Mila Nedelkovich
Contact: nedeljkovic.mila@hotmail.com

# Wien experience

## General info

In 2015 I studied in the winter semester at the Wirtschaftsuniversitat Wien (WU) in Vienna, Austria. WU is the highest ranked and the most prestigious university for economics in Austria. Although my exchange was short, it only lasted for 3 months, the time I spent living in Vienna will remain the best time of my university life!

## Preparations

The preparations for WU were quite straightforward and manageable. Once I got nominated by my home university, the international office from WU contacted me by mail explaining the simple application process. The most important thing for me to arrange was housing. On the website of the university, it is explained that they are partners with the housing agency OeaD. Although I read in many of the previous student reports that students were not satisfied with this agency, I did not have any other option but to apply for an accommodation with them. I lived in a single studio in the dorm Gasgasse, which was located in the 15$^{th}$ district in Vienna, 2 min walk from the metro and train station Westbanhof, which turned out to be the most convenient thing, since all the shops and supermarkets were located in the station, so everything you needed was really close. The dorm was located 10 min walk from Mariahilferstrasse, which is the most famous shopping street in Vienna and 5 metro stops from Stephansplatz, the center of the city. For going out and exploring the city, the location was perfect. The university was a bit far, it took around 30 min to get there with the subway, but as I did not have classes everyday of the week, it was fine in the end. Regarding the disadvantages of booking with OeaD, I had to pay rent for 4 months, although I lived there for only 3 and whenever someone comes to visit you, they need to pay a fee of 15 euros per night, in order to receive an extra bed for them (if you do not announce your guest, you will be fined). Also, from the 950 euros deposit that I paid at the beginning, they took around 150 euros in the end for administrative and cleaning costs. My recommendation: if you can find a private flat to share with someone in Vienna, go for it!

An important thing to mention is the duration of the winter semester in Vienna. Unlike the other universities, it starts in October and finishes in January, however many of the English courses for exchange students finish before Christmas, so just be aware when picking the courses to choose one of those (always the last day in the syllabus of the course is the exam date, since at WU they do not have exam weeks). The registration of the courses opens in August, at a specific date and time, and you have to be really fast, since within seconds the best courses get filled in. So just pick courses that you like and make a couple of combinations for your schedule in advance in order not to have overlaps and then be extremely quick the second the registration opens (WU will send you a link of a video of the whole registration process, so you will be prepared).

Also, during the summer you can apply for an EBN buddy, which is convenient because your buddy usually picks you up from the airport and can show you around the city. Another thing to do during the summer is apply for the Erasmus + Grant if you were chosen from the university.

**Finally: Vienna**

Once I arrived in Vienna, I had a couple of tasks to finish. All of this will also be explained during the Information session at WU.

First and most important is to register as a resident in Vienna within 3 days of your arrival! You have to fill in the form Meldezettel (link here: http://www.wien.gv.at/verwaltung/meldeservice/pdf/meldezettel.pdf) which has to be signed by you and your landlord. You need to bring the form and your passport at any one of these addresses: https://www.wien.gv.at/mba/mba.html.

Second is your transport ticket. In Vienna if you are a student you get a semester ticket, which costs 75 euros, and you can use it for all the public transport within Vienna. I got mine at the Stephansplatz metro station, you will see the office there, after presenting my letter of acceptance from the university (or your WU student card, but you won't have that one on the first day), residence permit which you get after registering with the Meldezettel and passport (to show that you are younger than 26 years).

Regarding my bank account, I did not open one in Austria as I was using my Dutch one. Since within the EU you do not pay extra fees for money transfer and taking out money from the ATM, for me this worked perfectly fine.

For my mobile phone, I got a free sim card from the EBN office after buying the EBN card for 5 euros, which gives you some discounts. After that you can activate a monthly plan for 10 euros from Hoffer for which you get 1000 min and SMS and 3GB internet.

If you stay in an OeaD dorm, you can pick up your key on the day when your booking starts, but be careful of their opening hours. If you book on the 1st of October (as I did), be prepared to stay in the office for around 2 hours to get your key and signed agreement, since everyone arrives then. So I would recommend booking your accommodation at least a few days before that.

**Courses**

*Risk Management and Insurance* (6 ECTS): Around 3 hours class every week. The classes were a bit boring, there was a lot of material, since you only study from the slides, but the test questions were straightforward and it was really easy to get a high grade.

*International Strategic Management I* (6 ECTS): This was an interesting course with a lot of discussions. It lasted for 6 weeks, with 5 hours class every week. You

only cover 5 chapters of the book and have to do a team presentation and paper about an assigned brand. The final exam was very easy.

*Global Branding* (6 ECTS): This was my favorite course. The professor was really funny and made the classes interesting. We had to prepare a team presentation for a brand for each class and in the end there was a final exam, again very easy.

*Monetary Policy in the US and the EU – with a Specal Focus on the Financial Crisis and the Great Recession* (6 ECTS): This was a one week course. It only lasted for 5 straight days, 5 hour classes, in December. I did not like how this course was organized since there was a lot of material given to us but no time at all to study it. Class participation was 20% of the overall grade, but there were no discussions, and the final exam was 50 multiple choice questions, but not all of them were covered in the slides. It was easy in the end, but I did not really learn anything.

**Finances**

The daily life in Vienna is more expensive than in Rotterdam, so be prepared for it. The prices in the supermarkets are much higher than in the NL, so sometimes it is even cheaper to eat out or in the mensa on campus. I spent around 700 euros monthly for food and going out. My rent was 575 euros per month. For my mobile plan I paid 10 euros monthly. You will also need money for travelling, as Vienna is located very centrally and you have a lot of cities to visit around it.

**Daily life**

Vienna was and still is my favorite city. From cultural events, such as museum and gallery visitings and Christmas balls to going out in different sky bars and night clubs every weekend, it has places to visit for everyone. No matter for what you are in the mood for, Vienna has everything to offer. Also, one of my best experiences in Vienna that I would like to share is joining AIESEC at WU. I met some amazing people there, was able to attend two conferences and made life long friends. Also, around Christmas time, Vienna is one of the prettiest cities in the world with all of its decorations and numerous Christmas markets. For years in a row it has been recognized as the best city to live in and I can only agree with that. I will never forget my time spent there and will always try to visit this amazing city as often as I can.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me!