

Podcast - How to Hochschule



Show transcript

Episode 4 - How to Find a Home

00:00:00: Stephan Hanf: Welcome to How to Hochschule! Our audio guide about tackling life and work at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, one of the most international universities in Germany. So grab a cup of hot ginger, put on your comfy headphones, and join us as we explore the world of Hochschule Rhein-Waal.

00:00:35: Shashwat Singh Chandel: We came to Germany, uh, there's a very famous video on how to reach Kleve from Düsseldorf. It's on YouTube and I think every international student, at some point of their life, they watch it. I watched that video, which train to take, this train that train. I was like done. I did my research, how to reach, and now very important detail that I missed is like in Germany,

00:00:59: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Düsseldorf Flughafen and Düsseldorf Hbf is different. So I got down from the plane and I'm like waiting in the five number platform where RE 10 is supposed to come according to me. We are waiting. The train didn't come for one hour. I'm like, okay, maybe the trains are late. I come from India. Trains are late.

00:01:17: Shashwat Singh Chandel: No problem. It can be late to us. I will still be there. Then some engineers came, the technicians came, they started taking out the track. So I think we are in a bad situation now, and before coming to Germany, I had only this consultant who booked a house for me and he said like, you just have to go there.

00:01:32: Shashwat Singh Chandel: They'll take you in. I said, okay. Then that's done. Then we asked someone in the Flughafen that, where do we have to go? And then he said, "Oh,

you have to take this train and then go to, uh, Kleve like this". So somehow we reached Kleve and I went to that house and we said, "We talked to you, talked to our consultant, and this is the house we are supposed to live in".

00:01:49: Shashwat Singh Chandel: We just came from India and it's already like eight in the evening. And there was this, uh, Vietnamese lady. She said, "Ah, yes, uh, the main landlord has to come. This is Friday. And the main landlord would come on Monday and then only you can, uh, move in". And my world fell apart. My phone is not working.

00:02:07: Shashwat Singh Chandel: It's night in Germany and I have no place to go.

00:02:10: Stephan Hanf: Shashwat Singh Chandel is an international student from India who studies Industrial Engineering at Hochschule Rhein-Waal .

00:02:19: Shashwat Singh Chandel: And I'm like this close to crying, very close to crying. I'm a 19 year-old, man, never been in Europe, so I'm like, okay, what to do. And then I contacted one guy who I knew studies in this university who I met one time in Delhi, and he told me that he studied.

00:02:30: Shashwat Singh Chandel: So I just somehow got his contact and I said, "Bro, I don't have any place to stay. Please let me stay here". And he said, "Bro, that's a problem because I stay with my girlfriend so I can't let you sleep in my house, but like I will try to find", so he came to us and then we went to Goch. For some reason we are roaming around Goch.

00:02:46: Shashwat Singh Chandel: It's already 11:00 PM. And we are roaming around trying to look for, he's calling few people, like "They're two guys. They need a place and they don't have any place to go". And I still haven't called my parents, so my parents are panicking because I forgot to call my parents and tell them that I'm in Germany right now.

00:03:01: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I don't know how I forgot, but it was like so much going in my brain. And then we found like there were five Indians living in one house and the house landlord was also Indian. But the deal is that the landlord doesn't allow any people who are new to come to his house, right? So we, he, the landlords were landlord was living in the ground floor and people live on the first floor and then there was attic. So the guy said, "Okay, we'll sneak you in.

00:03:22: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Just live on the topmost part, you know, it's an attic. And then never make a sound. Don't say anything, just live quietly". So I said, "okay bro, I just need a place to sleep. I'm very tired. Eight hours of flight, four hours of this, I will go". I went in, they offered me some food. Very nice Indian food I'm having.

00:03:41: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Finally, I felt like, okay, you know something nice. And I'm like, "Okay, where's my bed?" And he said, "No bed, bro. On the floor". Since I come from military background, I had a sleeping bag. I pulled it out, I made a bed for myself, very comfortable, and I just slept on it. And before I called my parents and I told them like, and I told them that everything is fine because I don't want them to be worried, you know?

00:03:59: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I said, yeah, everything is fine. I found my friends and I, nice place. And I slept that day was too exhausting for me to even think about what the hell happened with me. And I started looking for the places because this guy, when he came on Monday, it's been three days I'm living there. And then the landlord came and he said, no, like he cannot live here.

00:04:15: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I don't know what was the reason. And then I'm contacting my consultants like where to look for house. He's, they said, we are looking and it's been three, four days. I'm still having no house. I'm sleeping on the floor every day. And then it was like, okay, I have to find a house, but. Then I was one day just sitting on my laptop looking for houses in Kleve.

00:04:32: Shashwat Singh Chandel: The landlord walks up and he says, "Who are you?" You know, like that movie Parasite. Someone is living in his house and doesn't know and he's like "who the hell are you?" And I just like I said, sir, I am like very sad story. Where should I start from? I have no place. And he said, "You got two days. Look for a place. We cannot allow this."

00:04:52: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I said, okay. And then I found a place in Emmerich. That time, and that was basically the place which was also an attic with no furniture at all. Nothing at all. But I was like, this is the place, at least I move in. I moved in for 190 euros per month, cheap, and I moved in there, but that was very bad experience.

00:05:08: Shashwat Singh Chandel: But somehow I got the house and that's when I realized this is a big problem. Not for just for me, but for every international student who come here and then they got tricked by their consultant or some other way problems of what I started after first semester I started this thing, I told my consultant, "Every guy who comes to this university, He doesn't have a house, just tell me".

00:05:25: Shashwat Singh Chandel: And that is why I developed a network of houses and landlords and this and that. So I started this parallel thing with me just, I'm just helping them to come here because I don't want anyone to experience this. And sometimes when I help them, they give me gift, money, anything. I'm happy with that. Hundred euros.

00:05:39: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Okay, fine. But I find them houses and I still do it till this day. I did it like this semester also, when students came, I helped them with houses and

everything because this is something when you have a house, then you can figure out everything else. When you don't have a house, you cannot do anything.

00:05:51: Shashwat Singh Chandel: It's like a very homeless, horrible feeling.

00:05:53: Stephan Hanf: Yeah.

00:05:54: Stephan Hanf: It's a basic need, right?

00:05:55: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Yes.

00:05:55: Stephan Hanf: But why didn't you try to contact the Welcome Centre for

00:05:58: Stephan Hanf: housing?

00:05:59: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I, see, I didn't know anything. Especially when you go to the Welcome Centre, they don't have any plan like this. I don't believe that they have a like, you know,

00:06:05: Stephan Hanf: They actually do.

