

Erasmus mobility final report: Medizinische Universität Wien

Erasmus, the opportunity to stay a semester or a year at another university was in my mind since I started my medical studies at UMFT. It offered me the possibility to take courses in my maternal language and to establish contact with possible workplaces in my upcoming work life.

That's why I was incredibly happy, when I finally received the admission to the Medizinische Universität Wien (MUW). After doing all the paperwork and application for the courses in April/May 2018, the first setback came at the end of August 2018, just a few days before my departure to Vienna. An email of the International office of the MUW told me that they do not have enough places for their incoming students, so that I could not be doing my Erasmus in the autumn semester, but only in spring. After several emails and phone calls as well as the help of our local international office in Timisoara they assured me at least two of the four planned subjects and I could do the rest in spring semester. As I wanted to stay for a year from on the beginning, I agreed to this solution.

With plenty of unexpected free time in my timetable I organized a clerkship in internal medicine for my entire first month in Vienna.

Even if this affair at first was really unpleasant it turned out to be one of the best things that could happen to me.

As the semester starts on 1st of October I moved to Vienna by end of semester in a shared apartment, which I organized by myself via the internet.

Arrived in Vienna I was impressed how well organized everything was. We got the schedule of the semester early enough to check out where the classes are being held and how our day to day life would look like, each one of the Erasmus students was assigned to an "Erasmus-buddy" who is basically a local student of the same year who volunteered to help incoming students in the beginning. Furthermore they organized several welcoming events to get to know other Erasmus students. Some events were only for the Erasmus students at MUW, but some were organized for all the Viennese universities. That's how I found myself on the vineyards outside of Vienna on my first weekend, doing a wine hike and ending the evening in a typical Austrian Heurigen.

I started the semester with my internal medicine clerkship which gave me a perfect inside in the daily life and routine of an internal medicine ward and really taught me many practical abilities but also theoretical knowledge conveyed directly by the doctors and professors on the ward.

The subjects at MUW are separated into lectures, seminars and practical internships, which offers a great diversity and a great learning offer. The courses and seminars all take place in the main hospital 'Allgemeines Krankenhaus der Stadt Wien'(AKH) and for the practical internship the students are separated into small groups (5 people) and are dispersed over all hospitals of Vienna. In the practical internship the focus is on obtaining practical abilities, taking place in the routine of the wards, doing visits, assisting in surgeries and examining patients on your own.

The seminars are held in groups of 20 to 30 students and they mainly focus on the mediation of examination techniques and encourage the students to convey knowledge among one another.

In the lecture all the students of the subjects are together, but even if there are more than 150 persons inside, there is always the possibility to ask questions and to get further explanation.

The professors and doctors in the internship were all incredibly polite and respectful. The best thing was that they already treated us like colleagues and all encouraged us to work independently and by that relieved the fear of working directly on the patient during examinations or surgeries.

One of the best things in my point of view was the incredible faculty library, where you can find probably every medical book and borrow them without any charge. So there is no need to purchase any books or materials for the lectures. Also the e-learning platforms offered a whole new way of studying to me, which was nice to get known. In one of my subjects they filmed all the teaching sessions and you could watch them again the entire year. The university also offers free ultrasound courses that you can easily enter with friends (max. 4 people) and learn how to perform ultrasound on each other. The echography course I took was very informative and helped me to improve my practical abilities.

The year ends up with a big exam, called SIP5a. You take all the subjects at one day and you are doing the exam together with all the Austrian students. There is no session as in my sending university, but you have classes until the week before the exam. As it is a very big exam it takes especially in May and June some personal initiative and effort to sit down after an exhausting day of internship and lectures to learn for the exam. Even if there are a lot of rumours and horror stories about the SIP5 under the students, it is possible to take the exam also with a reasonable mark.

Besides the very educative part at the MUW, Vienna as a city offers plenty of possibilities to spend your free time and it was nice to see how the city is changing over the seasons. Some must-sees for me were besides an already mentioned evening in an Heuriger, the incredible amount of Christmas market (you cannot walk 5 minutes without passing a Christmas market in December), the Donauinselfest in June and a visit in one of the famous opera houses (you can already get a ticket for 3€ for every opera or ballet).

Furthermore throughout the year there are a lot of events organized for Erasmus students and all the medical students of Vienna.

All in all it is pretty hard to sum up an entire year of experiences, challenges, obstacles, positive and negative emotions in just one report. But the one thing I can say is, that I recommend the Erasmus programme in general and also the Medizinische Universität Wien to everyone who wants to stay an semester abroad and wants to get to know a new culture and another university.

All I can say is: doing Erasmus was one of the best decisions of my life. The last year offered me so much for my future and outpacing the obstacles helped me to become a stronger personality.

Thank you UMFT for offering me the possibility to make this experience.

Yours sincerely,
Maika Kadelka

