

Who are you and why are you doing your Erasmus in Germany?

My name is Elisa Bongiovanni. I am from Italy. My course is Interlinguistic and Intercultural Mediation at my home university. I am studying German and Russian at the home university, but in the last five years I have studied English and French too at school.

I decided to do my Erasmus in Germany, at the University of Hildesheim, because I have always wanted to learn German. I have had this interest in German since I was a child. My grandmother was German and I remember that she spoke German to me and I could not understand a word. I think memories like this sparked my interest in learning German. Besides, I always wanted to visit this beautiful country.

I chose Hildesheim because it is a beautiful and small town. I would never have chosen Hannover for example, because it is too big and there are lots of people. In Hildesheim it looks like everyone knows each other and the town is really lovely.

How were your first days abroad?

I thought that my days abroad would be difficult. But against all odds, I have immediately known Vicky, my roommate. She is so nice and cute. Even though I talked a lot with her, I had some difficult moments where I missed my family and my home, but I think it is totally normal.

At first, I was also worried about the language. I have been learning German for seven years, but my German class was not very efficient, so I could not learn much German. Nevertheless, I love this language, but in my opinion is one of the most difficult languages because of the grammar. Now, I know more words, but it is still difficult to communicate because in my opinion German people speak really fast.

Have you had a culture shock?

No, because I really like German culture. One thing that really impressed me is that in Hildesheim.

How do you find studying online?

I think that studying online is really difficult because you get distracted a lot. At the beginning I was quite sad because I moved to another country to study and I do not want to study online. But then I understood that the Covid situation in Germany was really bad, so it was necessary.

What hobbies do you have?

I love reading and I read everywhere when I can. I adore every genre of book. Currently, I am reading mostly thrillers or guides about journeys and I love walking in the nature and in the mountains. Besides, I used to attend lessons of classical dance. I have studied it for ten years and then I stopped. Sometimes I think that it would be nice to start again, but I do not have time and maybe I am too old to start again this kind of dance.

What are your special characteristics?

I am a shy girl, but at the same time I always try to socialize with other people. I am determined, if I want a thing, I try to obtain it.

I learnt to read at the age of four and I remember that I was at the kindergarten and I read stories to my friends. My parents always tell me that I was in the middle of a circle and my friends were around me listening to the stories that I read to them. And honestly, I think that languages are my thing. I cannot see myself doing something else, but studying languages.

Did your time abroad impact you in any way?

Yes, of course. Finally, I learnt to be independent: before I could cook on my own but only some things and I didn't want to be alone. Now, I learnt how to be alone and I think this is a good thing.

I really recommend to everyone who wants to study abroad: go. It could be really helpful for everyone. At the beginning I was afraid too, it is normal. I missed my family and my boyfriend, but I can swear that beautiful moments are more than the sad ones. Please go; it is a beautiful way to learn new languages because you will find lots of students from all around the world. You will meet new friends and you will not regret anything. It is the best way to get involved. I learnt to believe in myself because I would have never imagined that I feel so good abroad and far from my home and family.

What plans do you have for the future?

After my bachelor's degree I would like to start a job. I really would like to find a job where I can use the languages that I studied. Actually, my goal would be to find a job in Switzerland, since I live on the border with this country. There, salaries are really high and I could work with German.

Perfect, thank you very much and good luck for the future.