00:06:06: Shashwat Singh Chandel: They actually do?

00:06:07: Stephan Hanf: Yeah.

00:06:07: Stephan Hanf: They

00:06:08: Stephan Hanf: even have blacklist for houses you shouldn't call.

00:06:11: Shashwat Singh Chandel: And

00:06:11: Shashwat Singh Chandel: then they can give you houses?

00:06:13: Stephan Hanf: They'll help you find at basically what you're doing. You should work for a Welcome Centre, actually.

00:06:17: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I,

00:06:18: Shashwat Singh Chandel: uh, yeah.

00:06:19: Stephan Hanf: Have you ever spoke with them?

00:06:20: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Yeah, yeah, of course. But not for the house, because I was very clueless about it

00:06:23: Stephan Hanf: You should

00:06:24: Stephan Hanf: definitely talk with them.

00:06:25: Stephan Hanf: They don't give you a contract for rent, but they will help you out to say this and this opportunity you

00:06:29: Stephan Hanf: have to,

00:06:30: Shashwat Singh Chandel: But do students actually go to Welcome Centre for this stuff?

00:06:33: Stephan Hanf: I think most students have the same problem as you. They don't know that

00:06:36: Stephan Hanf: they can go there.

00:06:37: Shashwat Singh Chandel: So this is what the second thing is, because most of the things, like there may be services that are provided by Welcome Centre or FSR, but people don't know about it.

00:06:44: Stephan Hanf: That's the reason why we do this podcast,

00:06:46: Stephan Hanf: actually.

00:06:46: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Uh, yes.

00:06:47: Stephan Hanf: Home is where the heart is, but also where the head rests. It's where you study, sleep, eat, relax, and sometimes even party. It's where you make friends memories and maybe even mistakes. But finding a home in a new country can be daunting, especially if you don't speak the language, know the culture or have a lot of money.

00:07:09: Stephan Hanf: That's why in this episode, we are going to hear from three people who have been through the ups and downs of searching for a roof over their head in Germany. They will share their stories, tips, and advice on how to find the right accommodation that suits your needs, budget and personality.

00:07:30: Stephan Hanf: Lesson number one. It's a bit tricky.

00:07:33: Stephan Hanf: Um, before you applied, how did Welcome Centre help you?

00:07:36: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So it was the place to go, especially like the Visa stuff that you have three months when you get here to fix your visa, and then they extend it for a year. So all those stuff, the Welcome Centre is in charge of helping students.

00:07:50: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And as you're alone here, that's the only resource you have. You really appreciate their help. And so I went there a few times and they really explained me in detail what I have to do: first open the bank account, go to the city to register. They went and help me like with translating some documents that were like very German written, like I couldn't translate at all.

00:08:15: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And those kind of helped, like they really helped me arrange everything for me. So I said like, okay, I want to be that kind of person, like to help the new students and like to have as smooth as possible this situation, the first few weeks that are very rough. So I think that was like the reason why first I wanted to get the job and it's a very nice environment.

00:08:40: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So it was very like to go job. And a lot of people applied. There was very like fight job at the beginning. I don't know right now how is it going, but. Before it was like everybody applied to be a welcome center

00:08:54: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: tutor.

00:08:54: Stephan Hanf: But you're now, like the oldest one.

00:08:57: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah.

00:08:58: Stephan Hanf: Now a veteran, you could say.

00:09:01: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: It's time to retire.

00:09:02: Stephan Hanf:

00:09:02: Stephan Hanf: Anna

00:09:03: Stephan Hanf: Maria

00:09:04: Stephan Hanf: Rivas Sandoval is a student from Cali, Colombia who studies Gender and Diversity at Hochschule Rhein-Waal. Anna is also employed by the university's Welcome Centre where she supports students who struggle with various aspect of student life. Um, do you remember like the first time you started your job in the Welcome Centre with like the first task you

00:09:25: Stephan Hanf: had?

00:09:26: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah, so we were still on campus in the small house and I was with this girl, the girlfriend of my friend, and she was there for a while, so she knew everything what's going on. And the Welcome Centre has this thing that it's a learning by doing. There's no book saying what you have to do or what you should do in this situation.

00:09:46: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So it's old tutors teaching the new tutors, and that's how information goes by. Our boss told us at that time, just link with an old tutor and just learn what they're doing. So you're just sitting next to them and then people come and then you just read what they're telling them and just try to understand.

00:10:07: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And then she said, okay, the next person that come, you can say hi and just explain what whatever they need, and if you need help, I'm here. And that's how it was like just throwing, uh, new tutors under the water and just doing it. And it's very simple. At the beginning, students came for application forms for Visa or to take a look at the advertisements for the accommodation that we have at the welcome center. There's few cases like really tough that of course not even old tutors are allowed to comment on it. Maybe we reach our boss and then she takes care of it. But yeah, that's how I think the first one would be accommodation or application form.

00:10:53: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: For the, for the Ausländerbehörde, yeah.

00:10:55: Stephan Hanf: These

00:10:56: Stephan Hanf: are like the most common

00:10:57: Stephan Hanf: questions?

00:10:58: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah. Like visa and accommodation are our biggest job in the Welcome Centre to fix this for students. Yeah.

00:11:05: Stephan Hanf: Just in general for what

00:11:07: Stephan Hanf: kind of questions I, if I would be a student. I'm not, but if I would be, can I come to the Welcome Centre?

00:11:13: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Okay.

00:11:14: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So our mainly offers that we have is accommodation. We do not fix totally the accommodation for students like the university is not responsible. But we have come to agreement that if landlords in Kleve have an advertisement, they want to submit, we can print it and then put it on a folder. Now we have it on Excel digitally in our portal, and students come and check it out and they contact the landlords directly.

00:11:45: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Like we are the link. Just not, we don't fix stuff for students. So we do that. We go with the students every Wednesday for the residence permit appointments. So we handle the application form, we help them to check which documents do they need, and we go there, translate their appointments, because a lot of students don't speak German and they're not allowed to speak German to students English.

00:12:12: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: We go there and that's like the help we do. Other reasons would be we do events. Like this kind of cultural events to join students to help, like language tandem, let's say. People looking for a language to learn and they will give back their language and this kind of events we do. And yeah, I think that will be our offers mainly in the welcome center,

00:12:40: Stephan Hanf: um, a lot of people or students have a misconception about how the uni works. Cause in different countries you apply for your field of studies, you get accepted, then you come there and everything is more or less made for you, right? You pay a lot of money of course as well, but you get like housing

00:12:57: Stephan Hanf: and

00:12:58: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: They always start around September, the emails of "Please find me an accommodation".

