

Erasmus+ Travel Report

Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien (WU Vienna)



Semester: 2022/2023 Fall

City: Vienna, Austria

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Overview

My Erasmus+ semester was part of the CEMS program. Therefore, I only took the CEMS courses in Vienna throughout the semester. Overall, the semester was very short and quite intense, but it was an incredible time and I learned a lot. Vienna was safe, beautiful, and welcoming, and WU Vienna (Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien) was an amazing university with highly motivated students.

Vienna

Vienna is a beautiful city very close to the Hungarian border, hence moving to the city was relatively easy from Budapest. I was able to move by myself with luggages, by taking a train from Budapest to Vienna, which takes approximately 2.5 hours if there is no delay. The city is lively and I felt very safe even as a non-European person, and the public transportation was well operating. The living cost is generally higher than Budapest, but not too high if you shop and cook most meals yourself. One interesting difference between Budapest and Vienna was that unlike Budapest where Danube is the most city center, it is not the case in Vienna. The city was popular especially during the fall semester because of the tourist attractions and famous Christmas markets, but it was still peaceful and great to walk around. There are a lot of hidden gems you can find while walking around the city!

Accommodation

I lived in student housing in the 8th district, and it was the best decision because the area was safe, central, beautiful, and had a lot of other international students in the area. I would recommend the 7th district (Neubau) or the 8th district (Josefstadt) because they have all the supermarkets (Spar, Hofer (Austrian Aldi), and Billa), so many beautiful cafés, and at a walking distance from the famous attractions (e.g. Rathaus, Parlament, Hofburg, etc.) as well as party areas.

In terms of accommodations, there are many different options such as: WG (shared flat), studio apartment, or student dorms/housing, etc. You could find housing through different websites, and they would generally range from €400-€650, depending on the size, location, and what you are looking for. There are several student housing brands in the city that you could look into, and the most popular ones are: OeAD, STUWO, MILESTONE, Viennabase, the Student Hotel, etc.

Living

Moving to Austria as a non-EU citizen was a bit different from other Hungarian students. I had to get a separate visa as I was going to study in Austria for over 90 days. However, the Austrian embassy in Budapest no longer processes visas, so I was referred to Austrian embassies located in nearby countries for the visa: Bratislava, Slovakia / Ljubljana, Slovenia / or Munich, Germany. Since Bratislava was the closest option, I went there to get my visa for Vienna. If you are in my situation, send them inquiries via emails first, and they will kindly inform you for necessary documents.

Once you move to Vienna, you have to register your residence at each district office within 3 days of moving. You have to make a reservation in advance, so make sure to do it ahead because it can cause inconveniences if you do not reserve it earlier. Fill in the Meldezettel form ahead and prepare necessary documents so that you can get it done quickly at the office. Note that you also have to deregister your residence when you are moving out as well.

For living costs, you could expect around €300-400/month on top of housing costs, but of course it would depend on your lifestyle. Also, you can purchase Vienna transportation tickets via the WienMobil app. If you are under 26 years old, you can purchase the semester ticket for €75 with the app.

WU Vienna Campus

WU Vienna is next to Danube like it is for Corvinus, but it is further away from the most city center areas, so it is less crowded and has more space and connected to a large park, Prater Park and the amusement park there. The campus is beautiful and very modern, it is new and designed by renowned architects. The library building is the most famous building that stands out from afar, yet all the rest of the buildings are also comfortable, modern, and futuristic as well. If you want to use the library, you need to activate it the first time for the library and you can bring your belongings in hand (after putting your original bag in a locker) or in a clear bag, which you can purchase at the WU shop. The online reservation system for the study rooms are great for WU, not just for the library but for all the buildings. Moreover, the campus can be reached from both Messe-Prater station or Krieau station, depending on which building you would like to reach first. The area has modern office buildings nearby, and the park as well, so it is pleasant to walk around.

