A CEMS and Erasmus Semester at WU in Vienna

Basic data about Austria and Hungary (CIA Factbook)

- GDP/capita (\$PPP,\$): 47 000 vs 25 000
- Population below poverty line: 4.3% vs 14%
- Vienna - Budapest: 240 km
- WU Campus: 2013
- Languages: English and German
- “Motto”: at the crossroads of Europe

I had not spent much time in Vienna before and attending WU, a seemingly developed foreign university and getting to know the western city that is so close to Budapest sounded like the ideal choice, and it has been living up to my expectations.

Vienna has one of the most vibrant and biggest CEMS communities with an average of 80-90 CEMS students. (Huge potential to do something together with them!!) Early on, the Board organized a pre-semester welcome week in order to get to know the newly accepted and foreign CEMS students. My favorite events were the pub crawl competition and the weekend trip to Fertő-tó, where we visited a local Austrian winery.
Not only CEMS but also the university has many international students. Hungarians and Polish are competing to provide the second greatest share of the student body and you can also find a lot of Germans.

Vienna is at the crossroads of Western and Eastern Europe, so many huge international corporations have headquarters located in the city. This has proven quite beneficial for the quality of the classes because most of the times, our topics are supported by the views of guests from the relevant institutions and companies. Eg. at our Global Strategy course (thought by Nell) we have a guest every second week, or within the Competitive Business Environments course, we are solving a live case with L’Oreal, or the Scenarios of Globalization course, we have a guest almost every class, etc.. During the WU block seminar, we visited many companies as well, including the Austrian Post’s Letter Sorting Facility, the Augarten Porcelain factory, the Ottakrieger brewery, or the eco-friendly Siemes “city”.

Professors are surprisingly skillful and interesting, and even those are able to teach you something valuable who are unorganized. I would suggest WU to those that like to work on group projects because most of the courses have so many, that there are only few final exams. The semester start in October, later than most and some courses are organized in blocks, while some are overarching the whole seminar. Blocked courses mean that you have certain subjects thought intensely for a week or 3-4 days and boom, you have your grade.

WU has one of the most state of the art campuses in the world.
It is designed to maximize the meetings between people and to provide an inspiring or relaxing environment where you can do your shopping, banking, workouts, projects or business dinners. After the intense days of studying, there is nothing better than having a Friday beer in one of the ca. 5 restaurants on campus.

I think this made it possible for WU to host the CEMS Career Forum. It is organized every November and people from literally all around the world reunite with their friends, current CEMS students and alumni. During the two-day event, every opportunity is given to get to know companies on skill seminars, mock interviews and at their stands, and also to celebrate with friends from far away exchanges (I unexpectedly met with one of my German friends from my HK exchange 3 years ago) or those visiting from home.
From time to time, when there are no social programs or group meetings, you just pay 10 EUR for a BlaBla ride and in 3 hours, you are sailing with your foreign friends on Lake Balaton or spending a night out in Budapest.

For the afternoons and weekends, Vienna has a lot of historical monuments, green parks, restaurants and pubs and the relatively cheap public transportation takes you anywhere in 25 minutes.
And it’s also great to have spellbinding hiking locations close by (eg. Semmering or Pilestein).

All in all, Vienna is a spellbinding city and CEMS here offers you amazing professional opportunities, unforgettable memories and friends for life in the neighborhood of Hungary.