

Summer academy 2013

report by K.M

My name is Kirill. I am the student of Saint-Petersburg Polytechnic University and Leibniz University. I study double master diploma program in these two universities. This summer, in July of 2013, I have visited Sommeracademy in Germany, Hannover. The suggestion to participate was a surprise, however the pleasant one. Before I came there, I felt nervous, because of lots of things – first flight in my life, new culture and lots of new unfamiliar people, studying German. I took it like a challenge for me. I have not thought on that time, that this travel will be one of the best things in my life. Let's go through it all point by point.

Preparation

The journey to Hannover was not so easy from lots points of view. We have received the invitation only in June, that's why I have got only one month to buy tickets on plane and get visa. Because of visa requirement and procedures it takes a lot of time to make visa even for visiting. However we cope with this without problems, unlike visa for studying. But that's another story. Also there are no direct flights from Saint-Petersburg to Hannover, and most of the connected flights were not comfortable enough from point of view of arrival time. To summarize, I would say that there were some typical problems with travelling and in time I understand, that's it is always like that, so this time were nothing special or really bad and complex.

Educational Process

One of the best things in Sommeracademy is the studying. From one point of view, it forces person to study, be organized (because it is really early to study at 8:30). It gives a person a concrete idea and interest of travel – to learn German. From another point of view, language is the best subject to study because you learn additional way of socializing. It is such a pleasure to have a main goal for one month to study another language!

We have two teachers on our courses A1. Both of them have a little bit different methodic of education. However main different was in possibility to talk English. That was really rally hard to study German with non-English teacher. Mostly it is really useful, when you are completely immersed in fully German conditions, but not in the case, while you don't talk in German at all. That was really hard, number of misunderstands were really large.

Another teacher also left very good impressions. Because of the fact, that we were six in the group the socializing was really fast and close. I'm sure he was as interested in getting new knowledge about our countries and culture as we were. Listening hard rock, discussing famous events and features cuisine during the pauses. All include.

South Korea, Russia, Japan, America and Brazil – all study together. Of course there were funny moments, especially with accents. We became friends and still maintain the communication.



Entertaining Program

The entertaining program I would say was really good. It was wonderful. Zoo, Barbeques, FilmAbends, Hamburg and football, Maschseefest and Salsa footwork – everything was funny and well organized. I like most of all, that the program was really various and fascinating. Well combined walking and sitting entertainment, talking and listening, following the plan and have freedom of action. The organizers performed a huge job. They have to move in the same direction, because this direction is right, for hundred percent. After one month I asked myself – why it is only one

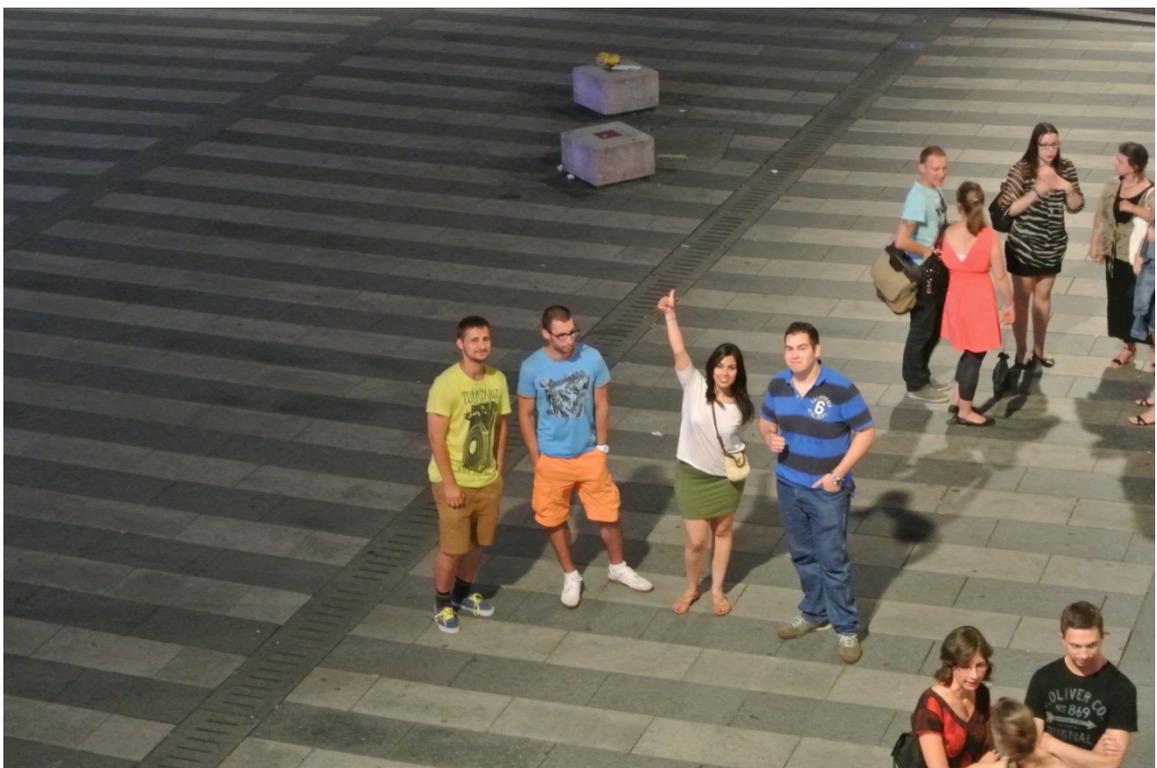


month?