University Experience

The university experience may vary slightly from other Erasmus students, as I only took specific CEMS courses and social programs as well. There is EBN (Erasmus Buddy Network) for WU Vienna that organizes various events, trips, and parties, but as a CEMS program student, I had no time to attend any events for EBN. For CEMS WU is the largest CEMS cohort and is extremely active, so you will probably not have much time to do activities other than CEMS events. However, if you are a non-CEMS Erasmus student at WU, you can have a lot of fun events throughout the semester with EBN if you would like to.

Due to the CEMS program, my semester started 1 week before other WU students started and ended earlier as well. The actual studying was done between late September and late December. Since the semester was shorter but the curriculum was the same amount, the semester was quite packed and I did not have so much free time throughout the semester. The timetable for the courses was very different from Corvinus. At WU, each course time schedule and the room number could be different every week, so you had to really check every class time in advance to make your own schedule. It is confusing, but could free up certain weeks if you plan ahead. However, it could be a bit challenging because each class is quite long at WU, usually at least 3 hours and up to 5 consecutive hours per class. Also, there are quite a few block seminars (at least if you are a CEMS student) that provide full course credits for taking intensive courses within a few days, so check it out in advance.

In addition, the university puts a large emphasis on group projects (at least for CEMS courses), so I had at least 2 group projects for every course I had. Most group projects are conducted through MS Teams, even more so than Corvinus, and it might create a technical issue of clashing with your MS Teams account at Corvinus. In this case, use a separate system (e.g. using Chrome Incognito mode for WU account and using Teams app for Corvinus account) to separate the MS Teams you use for the two schools. The professors were generally amazing at teaching, and we were able to have many practical experiences throughout the courses. Even though I learned all the courses in English, many students were from Austria or Germany, so most students would use German (or Austrian German) outside the class time. It is a great opportunity for you to practice the language if you would like to learn German.

CEMS Tips

As mentioned earlier, CEMS Club Vienna is very active and has many different teams that you can join as a team member or as a head of the team. I would highly recommend joining the team that you are interested in because you will have chances to connect more deeply with other CEMS students and make more memorable experiences organizing the events. There are so many events throughout the semester, usually at least 2 events each week just for CEMS. The events range from corporate events, parties, sustainability workshops, cultural events, etc., so try to attend the ones that you are actually interested in. If you are new in Austria, I recommend attending events that are at Heurigers because you can experience Austrian culture while drinking Spritzer. The CEMS club system is quite well established due to the size of the cohort, and you can make meaningful connections through some of these events. WU has an excellent alumni network, so I also recommend attending or organizing events with alumni. Of course, it is much faster to adapt at WU if you speak German already (majority of CEMS students here are Austrians and Germans), but still it is quite an international university so you will do well even with only English.

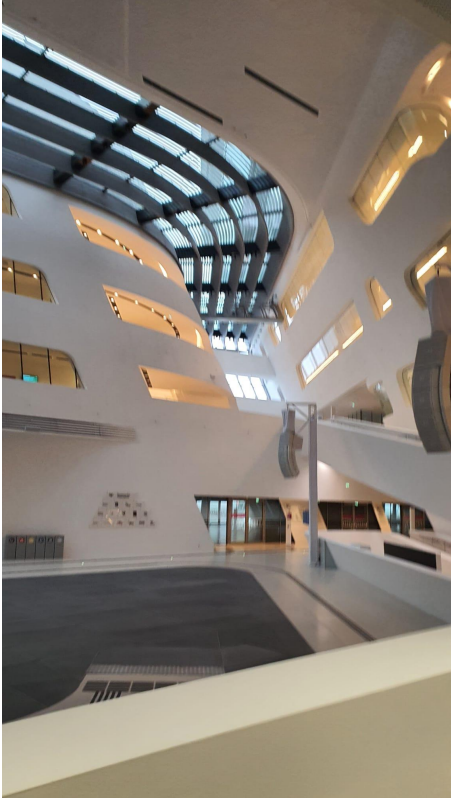
Picture 1-2. WU Campus (during the day)



Picture 3. WU Campus (night)



Picture 4. Inside the library



Picture 5-6. City View (Rathaus)

