

Field Report – Micromobility in Vienna

General Impression:

I had a fantastic summer in Vienna studying scooter-sharing systems. For three months I was able to get first-hand experience regarding how scooter companies have provided their services in the Austrian Capital, how the city administration has regulated this new mode of transport, and how the geographic spread of scooters relates to existing public transit, neighborhood density, and natural and cultural features such as the Danube River, pedestrianized streets in the first district, and even Schloß Schönbrunn. I had a very easy time finding housing in Vienna, running basic errands, using the public transit system, and connecting with relevant parties in Vienna involved in the ‘micromobility’ sector, including representatives from scooter companies, other researchers, and municipal staff. A highlight of the summer was being able to present my research findings in August to a representative from city hall who is involved in scooter regulation. I also was contacted by several undergraduate and masters students about my work, and met with several to provide advice on their research projects.

Quality of the Host Institution:

TU, and specifically the Research Center of Transport Planning and Traffic Engineering, was an outstanding host for my summer research. They replied promptly to my initial correspondence before I had secured the fellowship, and were very gracious with their time and space once I arrived. I was provided a desk and computer in their office, along with wifi, a fan, and use of their printer. The lab is full of interesting scholars who bring expertise from a range of disciplines, including engineering, computer science, and urban planning.

Contacts within Host Institution:

My two primary contacts for the summer were [Prof. Guenter Emberger](#) and Graduate Student [Barbara Laa](#). The two of them had done the most similar work to what I studied in Vienna (including a paper on bikesharing), and they are the second and third authors of the research paper we are now submitting to an academic journal. They both provided copious feedback to my drafts over the summer, and directed me to relevant people and datasets for the project.

From the very beginning of my stay in Vienna, my colleagues at TU made an effort to include me in their activities. I was invited to monthly PhD meetings, and given the chance to present my work on multiple occasions. I also travelled with the lab to Seestadt for a tour of that new development. Aside from this, I was included in team lunches and general social activities.

Future Recommendations:

My recommendation to future Marshall Plan students is to begin contacting individuals you hope to speak with or interview for your research as soon as possible leading up to your travel to Austria. The summer is understandably full of vacations, and the more lead-time you can provide to interviewees, the better. I also think it is paramount to make time for German Language training; many people in Vienna speak English, but many do not, and basic logistics of living and working there will be easier if you can gain a level of proficiency with German conversation.