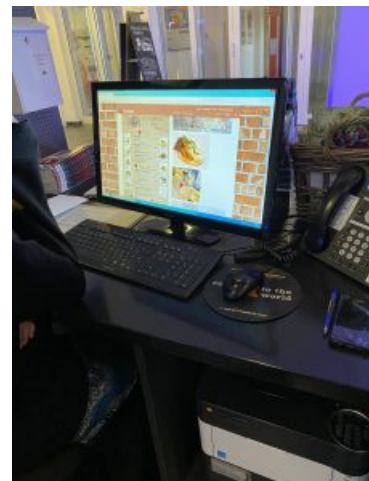


HI Connect Hamburg



My name is Ane-Dorthe, and I work at a hostel in Lillehammer, Norway. Our hostel is a part of Hostelling International. Within Hostelling International, they have created a HI Connect program. The program works as an exchange program where employees or volunteers can travel to different hostels and work for free in exchange for free accommodation. It also gives the opportunity to learn new knowledge and also to appreciate the cultural values.

I was sent to a youth hostel in Hamburg. The name of the hostel is Die Jugnedherberge auf dem Stintfang. I was there for two weeks, and I loved every minute of it. I got to work all over the hostel, and with amazing people. During my two weeks I got to see the most beautiful parts of the city and learn new things. The hostel is large and has over two hundred beds. They have their own booking office, which makes it easier for the reception during busy check in. The kitchen serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The cleaning staff cleans the entire hostel everyday. Janitors make sure everything runs smoothly. Everyone walked around smiling and small talked while walking past one another. This hostel was a tight group considering the amount of people working there. I had no problem joining their staff. I come from a workplace that works like a family, and I jumped right into a new one.



My time there I worked in most places. I worked in the kitchen, reception, booking office, and I even had a day with the janitor. I got to see what kind of breakfast they served, and what was a typical German breakfast. I learned their routines and quickly I managed to do things without asking what I was doing next. Every day they have a breakfast for the staff. There they talked about what was happening that day, and of course some small talk and jokes. While I was in the booking office, I got to learn how they handled their finances, email, booking, and much more. The booking office they have also works for a different hostel that's a little bit outside of the city centre. They also make sure the school groups that stay there have tickets to the attractions in Hamburg. Working in the reception was a bit challenging, mostly because of the old system they had, and a little bit because of the language barrier. Home we have a new system and everything on the computer. In Stintfang they had a very old booking system and allot of paper system for every room. However, I did manage to check out people and prep for incoming groups. I did feel my German get better for every day, I talked more and more each day. Mostly I had no choice because many people couldn't speak English very well. I also wrote their information sheet in Norwegian, so now they have one in German, English, Russian, Spanish, and Norwegian.

I learned their tasks and routine in all the stations I worked at. However, I did not learn allot about their sustainability. What I saw was that they reused paper for notes and reused the bread from breakfast for making croutons. They also washed all the towels in the hostel themselves, but the bedlinen was washed somewhere else. I wish I could have learned more about their sustainability.

Thanks to the HI Connect program I have gotten many new friends and contacts. I have already planned a new trip to Hamburg for every summer. I still talk to a few of the people there, and I miss them all so very much. My plan is to bring as many people I know to Hamburg so they can fall in love with the city as much as I did.

Thank you, Hostelling International!

Ane-Dorthe