

High School Exchange to Germany 2012/ 13

Commonly known as a major country of the „Old World“, Germany is the ideal destination for exchange students. The Partnership International e.V. high school program provides the opportunity for students to become members of a German family and attend a German secondary school for either a semester or an academic year.

This challenging experience allows young people to discover German life and traditions, and to learn the language of many famous poets like Goethe and Heine. After an unforgettable exchange experience students will return home full of memories, long-lasting friendships, and ideas on how to proceed with their young lives.

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Partnership International e.V.
ehemals Fulbright-Gesellschaft



Liebe Familie,

der Austausch vergeht wie im Flug
und meine Familie ist dadurch ein
ganzes Stück größer geworden,
ich übrigens auch :)

Eine dicke Umarmung
aus der Ferne



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About us

Partnership International e.V. is a volunteer based, non-profit exchange organization founded by Fulbright alumni in 1961. Former US Senator J. William Fulbright served as Partnership's Honorary President until he died in 1995. For more than 45 years, Partnership has been organizing international exchange programs for young people. Exchange programs range from short-term (3 to 4 weeks) to long-term (a semester or an entire academic year). They involve living with a family and attending a school abroad. Our programs offer the opportunity to live in the United States of America, England, Ireland, South Africa, Argentina, China, and Poland. We also offer programs for high school principals and teachers from the United States and Argentina, as well as exchange programs for students wanting to visit Germany. Our programs are a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience new socio-cultural environments, which enables participants to share new concepts with other people. Partnership International e.V. is a member of the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) and the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel.

Rebekah, who lived in Germany for a school year, says:

"Speaking of school, it's...interesting. While my German is undoubtedly improving, school is still naturally very difficult. Since I have already graduated, my school basically let me choose which subjects I wanted to keep. (except of course, Sport) I kept most of them- I only dropped Geographie and Deutsch. (Don't worry, I'm just taking a different German class), but now I am starting to wonder if that was the best decision. The classes are very difficult, as the teachers tend to speak very quickly. Even classes like Mathematik have proven difficult. I thought I understood most of what we did in class until we wrote the first test."

Secondary Schools in Germany

The German school system provides a variety of educational institutions for students between the ages of 15 and 18. Hauptschule, Realschule, and Gymnasium are separate school paths that offer different diplomas after completing grades 10, 12, and in some places 13. Our students are usually placed, according to their age and academics, in the 10th or 11th grade at either a Gymnasium or Gesamtschule, which combines the three separate school paths under one roof. The school year starts in August or September and ends in June or July. Each school decides in which grade to enroll students. Subjects like mathematics, German language, and science are compulsory at most schools. Of course, classroom instruction is in German. Before coming to Germany, it is recommended that students applying for the program develop some familiarity with the German language through a German club or evening classes, available at most community colleges.

German Host Families

Partnership International e.V. visits and carefully screens all families before they are accepted into the program. The families we consider consist of at least two people. In most cases, we place students in families with two parents and a child, a single parent with a child, or two parents without children. In some cases we place students with single parents whose children are no longer living at home. The basic requirements for hosting are that the family: provide a warm home, have a strong interest in learning about a different culture, and provide food and an individual bed for the exchange student. We provide the student with detailed information about their host family before arrival in Germany.

Casey, who lived in Greifswald, says:

"My host family is very kind, and when they realized I was very interested in military history and ships, we spent the first three weekends at the harbor, in Peenemünde, and in Stralsund. They helped correct the two papers I wrote for school, and I learned a lot of grammar just from those corrections."

... It is very beautiful here, but it is always windy, usually gray, and sometimes very wet. I can see the sea from the downstairs window, and I ride by it to school every morning. It is a real stress reliever to ride five km without having to think, talk, just peddle."

... One of the things that has helped me deal with stress is competition. As a sport class I am doing Handball. It is probably one of the top 10 most pointless sports I have ever played, but at the same time I have a strong arm and quick reflexes. It gets very competitive, and it is just another time when I don't have to think, just act."

Included in the Program Fee:

- Placement with host family including room and board
- Placement in a German Realschule, Gymnasium or Gesamtschule
- Providing support documentation for the student to obtain a visa or residence permit
- A week-long welcome orientation upon arrival in Germany
- Supervision throughout the program by a Partnership International e.V. local representative and/or one of the offices in Cologne or Berlin
- Monthly student contact throughout the program
- Quarterly progress reports

Participant Requirements

Students participating in the Partnership International e.V. high school program should meet the following basic criteria:

- Be between 15 and 18 years of age
- Have a strong academic record with a minimum grade average of "C"
- Be willing to accept placements throughout Germany
- Be prepared to adapt to the lifestyle of a host family
- Accept and follow all program rules

Welcome Orientation

Members of Partnership International e.V. introduce our exchange students to the German way of life, the dos and don'ts, and all the little things that help make the exchange experience a positive one. Four classes of language instruction per day and some fun activities make this one-week orientation a very valuable and useful start to the program. The orientation includes full room and board at a seminar site.

Program Dates and Deadlines

Fall Semester and Academic Year:

Application deadline: April 15, 2012

Program start: August 13, 2012

Welcome orientation: August 13 - 19, 2012

End of Program: January 24, 2013, Departure orientation January

22-24, 2013 (Spring Semester) - June 23, 2013 (Academic Year),

Departure orientation: June 21 - 23, 2013.

Spring Semester:

Application Deadline: September 30, 2012

Program start: February 14, 2013

Welcome orientation: February 14 - 20, 2013

End of program: June 23, 2013, Departure orientation: June 21 - 23,

2013.

Heidi, who lived in Germany, says:

"Sometimes I wonder what on earth I am doing here in Germany, but that feeling only lasts for a few hours at most and then something happens to make me feel so lucky to be here and having this experience. I have to admit, things are a lot more difficult than I thought they would be, but I guess that also means that I'll grow and learn more."