00:13:03: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And we just have this template created. Uh, the university is not responsible to find you a place. It's written everywhere. But again, we remind you, these are some sites that you can find. This is the Facebook group of the university where students just post their rooms, um, WG Gesucht, flat Rice Couch, something like that.

00:13:25: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And we have this book, the Welcome Centre. You can check out. We offer some help. But it's not our task to fill it up for you. Students get a bit demanding at the beginning, just, uh, for us to do the work for them. But yeah, it's understanding. They come from a background where everything is done for them, but I think it's the student's responsibility to understand the situation you're going through.

00:13:51: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And Germany is very, you do your own thing by yourself. And kids do it here, like when they're 15, 16, they start doing things on their own. That's the cultural shock. It can mess a little bit with students at the beginning, and it can mess with you all the way long if you refuse to adapt with housing, it starts a bit tough, but at the end, if a student understands it's their thing, they start searching and at the end you always will find something. You know, now the conditions and uh, the place and the rent price, that's another thing that can play a bit hard on students sometimes. In my experience of hearing the stories in the Welcome Centre for four years, it's very common to have some students with bad decisions of moving in into a place where they're being, their money is being stole and landlords are being a bit messy with what they should give to the student as a tenant and. They say, okay, I'm gonna give you this, and then they don't. Or the rent disappears and you have to pay double rent. Or it's too high the rent to be true. The place, the conditions are not so well, they're always gonna be like, A bit damage, a bit abandoned, let's say, from the landlord, let's say.

00:15:18: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: But at least it has to be decent to live in. Proper, like hot water in the kitchen or proper shower, that there's no mold or whatever you're gonna get sick, good insulation or whatever. So there's few details that yeah, are missing sometimes.

00:15:35: Stephan Hanf: But is there a way for students beforehand to don't fall in these kind

00:15:40: Stephan Hanf: of traps?

00:15:41: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: There is for sure, but I also understand the rush to find the place and I think that's where the problem lays. I was reading an email before the podcast and there was a student few years ago that rented a place and then the place was under construction when they moved in. So there was like tools and everything over there, like recently paint like two hours ago.

00:16:07: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And there was random people coming in and out the house and it was a mess. So the student got really scared and contact the university and the university texted this rental institution here in Kleve that is very known by students. The name? Not sure if I can tell it.

00:16:26: Stephan Hanf: Probably not.

00:16:28: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: But they're very known right now because they scam a lot of students

00:16:33: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: and

00:16:34: Stephan Hanf: It's a company?

00:16:35: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah.

00:16:35: Stephan Hanf: Okay. I don't think we can say that. Companies, uh, have lawyers.

00:16:38: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah.

00:16:39: Stephan Hanf: Okay. We should just say it's a company.

00:16:40: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah. And so the university texted, emailed them saying like, this is not proper. Like students should have a normal place to live in. Do you have any solutions? You look for this place for this person, like you should have a responsibility.

00:16:57: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And the answer was, "We specialize in getting a quick place for them to stay since they have a rush to find it. We're not specialized to find perfect, like perfect place for them". And I was like surprised by the email. And then they said, "we will talk to the landlord and see how things can work out". I have no idea what happened after. The email stops there.

00:17:22: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: But it's like, I understand there's a rush and the student without an address, you cannot do a bunch of things you have to do for your residence permit. You don't have a residence permit, you're kicked out of Germany, period. Like it's a thing. So it's a rush, but you cannot take advantage of that rush that students have.

00:17:43: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: That's what it's a really sad in the situation that it seems like, because I'm talking just from the student side, that there's a bit of advantage that landlords take sometimes from desperate students having in this situation and reading contracts in German. Like contracts in German are very tough and even proper Germans, they don't understand sometimes what it's said there.

00:18:09: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: If you don't know someone, like a German friend, then you have to go to this office in the Welcome Centre and they will read it for you. But still, that person might miss something and then you're stuck with a contract that, I don't know, it says you have to be there for a year, which is legal. Let's say. Verpflichtet, I think it's called.

00:18:28: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: But they told you it was not around one year contract. And then the contract says it is, and then when you sign and then you wanna leave and say, "Oh, but it's in the contract. You read it, you signed it." So it's a bit tricky sometimes the situation. And there's that dark side, let's say, of the accommodation situation.

00:18:48: Stephan Hanf: So

00:18:48: Stephan Hanf: when was the first time you heard about the blacklist?

00:18:50: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So I'm using, but it was not in my first year working at the Welcome Centre. I knew there were stuff like situations where my boss were talking with students when things got a bit messy with their lives, let's say. And accommodation is a hot topic, as I told you for the student life. But I never knew there was a blacklist of landlords in Kleve and I got to discover it, I think yeah, after a year in the Welcome Centre. Yeah. When I heard about the situation about a, landlady that kept wanting to ask to post an advertisement for her. And there were a few students coming to our office to tell us, "We went to this place that you're advertising, and let me tell you, it's not a nice place".

00:19:40: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: There's no roof. The land lady, like she opened the door, no roof in, in the room. They were, she was renting. It was full of stuff. So it was like, Not at all equipped someone to live there. It's actually like in the forest, a kind of area of the, a bit high in the city. Abandoned place and she just, they said like she opened the door and then she closed the lock and lock it behind them.

00:20:10: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: They were like, okay, we're gonna die here. Yeah. It was a very messy place and of course not equipped for someone to live there at all. So when students come here and tell us we are advertising that kind of place, then we of course remove it. Because we're not helping any student to get any in a nice place.

00:20:34: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And then there's, when things get to the point that landlords go to the blacklist. Cuz of course we're not gonna make students life any

complicated, and we are not gonna help this landlord achieve to screw students by having these kind of places for them and other situations, let's say, that you can get into the blacklist.

00:21:00: Stephan Hanf: Yeah, I mean the blacklist. Yeah. Maybe you can open it and then we have to describe how it looks

00:21:06: Stephan Hanf: like.

00:21:06: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Okay. Maybe you can give it a go since.

00:21:09: Stephan Hanf: Actually

00:21:10: Stephan Hanf: it's not printed

00:21:11: Stephan Hanf: out. So it's not the,

00:21:11: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: No, it's a digital format, so it's just a, it's not like a big deal, let's say. It's just a document, Word document, and a black list of landlords.

00:21:22: Stephan Hanf: The background is

00:21:23: Stephan Hanf: actually black, but I think

00:21:24: Stephan Hanf: it's more, more connected

00:21:25: Stephan Hanf: to your cellphone then.

