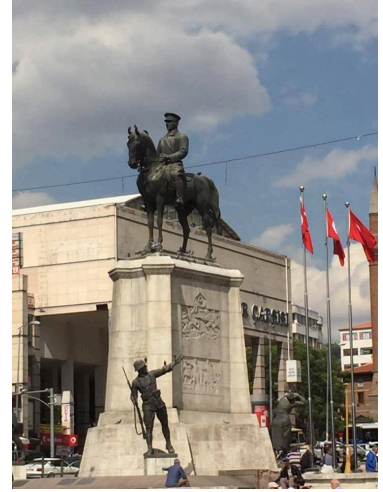
Türkiye'ye hoşgeldiniz!

Is the official start of the Evs! New volunteers arrived here in order to face the turkish daily life and help the others! They're six girls from different countries such as: Georgia, Ukraine, Poland, Macedonia, Slovakia and Italy. Their respectively names are kristine, Marina, Olga, Simona, Petra and Ilaria. They have different ages vary from 20 to 29 and they share a flat in Keciören. I have the pleasure of being one of them: Benin adim Ilaria ve ben italyanım. That means my name is Ilaria and I am Italian. The beginning of this experience was amazing but at the same time stressing ought to the huge things to learn: names of people and places, countries, the members of the staff of System and Generation and some basic word of this new language. How to set the turkish language ? Well I would rather say it's a mixture of arabic, german and of course something originally turkish!



I hope I will improve my linguistical knowledge thanks to Eren, our great teacher.

Among all the news faced at the beginning it's very important to remark that we came during a special period for the majority of the inhabitants: the ramazan. It consists in a period lasting about 30 days in which muslims are fasting and strictly following their religious duties in a stronger way. They wait the muezzin at 20.30 that sounds like an alarm clock for their belly and they can finally start eating. There are a lot of interesting aspects related to this moment, which is called "iftar". Among all, it's interesting finding out that is preferred starting with sugar as it helps e the stomach after a long day without food. Very interesting is also the costant presence of the ayran on the tables. Turkish people really love it!

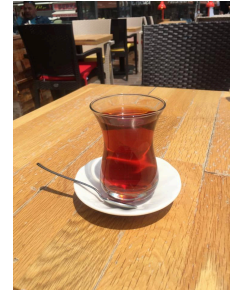


I will always be glad of having been in a muslim country during the ramazan period, as it teached me a lot of new things I didn't know before. And I am thankful to our organisation that managed a wonderful iftar dinner for us in a wonderful location in Keciören.

Going back to the start of this Evs, I remember a nice walk I had through the city with our nice Alex. I remember me noticing all the beggars on the streets and she explained to me that it was because of

ramazan, as muslims have to do charitable acts, especially during ramazan. It was always in the beginning when I jumped down the bed being scared because of the deep noisy I was hearing: there were drums, played loudly at 1.30 in the morning in order to wake up all the muslims for eating, because yes: they can eat during the night and charge their energies before the fast of the day after!

Going further on the analysis of the ramazan period we cannot hide that it somehow affected our volunteering activities being us supposed to serve the tables in a bar and to play some game with old people. I am referring to two of our main work places: the Clock Tower and Elderly house. The first is a nice bar, very characteristic and the second one is a welcoming retirement house. Anyway we have learnt how to prepare çay that is the turkish tea and learnt a lot of the culture scrutinizing the turkish daily life. It's interesting to notice how there are no ladies coming to the Clock Tower: just middle-aged men come there to talk to each other, probably about politics or football, who knows!



There is a third place where we work, that is a school situated in Keciören, where syrian kids are hosted in order to study english, arabic and turkish avoiding to make them lose academic years of school because of their unhappy background. The first time that I met them I could not avoid staring at their faces and thinking how unhappy life can be... everything depends on the luckiness you have in living in the right place at the right moment. But fortunately their smiles cut my thoughts: they were really happy and grateful to their teachers and enthusiastic of meeting us for the first time. I had wonderful feelings and I am seeking of meeting them again! For sure the merit has to be recognized to the volunteers working there as permanent staff (Sohalia and her team) and the fleeting volunteers that System and Generation constantly provide to them!



Now ramazan is ended, but I am sure there are a lot of things I will still learn! I just want to wish to all the muslims: afiet olsun!

Ilaria Chiliberti.