

**EXCHANGE REPORT****Name****Year and term for exchange**

Moa Holmqvist

Winter semester 2022/2023

Exchange university

TU Wien

Degree programme

Master programme spatial planning

Winter semester in Vienna at TU Wien

Before departure

I applied for exchange studies because I wanted to take the opportunity to live and study abroad. Mostly I was looking at universities within Europe and I knew that I wanted to go somewhere where I could study in English. I really enjoy spending time in the nature and therefore I also knew I wanted to go somewhere where nature is close to the city centre. During high school I read German so I also thought about going to Germany but ended up with choosing Vienna in Austria. My expectations were that it would be close to nature and that it would be a European capital city with a lot's of history. Before I started my courses at TU Wien I took a 6etc German language course at Innes language institute in Vienna. The language course was recommended by TU Wien and the credits could be accounted for as an elective course in my Erasmus studies. Since I was only abroad for one semester and because Sweden is part of the EU member states, I did not have to apply for a Visa. However when you arrive in Vienna you will have to register your main residence but all that information will be provided by the university when you arrive.

Upon arrival

I arrived one month before the studies started. I mainly explored Vienna and surrounding areas during this time, but I would really recommend taking the opportunity to travel around a bit more in Europe (there are great connections with train and bus to for example Prag, Ljubljana and Trieste). Since I did only read a semi-intensive German course, two times a week, the first month there was a lot of time to just explore the city but also other parts of Austria such as the cities Graz and Salzburg. ESN TU Wien is organizing a lots of event too, such as welcoming parties, hikes and trips to Budapest and Bratislava.

Financials

The German course costed around 450 euros but were paid for by KTH through the language scholarship that you could apply for. Other than that, the normal Erasmus scholarship financed my trip together with the CSN. The living cost and food prices were pretty much the same as in Sweden but alcohol and especially wine is cheaper. Also, the price for public transport is a bit cheaper. There was one student fee around 50 euros that everyone had to pay in the beginning of the semester to get access to the learning platform where you apply for courses, this will also be explained by TU Wien. To save money I recommend you to make your own lunch, to be honest I did not do it very often because it is very easy to just by a wrap or salad at Billa (Austrian Ica) and it will cost you around 4,50 euros. Also something to have in mind is that Austrians loves cash and many cafés and restaurants don't accept card so always have some cash with you.

Accommodation

I got my student accommodation through OEAD student housing. The only negative thing I have to say about them is that the contract is binding for at least one semester. The university of TU Wien was sending out an email after the acceptance with different websites for accommodations alternatives. I

paid 630 euros for a room with two beds and one bathroom and a shared kitchen in the 6th district with a 10.-15min walk from the school. The room was nice and clean, the kitchen was quiet small but in general I really liked the place.

University and studies

TU Wien is the biggest and oldest technical university in Austria. They offer a range of subject areas within the technical field and a lot of the Erasmus students I met were studying either Architecture, Mechanical engineering, or computer science. I studied spatial planning but very few courses in this faculty were held in English, so I also took courses from other departments. I would say the workload were pretty similar to the workload at KTH.

Courses

As almost every other Erasmus student I have talked to I had to change a bunch of courses that I initial planned to take due to different reasons, such as that they changed the course language to German in some courses that had been given in English the previous year. Most of the courses in the faculty of spatial planning are given in German but some were given in English. I took the following courses at the faculty of spatial planning:

288. 944 Benefit-Cost Analysis

280.948 Everyday Life, Difference and Intersectionality in Urban Studies

280.844 Transformation Processes and Steering Approaches in Metropolitan Regions

280.910 Urban Research, Living Environment and Everyday Life

280.A24 European Spatial Policies and Instruments

Outside of the faculty I read one course at the institute of Visual Computing and Human-Centred Technology:

186.826 Colors

And one course at the institute of Water Quality and Resource Management:

226.048 Ecology

I did my exchange in the second year of my masters and therefore had 30 credits of elective courses that I could use which was great and made it possible for me to choose courses more freely.

City and country

The climate and culture is pretty similar to Swedish climate and culture. What is different is the use of cash and that almost everything (besides a few grocery stores and museums) are closed on Sundays. If you are interested in architecture, art, music and enjoy visiting museums Vienna is great. The social housing history in Vienna is also very interesting for a spatial planner interested in housing regimes and social inequalities. When you are tired of all the beautiful buildings in the city centre it can be nice to try one of the stadtwanderweges that you can find at city of Vienna's webpage. These are easy hiking paths that you can get to by either U-bahn, buss or a city tram. If you want to explore the mountains you can take the ÖBB trains and with a Vorteils card Jugend you get discounts on the train tickets. On a rainy day pick a wienercafe for coffee with a friend or go to a heuriger to eat or have a glass of wine. My experience is that you get better service if you speak German with the staff so you might want to practice a sentence for ordering but it's not necessary, most of the people now English. If you go in the winter semester unfortunately you won't get to much skiing done if you are in to that since the

semester ends in February. If you want to go skiing I would recommend to go in the end of the winter semester.

Leisure and social activities

In the spare time I explored Vienna, since it is a big city there is many districts to visit and you will probably find your favourite. I lived in the 6th district next to Naschmarkt which have a great flea market every Saturday between early morning and 1 pm. There are lots of cafés, bars and restaurants to try out, museums to visits and ESN is hosting a bunch of events that you can go to. These events are often free or at least pretty cheap. They also arrange trips to cities within and outside of Austria, these often cost a bit more. I went to Budapest with ESN which I really enjoyed and it's a good way of getting to know new people. Me and some people I met at university also did our own trips to different cities and mountains in Austria and a daytrip to Bratislava. If your in to bouldering I would recommend blockfabrik at Schlossgasse or Kletterhalle Wien in the 20th districts for rope climbing.

Sustainability

I did travel by Flixbuss from Malmö to Vienna one time and back from Vienna to Malmö one time. The bus tickets costed around 630 skr and then a 2,5 hours fairy between Denmark and Germany is included, when you get a break from the bus can stretch your legs and eat something if you like.