00:21:26: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah, yeah, for sure. And we have a few names of landlords that we have collected during a few years at the Welcome Center before even Covid and address. We just have one of them, which has the description of why it's in the blacklist and yeah, there's a few names

00:21:47: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: there.

00:21:47: Stephan Hanf: Mostly German names. I would, I can't read them though. But they're mostly German. I would say. One sounds a little bit Dutch, but Yeah. And they're

mostly from, do we, do you have different blacklists? So does the Welcome Centre in Kamp-Lintfort has a different

00:22:00: Stephan Hanf: than you have?

00:22:00: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Uh, no. I think this is the only

00:22:02: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: one.

00:22:02: Stephan Hanf: Yeah. Because then I would say the most offenders, uh, are in Kleve.

00:22:06: Stephan Hanf: Yeah. Because they're not actually, there's only one from Kamp-Lintfort, yeah. Like I said, I, I'm not allowed to disclose, uh, except one, you don't really know the background

00:22:15: Stephan Hanf: behind them.

00:22:16: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Exactly. So it's not like a very shared information, let's say on the tutors side and because of course topics might get a bit yeah, private and students won't want to disclose it and yeah, we keep it for very few

00:22:33: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: I think right now we have it open for all tutors. But it didn't used to be that way.

00:22:38: Stephan Hanf: It's

00:22:38: Stephan Hanf: not an open list. It's, I think, also important to say, right? You can't look it

00:22:42: Stephan Hanf: up online.

00:22:43: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yes. Mainly for the students, the tutors that work in the Welcome Centre.

00:22:47: Stephan Hanf: Yeah. But you, you, but you would tell students, "Oh no, don't go there. He's on a blacklist". Would you phrase it like that?

00:22:53: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Since we don't have any advertisement of these people, I don't think we have people that come here and say, "Hey, I saw this place. What do you think?" We don't get that kind of questions, so if we don't see it in our advertisement Excel sheet, there's no way that they contact us.

00:23:13: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Only when we see it, an email from them sending the advertisement. We just say, we're not able to publish this advertisement since there's a blacklist and. We're not able to submit your request, period.

00:23:29: Stephan Hanf: Yeah, we don't know there, it's just names, so it's more mysterious than it actually is, but we also don't know the offenses.

00:23:36: Stephan Hanf: But if you're on a list, you should have done something to not just one student. But yeah, more people have to come forward and say, please go, don't go there. Right. Like the, the no roof story

00:23:48: Stephan Hanf: you just told me,

00:23:48: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: I think the university wouldn't take the risk out of nowhere to put you on a blacklist because at the end is the university taking this decision.

00:23:56: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Of course it's my boss, but she probably consults her boss as well. And then it's at in a higher level, the situation. So if the university decides you are not longer a good match for being the landlord of students in Kleve, then yeah, it should have been a big deal. Probably.

00:24:15: Stephan Hanf: I wouldn't say

00:24:15: Stephan Hanf: you are. You're not the official way to get a room, right?

00:24:18: Stephan Hanf: Yeah. But you can help. Help. Yeah, just help, not do it for them, but help along the way to find a room.

00:24:24: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Yeah. So

00:24:25: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: I mean, the official way is just you doing it on yourself and we are just, this is like maybe the proper way cuz we're like a filter now. So we help students not to get in these situations. Now that their black list exists, we have a certain filter.

00:24:44: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Again, it's not like the proper filter cuz we don't have all the database of the landlords and what they did and whatever. But at least we saved you from, I don't know, 2, 4, 6, somehow 10, nine situations that you can skip. These people probably have their advertisement in WG Gesucht. You cannot control that.

00:25:06: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: So it's tricky, the situation.

00:25:11: Stephan Hanf: Yeah. I mean, there's a possibility to go to, uh, student housing. Yes. But it's

00:25:15: Stephan Hanf: limited.

00:25:16: Stephan Hanf: Right?

00:25:16: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Very limited situation because there's a waiting list that can take up to six months. Yeah, that's, so having a dorm at the university is a challenge. Like we have in Kleve, we have three kind of dorms here, which are really next to the university, like in both sides.

00:25:35: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And still there's a lot of demand for them because of course you save saved these situations. It's just a contract. Dorms are very good structure and if there's a problem, someone comes, fix it and you don't have to pay anything. And it's very cheap as well. So it's very convenient to live there. But to get a dorm is really tough, let's say.

00:26:00: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: But a lot of students do prefer it.

00:26:02: Stephan Hanf: I guess the most people coming here, they, they won't have a room in a dorm. Right? They will have to go to the free market.

00:26:08: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Exactly. They always like say, how can I apply? And then we say, okay, this is the way you apply for a dorm. But there's a waiting list. The waiting list lasts from three to six months.

00:26:19: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: Meanwhile, we advise you to find a private place. So these are the, our recommendations. They always come to find, uh, private place, like a WG, let's say. Mm-hmm. And then they get accepted to the dorms. And then they moved to the dorms. Right. That's the story that most of student happen. I think maybe one or two got lucky and they got the dorm right away, but I think that's very not regular thing to happen.

00:26:48: Anna Maria Rivas Sandoval: And the dorm situation is something that is not managed by the university or the Welcome Centre but by Studentenwerk, something. Yeah, it's treating with them, not with us. So we know very few about their policies and whatever they have. Yeah, with the dorms, it's tricky. A housing situation,

00:27:10: Stephan Hanf: Lesson number two: one, it's better than zero. What was it like your first experience you had when you came here to Kleve?

00:27:17: Ibrahim Bageya: Yeah,

00:27:17: Ibrahim Bageya: so. Before I get to Hochschule Rhein-Waal, I start looking for an apartment six months before. I think among, among the first people talk, like I was very focused, very active. Like every email I got, I answered immediately.

00:27:32: Ibrahim Bageya: I didn't wait the next day, so I actually got my acceptance earlier. Like in one of the first days where they accept people, like, really, I got it early. And then I was like, okay, what am I wearing, I look for an apartment.

00:27:45: Stephan Hanf: Ibrahim Bageya is a student from Uganda who studies International Taxation and Law at Hochschule Rhein-Waal . Ibrahim is also a student assistant who supports both his own study program as well as International Business and Management.

00:27:58: Ibrahim Bageya: So I go to eBay, I look for, uh, housing, which have, uh, you can visit them. I contact the people and then you can visit them. So I started looking for Emmerich, Rees, Heiden, and around the around places Kleve. I started visiting these houses almost every week. I'll visit one, I'll make one Termin, one appointment, and then I visit one by one.