P.S. I touched an elephant!

People

Sommeracademy provides unprecedented opportunity to meet new people from another countries, culture, religion and language. Of course, with the development and spreading of internet, you can talk via internet, with any person at any time. Nevertheless there are thousands of reasons to avoid such communication. But during the Sommeracademy, you are placed in such circumstances and conditions, that you willy-nilly start to socialize with new different people. You are united by the same goal – learn German. Mostly all are the same age. Along with the entertaining program, It creates perfect conditions to chat and meet people. And every new day you learn a lot of new things about people, facts around the world. All people start to check myths and rumors about different cultures and nations. After one month you make new friends. Some countries and cities on the map receive new meanings; they are not already places with no face. Borders are erasing, you feel that people all over the world are not so different from friends and neighbors from homeland country. And it inspires on travelling, visiting cities where these people from are.



We (me and my friends) have been living in two dormitories, near the Medizinische Hochschule. And I would note that mainly there live non-Europeans. It gives me the possibility to meet people, mostly with different type of thinking, like Indians, Chinese and others. In contrast to European style of communication, which was prevailed on courses and in free-time, in dormitory we met another way of living. Not the pure Chinese or Indian or other, but under such influence. Like eating with food, or so-called “fish days” or even “fish weeks or ages”.

Hannover and Germany

Germans and Germany. This topic, of course, was very actual, because we were surrounded by this culture. I think every mate or familiar in Russia asked me about that before, during or after academy. However, the most surprising thing is that mostly we talked with students from other countries, while studying, because all people, who came on Sommeracademy, came from other countries. And we even have not a real chance to talk to Germans, except teachers and other people who organized this. Although, even people, who organized courses, were not all Germans. And further things come into mind about Germany.



Organization is the first thing which comes to mind. The level of organization is much higher than in Russia and appears everywhere. Program was described in details; we received all papers in time. Everyone has answers on every question; there were no situations when we do not know what to do. Only one thing was negative – we have to change the dormitory in the first day, and coupled with the fact that we have arrived in the day before courses start, we have to carry on our luggage for three days. On the first day it was because of hotel. On the second - because of the first dormitory. On the next day - because we have to move in the new dormitory, the permanent one. However even in such case, changes of dormitory, what was not convenient, the organization was high. We have received all tips and instructions which we follow to reduce amount of unpleasant moments.



Friendliness is the second good treat which I have found in Germany. This is a kind of politeness which supports the optimistic atmosphere. Perhaps it was connected not only with the national's treat but with good weather. Anyway, it was very nice to live in Hannover because everywhere people were able to help you and to do it in a friendly manner. Especially when you study A1 and not able to talk German at all or good. This really inspires. Almost always in the shop the seller wishes you to have a nice day and smiles in the end.

Punctuality. I should mention it, because it was true. All Germans were in time. Our teacher even reminds us about this treat when we were late once. As my friend says, it's more probably that German train comes one minute earlier than two minutes later.

Scholarship

Scholarship was really important in the Sommeracademy. The scholarship to be honest was one of the crucial factors to agree on the travel. The reason is simple – this money could cover expenses on flight and education. So it easier to spend money on different things in different country, which you have never done before, such as eating new food, visiting new places and museums and so on.

I want to ride my bicycle.

In the Hannover was around the enormous amount of bicycles. Modern and old, expensive and cheap. Everywhere, along the city tens of people ride on their bikes. I really love this idea, especially because it goes with ecological trend in Germany. Sport plus effectiveness and ecological compatibility is the formula of success. And I hope that one day it comes in my city, even if in winter the average temperature is -10.



Barbeque

As I understand from the talks and my experience, barbeque is a second religion in Germany. If you don't know to spend your time with friends – just organize barbeque. Most of parties start with barbeque. One week and you get know how many things you can grill and how many places on Hannover exist to have barbeque nearby.



General impressions

Everything was good. I would say perfect. Organization, people, atmosphere. No pressure about study, money. May be some pressure were only in first days. It was in the beginning quite nervous to find the dormitory, place of studying and so on., even with a map, because it's new city, nonnative language. The program was really interactive and entertaining as well as language courses. I really miss this time in Russia, because the new impressions, that I have received, developed me as a person for the better. I want to finish my report with Russian phrase: "Hannover, wir sagen nicht Tchuss, wir sagen auf Wiedersehen!"

