

Dual Degree Partner School: The Vienna University of Economics and Business
(Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, WU)

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Dual Degree Period: 2022 FW & 2023 SS

Accommodation

You will need to find the accommodation on your own. And you would need the housing contract in order to apply for the residence permit while you're still in Taiwan.

Following are some of the student housing provider:

OEAD: it's a non-profit student residence provider and offers accommodation for around 12,000 students annually throughout Austria. The rent is all inclusive, no need to pay for gas or electricity.

OeAD-Guesthouse Molkereistrasse is the closest to WU campus, I've stayed there for a year and would highly recommend it's location. It's in the middle of 2 metro lines: U1&U2 and is close to Train Station: Praterstern, going to the airport is also convenient with the train. There is a supermarket BILLA downstairs and is also close to HOFER, LIDL, PENNY and SPAR. The best thing is it only takes 8 mins to walk to WU D5 building (most of the SIMC courses take place there). The only downside would be there's limited number of single studio, so if you are not fast enough, they are easily booked out which leave you having to share an apartment with other students.

Milestone: All of them are single studio and are also close to WU. The rent is all inclusive, no need to pay for gas or electricity.

The Fizz Vienna: All of them are single studio with double bed. The rent is all inclusive, no need to pay for gas or electricity. One of the locations has gym membership included in the rent.

Die Zimmerei: All of them are single studio and are also close to WU. The rent is all inclusive, no need to pay for gas or electricity.

Studying at the host institution University

- Courses offered, level of courses, exam types, etc.: Most of the courses are project based, which means that there's no exam required.
- Class periods, structure of the academic year (semester system, trimester system, etc.)
There are two semester throughout the year, Fall&Winter and Spring&Summer. Summer break is from July-September and Winter break is from January-February. (Of course you will have Christmas break in between but it's only a couple of days and you might need to go back to school between Christmas and Winter Break)
- Campus life (cost, canteen, working opportunities, etc.)

Canteen: The canteen in WU is called [Mensa](#), and it costs around €6-8 per meal. You could choose to top up your student ID or simply go and pay at the counter, it opens to public too and I always choose the latter. Usually on Wednesdays it's the most packed because it's Schnitzel Wednesday!

- Language proficiency level, language courses offered at the host institution
All the courses are taught in English so speaking fluent English would be sufficient. As for the day-to-day living, speaking some German would make it smoother and easier. Most of the signs are in German only, so being able to speak German would be a plus to your life in Austria. WU offer pre-semester German courses for incoming international students with the fee of the textbook so it's definitely worth signing up!
- SIMC Related:
There are student union called **SIMC CONNECT**, it has lots of departments you could choose from GetTogether&Sports, to NIMS to Entrepreneurship Avenue. Joining one of the departments could help you build a deeper connection with others. **Running Dinner** is one of the best ways to make social connections with fellow SIMCIERS and alumni.

Everyday life and leisure time

- Cost of living
In Austria, the currency is EURO. The cost of living is similar to Taiwan, especially for groceries. Of course if you dine out, it usually costs up to €40-50 per person.
- Culture shock experiences
I don't really have any but I am surprised sometimes how similar Austrian and Taiwanese cultures are. We both take off our shoes before entering the house, the family connections are also tight, and when it comes to job-seeking, the education matters.
- The dos and don'ts in the host country
DO drink the tap water in Austria, it's from the Alps (it's fresh!!!)
DO learn some German, you will survive courses with English but for day-to-day living, speaking German would make your life generally easier in Austria
DO drink white wine instead of red wine in Austria
DO order a glass of drink when you eat out (it's sometimes considered as a unspoken rule, if you would like to save some money, I would recommend Soda Zitronen for non-alcoholic drinks and Spritzer or Radler for alcoholic drinks)
DO round up the amount of money on the receipt at the restaurant (of course, depends on the service)
DO have an open mind
DON'T think you won't be checked your transportation ticket, €100 will be fined if you're not lucky enough.
DON'T forget stores are not open on Sundays (except for restaurants), plan your shopping and groceries days, having nothing to eat on Sunday is not fun.
DON'T underestimate the coldness in Winter, it's freaking cold.

