



Why is it worthwhile to move into a hall of residence of the Studierendenwerk? What are the challenges of this way of life? And why are there actually tutors here? We answer all of these questions in the first episode of our podcast with Regina Rose – the team leader from the dormitory administration in Tübingen.

Mang: Hi and welcome to the first episode of our My-StuWe podcast. Over the next few weeks, we want to introduce you to various services provided by the Studierendenwerk. Yes, hardly anyone even knows who the Studierendenwerk is. And that's exactly what we want to change in the next few weeks with this podcast. We'll show you what services and offers we as the Studierendenwerk have for you as students. We also want to give you some tips and tricks to make your everyday life at university easier. First of all, let me tell you about myself: I'm Philipp, the press officer of the Studierendenwerk. I also coordinate all the public relations work here. That means I'm responsible for our website, the My-Stuwe app and the social media channels. I'm looking forward to talking to various colleagues over the next few weeks. And today it's all about housing. We have a very dear colleague from the dormitory administration as our guest, Regina Rose. We'll talk to her about what it means to live in a hall of residence. Let's not waste too much time and start right away. Hello, Ms Rose, nice to have you here today. Hand on heart, do you actually remember your student days? Did you live in a hall of residence yourself back then?

Rose: I like to think back to my student days because I studied in different places. I was in Heidelberg, I was in Tübingen and especially in Konstanz, which I liked very much. I didn't live in a hall of residence myself, for this reason: I didn't even know at the time that there was a hall of residence that you could apply for. I lived in a single flat with a view of the lake. It was near Constance at the time. I liked it very much.

Mang: Yes, that's interesting. It was quite similar for me. I was still able to live at home with my family at that time. But unfortunately not everyone is so lucky. Students face a difficult decision when they start their

studies. Commuting to the place of study from home, as I did. Looking for their own flat, these are all possible options. From your point of view, why should students apply for a place in a hall of residence?

Rose: Well, in any case, the rents are extremely cheap. We have no utilities that we have to pay and a warm rent. When I think about my time: I lived alone. Then I met fellow students, but I was basically alone in a single flat. And you don't usually have that here.

Mang: Absolutely, this social component, that you get to know other people, maybe make friends for life. These are all definitely good arguments for this form of housing. On the other hand, there are certainly some disadvantages that cannot be dismissed out of hand. I imagine that privacy is often in short supply in a student hall of residence. Are there perhaps other points that students always report to you that are more of a challenge?

Rose: Definitely in the larger shared flats, the cleaning in the communal kitchen and facilities. There are always complaints where the colleagues on site go and see what they can do and where they can support the students who don't feel well, so that it simply gets better. So these conflicts that arise when several different people meet and somehow find common, very precise lines.

Mang: What kind of people are actually living in our halls of residence? Many first-year students? Internationals? Is it even possible to make a general statement like that?

Rose: I don't know if the question is so easy to answer. No, you can't say that across the board. Everything is

spread across the board here. We have students from the first semester, we have students in the higher semesters, we have doctoral students, we have families, we have students from all over the world. So I can't give a general answer. Yes, we definitely cover a very broad spectrum.

Mang: So all in all, it's a pretty colourful mix. Next, I would like to talk about the everyday life of our residents. And who better to report than the students themselves? We asked a current resident how he feels about life in the hall of residence.

*Michi: I'm Michi and I'm currently studying computer science in my third semester. I've been living in the WHO for quite a while now, and I decided to live there because it's simply a good opportunity to live cheaply in Tübingen. And apart from that, the housing market in Tübingen is also rather modest. Everyday life in the hall of residence is just cool. We are surrounded by students here in the WHO. It's a whole village. It's like a little island where you can hang out with fellow students and friends all the time. You can go to the Kuckuck. What's not so great are the kitchens. They're sometimes so dirty. But what do you expect in shared flats with 16 people, where people come together who hardly know each other?*

Mang: Thank you for this little insight. I think we can all imagine a little better now what it means to live in a residential home. But it certainly depends a bit on which type of accommodation I choose. For example, we have single rooms or shared flats. Perhaps you could summarise for us what kind of accommodation we offer students.

