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Learning about Germany

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Nürtingen, Germany

May 7th, 2018

Learning about Germany

This is my first time in both Germany as a country and Europe as a whole. I expected that I would spend most of my time confused on how to get around and struggling quite a lot. I thought I would struggle to buy groceries, to order food, and in my courses. I also thought my German would easily improve because I would need to use it so much. I expected to meet a lot of new people and get to explore new beautiful places and observe a new culture of people.

I learned a lot so far about how wrong I was about some of my expectations and how much I underestimated some of my expectations. For example, I have very little issue navigating my university and the city it resides in. I also have no problem getting the food and services I want. I underestimated how many amazing people from all over I would get to meet. All of these people from places all over the world I now get to explore. It also has taught me how similar people really are and how amazing it is to meet people from different countries, speaking different languages, with different beliefs. It is very eye opening, exciting and educational. I have met so many lifelong friends here. I also learned that German University isn't too difficult and I really enjoy their instruction style.

The person I conducted my interview with is my friend Damla, from Istanbul, Turkey. I think the biggest thing that surprised me was her age. She is 22 and in the same year of college as me. This is different because they start university much later than we usually do. Other than language I would say we are extremely similar in most areas; the biggest difference is religious beliefs, but they are free to choose their religion, which is similar to the States.

My perspective of the people in Germany changed, because many people said Germans are not really open, welcoming people, which is definitely not true. They are also not as punctual as everyone says they are. I learned a lot of people are really surprised when you say you do not support your government, because right now a lot of the people in my demographic do not agree with their president either. I realized a lot of the political and social issues we are dealing with in the US are paralleled with what other countries like Turkey are dealing with as well. This experience has opened up my world views a lot, and I hope to keep expanding on that.