- Weather
 - Spring (March-May) 14°C
 - Summer (June-August) 24°C-35°C
 - Fall (September-Mid November) 14°C
 - Winter (November-February) 0°C

- Leisure opportunities, travel tips, city and surrounding area

Within Vienna:

Wine Hike: There are lots of vineyards within Vienna, with public transportation, you could reach them within 40 minutes and take a nice hike for 30 mins then you could reach the top and have a nice view of the city within the beautiful vineyards.

Opera & Musical Show: I would recommend go to all three of them.

 - Vienna State Opera: for some classic and the most authentic experience)
 - Musikverein: highly recommend going there during the new year concert, it has special programs and it's also one of the tradition to watch through TV among Austrian
 - Musical Shows: every year Vienna has different musical shows that play throughout the whole year, except summer time, I would recommend REBECCA, it's the original from Austria and it has been adapted to Netflix show.

Biking: Rent a public bike and bike through @Prater or the RING area within city center, especially during the nice weather, spring and summer time.

Water sports @Donaube: Lots of activities happen along the Donaube, especially during summer, you could find all kinds of water sports at Donaube.

Healthcare

I would like to share the healthcare system in Austria but I hope no one would need to use it. ÖGK is the public healthcare provider in Austria, and in order to pick up your residence permit, you would need to have the proof of insurance from them.

After getting the insurance, be sure to apply for e-card, which would need you to book another appointment yourself with the headshot picture. They will make one and send it to your mailbox.

In case of emergency, call 144 and with your e-card number ready. If it's severe, they will send the doctor to your place and check on you to see if you need to be transferred to the hospital. For emergency care, you won't be charged with e-card.

If it's just an regular check up, in Austria you will need to book an appointment with home doctor first so they could transfer you to other specialists if needed.

I would recommend using <https://www.docfinder.at/> to find the doctor you need in your nearby area, usually you could filter by which insurance you're insured and could also check the comments. ALWAYS make an appointment, sometimes the appointment could take up to 3 months. (My eye check up appointment literally take 3 months to book.)

In Austria, the doctor appointments are mostly covered by your insurance so you won't be charged but not the medicine. The doctor will give you prescription and you could go to any Apotheke (pharmacy) to pick it up with your e-card.

Working opportunities

With the student residence permit, you are eligible to work maximum 20 hours a week. However your employer will need to send the application to AMS and it sometimes takes up to 2 months. By law, for full time employees, everyone could have 30 days paid time off, as for the part time employees, you will have the paid time off according to the percentage working hours. For me, I'm working 20 hours a week and I have 13 days paid time off once I am onboard.

In October, WU career center will hold one of the biggest job affairs at Messe Prater. WU career center offers lots of free of charge services such as CV screening and mock interviews to help students. I would recommend booking the appointments and really have the experts to help.

Also SIMC program also offers lots of workshops and networking opportunities with top tier companies in Vienna so seek the opportunity and join as many as you can to meet these people. Sometimes the opportunities pop up without expecting it!

I would also recommend joining the Spring Program offered by NIMS. It's a one week internship program, usually take place in Spring. It gives you the chance to really work with the company and get to know the people, and could potentially secure yourself an internship.

Conclusion (best and worst experience; would you study there again?)

10/10 would recommend WU to future IMBA students who wants to apply to Double Degree Program. WU SIMC program not only has the best facilities, it also has a very tight connection among your fellow SIMCIES and with the alumni. Lots of resources and connections, never make your double degree year full. It's by far one of the best decisions I've ever made in my life.

If you have any questions or if you're planning to apply for WU as your double degree school, please feel free to reach out to me: biancabai88@gmail.com. I would be more than happy to help you and share more experiences that I have in Austria.