00:28:22: Ibrahim Bageya: And by that time I also, before I started school, I was working. So I had good income. I had the money to pay there for apartments. I was, okay. So the problem came, I could not get an apartment. For whatever reason, I can't tell you why. That's the honest reason. Because you'd come visit the apartment, they show you around, and then they're like, oh, we shall contact you.

00:28:46: Ibrahim Bageya: You never hear from them. Never like literally never.

00:28:50: Stephan Hanf: Did

00:28:50: Stephan Hanf: you try to reach out

00:28:51: Stephan Hanf: to them afterwards?

00:28:52: Ibrahim Bageya: Usually they give you like a sheet which has a Mieter Auskunft . You have to fill it. And all your income, where you work, everything, you put what they call, um, Lohnabrechnung for the last three months. On top of that, I didn't have so much expenditures and uh, I was really okay.

00:29:08: Ibrahim Bageya: Mm-hmm. They never gave me an apartment, never. Really, like I asked, there's a woman I asked, she told me we had someone who won 3000, so we gave her that. I'm like, okay, but all these months, like I told every week I visited in Rees, I even went where the horses where there's like a farm and they had like horses and they still didn't gimme an apartment.

00:29:31: Ibrahim Bageya: I struggled and all the months ended without me getting an apartment. Not even one. They never called me. When I called back, they told me they gave it to someone better and I felt like I had all the requirements. And also some of them asked what they call a SCHUFA-Auskunft.

00:29:48: Stephan Hanf: Can you explain what it is? SCHUFA?

00:29:49: Ibrahim Bageya: So SCHUFA

00:29:50: Ibrahim Bageya: is

00:29:50: Ibrahim Bageya: um, is a private institution in Germany.

00:29:53: Ibrahim Bageya: It basically covers information that has to do with your finances. It's not affiliated with the government, but most of the time if they want to see how credit worth are you in German, they wanna see which percentage you have. You understand? So I had like 89%. I think it's good. Okay. I didn't have, by that time of credit, I avoided getting a credit because I don't wanna be in debt. I always wanted to use my finances and when I work more to get more finances, I'm gonna use this money.

00:30:23: Ibrahim Bageya: But I always wanted to use my own money and I didn't know in German a good credit takes you somewhere. I learned from that if you have good credit, you're paying your money. They take you as a serious person. That's when I learned that, but I didn't know. So my SCHUFA-Auskunft is, uh, 89%. I feel so happy. I give it to all you asked me.

00:30:46: Ibrahim Bageya: Still, it didn't help. It didn't really help. They would look at it and be like, yeah, but usually there's like a Bewertung somewhere for, for each, uh, type. They ask how much is he willing to give back? How much is he trustworthy? They give you a small kind of like percentage, and because I didn't have a credit, it was 0%.

00:31:07: Ibrahim Bageya: Mm-hmm. So everyone would be like, "This one, I don't think we can trust him".

00:31:11: Stephan Hanf: Yeah, that's crazy.

00:31:12: Ibrahim Bageya: But then I was like, but after that I actually got a credit. Now I have a credit. I have a credit, it's going very well. I make sure I pay my credit every month. And because I do tax and law, I know how important it is to actually get your credit.

00:31:24: Ibrahim Bageya: You get a, you can get a good phone deal, you can get a good house with this, you can get a loan. I didn't know all. I didn't know all that, but now I can get all those things, but I don't need them. I don't wanna get in trouble with any bank or something. Yeah. And yeah, it didn't really work until we started university.

00:31:41: Ibrahim Bageya: I didn't have an apartment, so what I do, like I keep on the AStA page on Facebook, they usually post houses.

00:31:47: Stephan Hanf: Did you went

00:31:48: Stephan Hanf: to the Welcome Centre as well, or just to AStA?

00:31:49: Ibrahim Bageya: No.

00:31:50: Stephan Hanf: Did you know about the Welcome Centre?

00:31:51: Ibrahim Bageya: Yeah, I

00:31:51: Ibrahim Bageya: knew about the Welcome Center.

00:31:52: Stephan Hanf: But

00:31:53: Stephan Hanf: afterwards or beforehand?

00:31:54: Stephan Hanf: Afterwards, probably.

00:31:55: Ibrahim Bageya: No before, because they sent me a list of Excel sheet.

00:31:58: Stephan Hanf: Ah, okay.

00:31:59: Ibrahim Bageya: Of all, uh, landlords. Mm-hmm. Can contact, there was a red list and a green list and uh, of course may I focus on the green list. Because I figured the red list meant something. But they're usually like, the red list are, these are the landlords that you're not supposed to contact because they won't give the right treatment.

00:32:19: Ibrahim Bageya: But I know this explanation after, not before. So may I only contact the green ones? But the green ones, most of them I didn't want a WG. I wanted a private kind of like apartment, small apartment, my own privacy and stuff like that. I never lived in a WG and I'm a very clean guy. I don't wanna live with people and then I have to do all the work clean for them.

00:32:41: Ibrahim Bageya: I don't wanna be a daddy. I don't wanna have fights. I'm not this guy who's gonna pick a fight on small things. And when I live in a WG from experience with my friends. You find pans in front of the door, you have to jump, and then you find bottles of beer in, in the toilet. Like, I don't want that curse.

00:32:59: Ibrahim Bageya: I can't live with it. And, uh, that tells me why I stay alone, because I want to keep my things where I left them. Because I restricted myself most of the WGs, I couldn't get them in this, uh, list they gave me because they were WGs but I got one here in Oberstadt. The woman was so nice and the guy was one was very nice, and the guy who lived there was from the States.

00:33:25: Ibrahim Bageya: And the guys. "Oh, you. Oh, you don't, you speak also German. Oh, I find it cool. I've been here for three years, bro. I can't do it in German". I'm like, I just watch you YouTube videos and I buy Amazon books and then I land by myself. I was like, yeah, it's hard for me. And that's how we got the conversation. And you can take my apartment.

00:33:42: Ibrahim Bageya: It was a really nice apartment, studio apartment. Guess what? It was 550 a month for new tenant. Before he used to pay 450. So that means the landlord increase a hundred in it. I'm like, mm, my budget is 400. I can't afford this. But the landlord is like, yeah, you can move in any, anytime you want. Jordan is moving out soon, you just move in.

00:34:07: Ibrahim Bageya: I'm like, but it's 550. And he told me he has been paying 450. Like, yeah, increasing for new tenants. Because we are just gonna, uh, refurbish a little bit and then it's gonna look more nice like, okay, so I keep open this guy. I'm like, if I don't get this, my only plan, I can just stay there for like six months.

