

From Bukarest to Berenbostel

Question: Could you please introduce yourself?

Answer: My name is Andrea, I am 32 years old and I come from Romania and I emigrated from Bukarest to Berenbostel, Germany, eight years ago.

Q: What were your reasons to emigrate? Why did you choose Germany?

A: I had personal reasons for my emigration. I got to know my husband, who comes from Germany. Eight years ago I followed him.

Q: What was your impression of Germany before you went there? Were there any personal imaginations or opinions of your family / your friends?

A: No, especially for Germany there were no imaginations. Certainly it was something special to live in a foreign country for such a long time. A few times people got jealous when they listened to my stories.

Q: How did the settling down proceed? Did you have major problems with the integration? How did you manage the unknown language?

A: I used to study German in Romania. But this basic language didn't help me a lot. Because of my German husband my integration was immensely relieved. I was introduced to his friends and his family. I forced the people to speak with me in the English language in Germany the first time.

But my first impression of Germany was really negative. After six o'clock the streets used to be almost empty here in Berenbostel, so I asked my husband for the reason for that, because I was really confused. I lived in the capital of Romania before my emigration and I did not know anything like this. For me it was usual to go out with a friend into a cybercafé even at two o'clock in the night.

Q: What was your entrance in the work life like?

After a few months I started with my first job as a waiter in a café, although I almost couldn't speak any German. I took the menu and learned it by heart. But when costumers had any requests I understandably had my problems. Because of my husband, who works at the police station, I got my current job as an interpreter at the police station.

Q: What do you think are the differences between Germany and your mother country Romania?

A: The most differences are between the people here in Germany and the people in Romania. People in Romania are considerably friendlier and more open hearted. Also the people in Romania are more hospitable; regardless of whether he or she is poor or rich, immediately the guest is offered something. In my eyes the German people are cold, stingy and reluctant. For example when I could not sleep, I went to my friend in the middle of the night, threw stones at her window and did something with her in the city. Something like this would be inconceivable here in Germany, while this is natural in Romania.

Q: Please remember your first time here in Germany. Would you say that the integration was difficult because of the different traits of the people?

A: Yes, at the beginning it was really difficult. It took me almost two years to meet friends. In the first years I used to be homesick, especially at the holidays like Christmas. I thought a lot of my family and often I cried.

Q: Is there any longer a connection to your family and friends in your homeland? Do you keep in touch with Romanian clubs or associations here in Germany?

A: Still I keep up the contact to my family and friends in Romania. Also in Germany, I met some Romanian friends, but my best friend here in Germany is German and no, I don't keep in touch with Romanian clubs.

Q: Retrospect the eight years you now live here in Germany. Would you say that it was the right decision to immigrate to Germany?

A: I can only answer this question inaccurately. Maybe it would have been better to build up my life in Romania before immigrating to Germany.

Interview by Jan Helle

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