Rose: So our range of halls of residence: mainly the single rooms, furnished and unfurnished. We have flats, we have family flats, we also have flats for couples, a special dormitory for doctoral students in Heuberger-Tor-Weg, a small proportion of barrier-free rooms, for example, upstairs in Fichtenweg 9, in 29 and 31. We have units in the university locations of Rottenburg, Sigmaringen, Albstadt, Reutlingen, Nürtingen and Geislingen.

Mang: Yes, so the Studierendenwerk has 109 housing complexes at eight locations – a total of almost 6,000 places. That is a huge number. It's certainly easy to lose track of them sometimes. Each of these complexes is also very different, and not just in terms of age, I might add! Perhaps you could tell us your personal impressi-

on, which of these halls of residence do you personally like best?

Rose: Clearly the halls of residence in the old town, the small halls of residence: Froschgasse, Haaggasse, Hafengasse. And of course they are also very beautiful. We also have listed houses, for example in Münzgasse. Some of the walkways are slanted and it does have a certain charm. But if I had to, I'd prefer an old town home.

Mang: What about Waldhäuser East? It's also a very special, unique location, I would say, because it's actually already like a kind of village.

Rose: Exactly, because we also call it a student village. There should be about 1,727 places in the halls of residence. If you want to be around a lot of people and like a lot of action, even with the cuckoo, then you apply here. It's also a special place where people can meet and get together. A club – I think there is dancing and also some drinking and the one or other party takes place here. Very popular. And I think it's been around for a very, very long time.

Mang: That sounds exciting. Do students actually have any influence at all on which of these halls of residence they actually end up in? So, when they apply, can they give certain preferences? And how likely is it that they will end up there?

Rose: Of course they can choose where they would like to move. They make it dependent on where they study. The medical students are mostly upstairs with us, but we then also offer the rooms, if you no longer have the particular object or type of accommodation available with us, then we also offer other rooms, there is a certain sphere of influence there already in the application. We have many applications for individual flats, which we unfortunately often have to turn down because we simply have too few.

Mang: Which form of housing is more popular? Do students really want to live together in shared flats? Or is the preferred form of living more the single room?

Rose: With the new building in Reutlingen Pestalozzi-strasse 67, we had 107 new dormitory places and actually had mostly enquiries for the single flats. Maybe it's also because of Corona that they want to live alone and apply for them.

Mang: We will take a closer look at the topic of applications in the next episode. Here we'll tell you what tips you can use to increase your chances of getting one of the coveted hall of residence places. Finally, I would like to talk about the topic of tutors. You probably know them more from your studies, where they organise tutorials on behalf of the professors. Perhaps you could tell us again: What is the task of the tutors in the hall of residence and why do you think they are so important?

Rose: Well, we have quite a few tutors here in the administrative area of Tübingen in Waldhäuser Ost. Because of the number of students who live here, we have four. We have two in Hartmeyerstrasse, we have two in Konrad Adenauer Strasse. Currently one in the French Quarter and in Victor-Renner-Strasse. Not to forget, of course, my tutor in Heuberger-Tor-Weg, who also tries to do a lot of events, even though there is no community room available. The tutors are actually the first points of contact for students who move in. Some tutors also send us a template where they introduce themselves and we then send it out. The tutors are also there if you have questions about the registration office; where do I go? The tutors do consultation hours. But first and foremost, they are there so that the students can get to know each other. The new students, including the international students, meet for cooking evenings and games evenings. They go on excursions to the surrounding area, they go to Ritter Sport. They have also been to the thermal baths. They do all kinds of things and, above all, have a lot of fun.

Mang: It really is an important support in settling in. The students often arrive at their place of study, are complete strangers and simply need some support. What can students do who are perhaps really interested in getting involved and becoming tutors themselves? Can you send an application to the student union?

Rose: So when we have vacancies, we handle it in such a way that we put up a notice in the dormitory or I contact you, Mr Mang, and ask for a social post in the media.

Mang: So follow us diligently on Instagram or Facebook and if there are tutor vacancies, you can find out there. Yes, that brings us to the end. Ms Rose, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us today. I hope we were able to show you out there that there really are many good reasons to choose to live in residence with us. If you have any more questions for us or Ms Rose, please feel free to write to us on social media or

by email. And in the next episode from the housing section, it's all about applying for a job. Thank you for joining us and see you next time Ciao!

*\*Note: This transcription of the podcast was generated with the help of machine software. We apologise for any minor discrepancies or spelling mistakes.*