00:34:23: Ibrahim Bageya: Then I move out. I look for something cheap if I get to know Kleve very well. It didn't work out like the guy didn't want to move out because he said he failed some exams. He had to stay, he doesn't want to lose his apartment. I reach at the end when I don't have any apartment. So still on the AStA page, I told you there was one guy from Mozambique, he post a very small apartment, street, apartment, very nice, cool place.

00:34:49: Ibrahim Bageya: I'm like, this is for me. I call him. That's when like, I think the semester started. I missed like two weeks or something like that. I didn't attend freshers week. I didn't have an appointment. I've been looking for now, I think seven months. All that long, I didn't get nothing after the energy I put. Nothing.

00:35:07: Ibrahim Bageya: And the guys are like, yeah, you can move in here. I'm moving out. I'm gonna do my thesis in Cologne and I don't wanna come back in Kleve, it's, uh, it's a dead city, but he didn't use the word dead. He used a really, really vulgar word, I don't want to use it here. So I'm like, yeah, cool. When should I move in? I leave everything here.

00:35:27: Ibrahim Bageya: You move in when you want. I don't need anything here. I'm like, for real? He's like my cups, anything you just take, you don't pay. It's free of charge, bro. Just take everything. I'm like, I'm moving now. Like we need to call the landlord. He's in Goch. He stays in Goch. We tell him I've got a new new Nachmieter and then we're cool.

00:35:45: Ibrahim Bageya: He speak some German like Yeah, he speak some German. Yeah, but he only speaks German. He doesn't speak English. I have to tell you, I call the landlord and that day is like, oh, I'm in Goch. Can you come? I don't even know where the bus to go. Call the train to go get, it's like you just go to the same train.

00:36:00: Ibrahim Bageya: It's like few minutes, minutes away, and then you get there. That's what I did, and then I reached the Landlord. I was like, here. "You work?" "Yes", I show him my Lohnabrechnung. "You fail to get a house on this money in Kleve?" He's like, "How?" And I tell him my story, he's like, that is impossible to be. I'm like, yeah. He's like, you can pay my rent for the next, and I had saved money actually for specifically for rent.

00:36:25: Ibrahim Bageya: I had Kaution ready. I had had money ready. He's like, yeah, move in when you want. When the other guy goes out, you just move in. I moved in the next day. That was so easy. I was so happy. Like carrying my whole package of bags just to come to Kleve. I was so happy in this small house I was like, at least I have a place.

00:36:44: Ibrahim Bageya: So that's how I started. I cleaned it a little bit the next day and, it was set for my own view, my own perspective, and until now, I still stay there.

00:36:54: Stephan Hanf: Why do you think it took so long?

00:36:55: Ibrahim Bageya: I think the people underestimated me. The people didn't see value in me. They didn't feel like they could trust me. They had this whenever.

00:37:05: Ibrahim Bageya: When I spoke German on the phone, I sounded really, I can speak German, actually, when they saw me in real life. There was like a little move of inch, like you are the one you Mr. Bageya?.I'm like, yeah. I'm Herr Bageya. Okay. You speak quite good german on the phone. Thank you very much. I didn't know what that meant.

00:37:24: Ibrahim Bageya: That actually meant like we thought it was someone maybe, maybe someone

00:37:29: Ibrahim Bageya: else, you know,

00:37:30: Stephan Hanf: You think racism

00:37:31: Stephan Hanf: was a part of it?

00:37:32: Ibrahim Bageya: It was something like that. Typically it was something like that. Every time they saw me first, this dark guy tall entering into a building like. It was really crazy because these houses actually are not the best.

00:37:44: Ibrahim Bageya: This one, which was really in a bad condition. I was already to take it. I was really ready to take it because the person who stayed there was a junkie. Everywhere there's bottles broken. I was like, I'm going to renovate it myself. I'll paint it. I'm ready. The woman was like, look at me and like, are you sure you wanna do this?

00:37:59: Ibrahim Bageya: I'm like, yes, I need this house. It looks perfect for me. But she gave it to someone else regardless, and I'm like, I work. I contribute taxes, like I'm gonna pay your money and had a job by bofrost. I don't know whether you know bofrost.

00:38:15: Stephan Hanf: I know.

00:38:16: Ibrahim Bageya: They pay quite well.

00:38:18: Stephan Hanf: Some people might know, don't know it when they're from outside of Germany.

00:38:21: Stephan Hanf: It's, uh, maybe you can explain

00:38:23: Stephan Hanf: it.

00:38:23: Ibrahim Bageya: Yeah. Bofrost is like an international company that stores frozen food. So this frozen food is basically very tasty and they usually deliver it to people can order online on their website. But I have to tell you bofrost is also in Belgium, France, Netherlands.

00:38:41: Ibrahim Bageya: It's like over Europa. So they have these Lieferung services. You order, they bring you the food, and I work there as a bylander, just pack the food in the cars and wake up early. They pay really well. And the people are so cool. Not only Germans work there, but we have Polish, we have uh, Afghanistan, we have Moroccans, we have, our boss is also not like from German.

00:39:03: Ibrahim Bageya: Okay. Stay there for long. But he's also like from Kazakhstan or something. Like, there's so much diversity, and that's me how I feel at home. When I see people from different countries, I'm like, I'm home. Where I used to stay, I used to be the only black guy on the street. When I walk, even people were driving, they stopped driving their cars and look at me like literally change from looking to where they're going.

00:39:29: Ibrahim Bageya: They ask me, they give you this face. Who are you? And you like lost or something? I had to leave that my whole year. Until I found like a Verein, basketball Verein. That's where I felt placed. Cuz we had Russians, we had Lebanese, we had, and I was okay. I was the only black guy there from Africa. But I felt also home because I saw these guys from other countries and they were telling me their stories.

00:39:52: Ibrahim Bageya: They've also just been here for five, three years. I was like, okay. But he live like in a street where like, The whole street. Number one to 100 is only black guy. You can't even do a walk in the evening because even the dogs wanna attack you. Even the kids, when they see you, they run away from you, like you look like a clown to them.

00:40:10: Ibrahim Bageya: Even kids still run away when they see me.

00:40:12: Stephan Hanf: Really?

00:40:12: Ibrahim Bageya: Even here in Kleve.

00:40:13: Stephan Hanf: Wow.

00:40:13: Ibrahim Bageya: Like when they see me, they usually hide in their daddy or mummies back. I don't know how I look, but uh, it's something, I've lived in Germany for some time. It's not my thing. For me. I can't change it. Like,

00:40:26: Stephan Hanf: No, of course. How?

00:40:27: Ibrahim Bageya: Even though when I go in Netto, in supermarket, I love kids.

00:40:30: Ibrahim Bageya: I really love kids. I love children. But I, when kids see me and run away, it hurts me a little bit. Like I don't do anything wrong. They just, even when they're auf dem Spielplatz, you pass with a bike, they see you, they even stop. Like, it's like they've seen a ghost or something like that. If you go like in der Wald or like in the forest to run, I usually do jogging to until Bedburg-Hau and when they find a couple also walking, they stop even walking. And look at me. Here we have a, uh, international university that should be normal, but it still happens in Kleve.

00:41:08: Stephan Hanf: And of course,

00:41:09: Stephan Hanf: it's not like a very nice topic to talk about racism or, or bad experience in general.

00:41:15: Ibrahim Bageya: But

00:41:15: Ibrahim Bageya: we should,

00:41:15: Ibrahim Bageya: because it's very important to sensitize our community.

00:41:18: Ibrahim Bageya: I don't do drugs. I don't sell drugs. As long as you, you don't see me doing that. You should not judge me. Try to know my character as a person. Never know, I can teach you things you don't know. Mm-hmm. I know quite so many things that people don't know here, trust me. Mm-hmm. But people don't see that I'm actually a, a person who has that value.

00:41:39: Ibrahim Bageya: They see me actually on the black side or the wrong side. Yeah, so I think it's more like we, we can, like the way we can say like, not all white people racist.

That means not all black people are bad. It should be the same. Get to know someone, know their character, find out if they fit in your circle. If they don't fit, push them away.

00:42:00: Ibrahim Bageya: It's not Verpflicht. It's not mandatory, but, uh, you to judge me on the spot and I don't know what these parents teach their kids back home.

00:42:09: Stephan Hanf: I don't know. It's a good, good

00:42:10: Stephan Hanf: question. I actually have no idea.

00:42:12: Ibrahim Bageya: I think like where we are going

00:42:13: Ibrahim Bageya: right now, As a people, we are all fighting the same kind of problems. Climate change, fire burns.

00:42:21: Ibrahim Bageya: We are all fighting the same problems. We should put small inconveniences. The city's racism problems are not society problems. They actually generational problems like our parents pass it to our parents cause they keep telling the same kind of stories, you know? Mm-hmm. We need to, to stop this generational curse.

00:42:40: Ibrahim Bageya: We have better way things to think about. We have to think about more other things, which are very important. Yes, it happens that sometimes you can't stop everyone from the way they think, but I know one thing. When a war starts right now, everyone will be running for their own life. We need to come as collectively, really put these things behind us.

00:43:01: Ibrahim Bageya: They don't really add value. What does it give you if you hate on someone? Nothing. It only grows your ego and makes you even limited in only one circle. If you hate black people, you never talk to black people. You never learn anything new. You are limiting your knowledge yourself. You putting yourself in the prison.

00:43:20: Ibrahim Bageya: I have so many friends. In a very short time I've been in Kleve I have two posts in the university now. I have established myself so freely cause I'm flexible. I see everyone in their own perspective. I don't judge and then I don't come and hit you and it just, of course I don't say like everything, I like it, but I reserve the negativity.

00:43:42: Ibrahim Bageya: It adds no value. Really. Me have really had bad experiences, honestly. Very bad. Very bad. But you know what I've done? I never went to a police or anything, or I smile and move on. I just like blow it. The wind, like the wind is blowing off my air. I just don't put it in my mind because I know you're just ignorant.

00:44:07: Ibrahim Bageya: You just don't know enough. You need to learn yourself. You need to go and make some research. You need to teach yourself. And I usually don't blame them because they didn't choose to be like that. Mm. It's actually the fault of the generation before them. They would've been better people, but it's the system that created that.

00:44:26: Ibrahim Bageya: And the system's not putting really strong ideas to stop this. They're gonna be in their comfort zone. Everyone wants to be in their comfort zone. Don't you?

00:44:37: Stephan Hanf: Yeah, of course. Yeah.

00:44:37: Ibrahim Bageya: Yeah. Think about it. Me, I actually don't blame anyone who treats me different. No. I just hope one day they can see the light and if they don't see the light, that's still fine.

00:44:49: Ibrahim Bageya: No one is perfect. I know they're, there's good in them and they do it, and they don't have to show it to me, but I just pray they don't pass it to the next generation. I can't stop it.

00:45:00: Stephan Hanf: No, no,

00:45:01: Stephan Hanf: that's, that's the

00:45:01: Stephan Hanf: sad part about it, right?

00:45:02: Ibrahim Bageya: Yeah. But, uh, I've, as my person, like me,

00:45:05: Stephan Hanf: But

00:45:05: Stephan Hanf: you can change it a little bit, right?

00:45:07: Stephan Hanf: How at least you try to change it with Yeah. Like how you

00:45:10: Stephan Hanf: behave yourself.

00:45:11: Ibrahim Bageya: Of course. Like as per, now as I'm talking, I'm sure you've got some kind of insight. You see how bad it is. And then for your case, if you talk to any black person or anyone who looks like me, you don't see them like other people.

00:45:25: Ibrahim Bageya: That's good for us because then at least we have one who doesn't look like us, who understands us. One is better than zero.

00:45:35: Stephan Hanf: Lesson number three: being clueless is a fun thing. A lot of students who come here to start their bachelor or master, they don't know how it is to live and study. Here in Germany. It's not, for example, in other countries where you have a tuition fee and you get housing, you have to organize

00:45:56: Stephan Hanf: yourself.

00:45:57: Stephan Hanf: Right?

00:45:57: Shashwat Singh Chandel: In Germany, I think that the all the experiences, you have to survive one semester somehow here and there, and then you will know, okay, this is Germany. This is not what you imagined.

00:46:05: Stephan Hanf: What did you imagine when you came?

00:46:06: Shashwat Singh Chandel: You know, I thought it would be like I would be the Indian guy in the group of international students.

00:46:10: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Like a good life, you know, we are living, chilling. I will be that guy. It was not like that when I came to Germany. I thought everyone, international students hanging out with each other. But when you come to Hochschule Rhein-Waal still sometimes, uh, Indians are hanging out with Indians. Other nationalities hanging out with their own people and it's all exclusive groups hanging out separately.

00:46:27: Shashwat Singh Chandel: It's not what I imagined. It's not like when you obviously meet them in the classes and you go to parties and you meet them, but at the end you are still with your own people. And that was me for the first year in Germany. I was always with Indians. I didn't have any international friends at that time until I moved.

00:46:40: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Uh, and then there were like more people and then I was, then I decided I don't wanna be that guy who comes to Germany, studies here, hangs out with Indians, and then goes back and doesn't get to know more people. So I stopped hanging out. When I started hanging out with more international people, it was very weird

again, to make friends with them because how to start, I don't know what to talk to them, which is a very good thing.

00:47:00: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I came to Germany and I got to know about people and then there's more to world than this and uh, I never regret it because otherwise I would be In India we say that means the frog that lives in the well. He doesn't know the world outside. He's always in the well, but there is a world outside and it's like coming out of that.

00:47:17: Shashwat Singh Chandel: And now I know more. I cannot go back to that now.

00:47:21: Stephan Hanf: What would be

00:47:22: Stephan Hanf: like regarding finding a home here in in Kleve, what would be your advice for

00:47:28: Stephan Hanf: people coming now?

00:47:29: Shashwat Singh Chandel: My advice would be, okay, now that you have told me that there's Welcome Centre helping, so that would be my advice. Go to them. Otherwise, FSR has buddy programs.

00:47:36: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Join that. You will meet people and that makes it so much easier because these people who are in the FSR, they know already. Houses and everything, so contact them and uh, you know, because not everyone knows every people in Germany. So yeah, contact them and they will definitely help you out with this.

00:47:49: Shashwat Singh Chandel: They have whole department doing this. They are like 20 people, and you will find something before coming to Germany. You start doing that. Housing is the most important thing before coming to Germany. Just fix that and then only come to Germany. And don't come to Germany otherwise without a house, because then it's gonna be a horror story.

00:48:05: Shashwat Singh Chandel: There's so many bad experiences with people getting into wrong houses, like. Better when you ask how is the house? Who are the people living there, and this and that, because I've had people who have really bad experiences living in Kleve. They got into weird housemates and they were doing all kinds of weird stuff, and then they got also kicked out in the middle of night.

00:48:21: Shashwat Singh Chandel: This has happened to my friends. So do the housing with the help of people who are, you can trust here, you know, the FSR, the Welcome

Centre, avoid the bad houses. And once you fix that and then you start thinking about coming to Germany, you can be 10 days, 15 days late, no problem, but fix the house thing first.

00:48:35: Shashwat Singh Chandel: That is one of the worst experiences that I have. Apart from that, once you get the house, it's all good. You can fix any other thing. But housing is one thing that you have to fix at first before coming to Germany.

00:48:46: Stephan Hanf: And you

00:48:46: Stephan Hanf: didn't really know that

00:48:47: Stephan Hanf: beforehand, right?

00:48:48: Shashwat Singh Chandel: No. No, that exactly. I didn't know that. I thought it would be like you would find it because I have no experience in searching for house, so I didn't know how hard it was.

00:48:55: Shashwat Singh Chandel: And especially in Germany, how would I know? Yes, like now when you apply for it, like I think you should tell people and beforehand that this is a thing. You have to look for your house on your own or maybe apply for dorms. So if you get a dorm, I lived in the dorms and that was like the best thing to do because as a student, if you're living in the dorm, there are so many benefits that come with it.

00:49:12: Shashwat Singh Chandel: You have a study room there, your party hall there, and no one to disturb you. It's a very safe place to live. And no one will scam you. STW won't scam you like other landlords would. You know, of course you can do, take actions against them as a student at how much time and the money you have to do deal with that.

00:49:27: Shashwat Singh Chandel: So I think the safest place is to go for dorms if you can't find it otherwise, WG. But I think best places to go for dorms and there are more dorms now in Kleve. When I came there was only Brienerstraße and then two buildings of Flutstraße and now they are four buildings of Flutstraße. Brienerstraße is still the same.

00:49:44: Stephan Hanf: When you found

00:49:44: Stephan Hanf: a home, right?

00:49:45: Stephan Hanf: How it is to live in Germany? I think you probably,

00:49:48: Shashwat Singh Chandel: yes.

00:49:49: Shashwat Singh Chandel: I had so much fight with my other flatmate because of this, because again, I was like not getting it. I was like cleaning, cooking, and then like something spilled on the floor and I had no experience of cleaning, but later on I realized, okay, you have to do this.

00:50:00: Shashwat Singh Chandel: This is the stuff that you have to do. But this is something that you learn by time, I think, because as a new student, you have never seen this student. You cannot just like when within a week you can just be adopting to the system because this is also very foreign concept to you and a cultural shock.

00:50:13: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Oh, you take. Take care of your garbage and you have to throw it and this and that. But yes, this is something you learn with time. This is something that you have to, and I think no one has at some point after six months, seven months, like most people live in the first semester or when they cannot adopt with it and they cannot make friends, and then there it's too much for them and home sickness or the people live in live leave Germany in the fourth year when they fail something.

00:50:36: Shashwat Singh Chandel: There are two points. No one leaves in the middle because at the middle you're already comfortable. All these things, these are coming naturally to you, and now you are, when you go back to India, you won't be able to just . Why are they not segregating now, you don't belong to India anymore or your home country.

00:50:48: Shashwat Singh Chandel: You are now here after one year, two years. I think it comes naturally. It's not, no, no training required for it. It's just like when you live, you, this is how you live now.

00:50:57: Stephan Hanf: Do you think you're going to miss the student life?

00:51:00: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Yes.

00:51:01: Shashwat Singh Chandel: Yes. I already do because now everyone is doing thesis. Someone is working. No, my none of my friends is here.

00:51:07: Shashwat Singh Chandel: They're like, someone is in Heidelberg, someone is in Netherlands. So it's student life is over for me now. Now it's all just doing thesis, applying for jobs and this and that. The fun of it was that we were all naive and stupid. That's the thing. This stories you can only do when you're very stupid enough you, you're stupid enough to do something things and that's now it's memory.

00:51:25: Shashwat Singh Chandel: But now you know you won't have that stupidity or numbness that you had that time to enjoy that much what you had. Now. Being clueless is a fun thing.

00:51:45: Stephan Hanf: Thank you for listening to the How to Hochschule podcast. We hope you enjoyed the show, and feel free to follow us and recommend us to your friends. If you have any thoughts or suggestions or just want to let us know how you like the episode, please don't hesitate. Take courage and do reach out to us at podcast@hsrw.eu. We are always looking for ways to improve and we appreciate your feedback.

00:52:07: Stephan Hanf: Also, be sure to check out our show notes for links and more information on today's topics and guests. Next time on the How to Hochschule podcast. This is the first time you, you went as a team here, right? Yeah. It's the first time. How do you know? Know each other from drinking and party Tune in next time as we discuss how to find friends at the most international university in Germany.

00:52:31: Stephan Hanf: Thank you very much for joining us today. I'm Stephan Hanf. This is the How to Hochschule podcast. We are looking forward to having you back next time.