

ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT ÜBER STUDIENERFAHRUNGEN IN BAYERN

[Report on study experiences in Bavaria]

Herkunftsland [county of origin]:	Slovakia
Studium in Bayern [program in Bavaria]:	von [from] 2021 bis [until] 2024
Hochschule in Bayern [university in Bavaria]:	Julius-Maximilians University Würzburg
Studienfach [subject of study]:	China Business and Economics
Abschluss [degree]:	Master

Preparation of the Stay

In preparation for my stay at the Julius-Maximilian University in Würzburg, I had to navigate several administrative procedures. This included obtaining the necessary language certificates, ensuring that my study place was confirmed, and securing suitable accommodation in the city, which was by far the most challenging part. You have to apply for a place at the local dormitory well in advance. There are limited places, and many people don't get the room at all. Finding an affordable place in the city is as challenging as getting the dormitory, perhaps even more so. Be prepared to send tens of emails throughout the span of several weeks and getting no replies or only rejections. If you get a positive reply, don't get too excited because you will still have to pass the interview set up by your future housemates. I wish somebody had told me about the competitive nature of "room-hunting" beforehand. Luckily, I was able to get a place at the dormitory last minute, only few days before the start of the semester. But not everyone gets this lucky. I met a girl during the introduction week who still hadn't found a place to live in so she was staying at an Airbnb, which was quite expensive as you can imagine.

Travel and Arrival at the place of study

The most convenient and fastest mean of transport to get to Würzburg is train. Even though Deutsche Bahn doesn't have the best reputation, I have encountered very little setback during my studies. However, it is necessary to buy the tickets well in advance, otherwise you will end up paying ridiculous price. Upon my arrival in Würzburg, I encountered some initial challenges. Despite being informed by the university that my student card was ready, I found that it was not prepared, which temporarily hindered my access to various university services as well as public transportation. When I arrived at the dormitory nobody was present at the office as I was told it would be. Furthermore, the contact sheet provided by the university had an incorrect contact number, making it difficult to seek immediate assistance in resolving these issues. Finally, I met some kind people who also lived in the dormitory and my fellow "dorm-mates" gave me the correct phone number. Even though the situation was resolved after approximately one hour of waiting, it left a bad taste in my mouth and poor image about the local Studentenwerk who provided me with the incorrect information.

Stay at the Place of Study

Despite these initial hiccups, I found that public transportation in Würzburg was efficient and reliable, at least during the weekdays. If you live outside the city centre, like I did, you will have trouble getting back from the city after a weekend night out as there is only one bus per hour and after a certain time it stops running altogether. The cost of living in the area was manageable in the beginning, but it increased overtime and never went back to the original price. My dorm was a new building with spacious rooms and big windows, so it was pricier than other dorm alternatives. The facilities of this particular dorm included gym, common room (which you had to book and pay for in advance), laundry room, garage and something of a volleyball field. Grocery stores, pharmacy and a big library are only a walking distance away.

Keep in mind that during the exam period, you probably won't be able to get a spot at the library unless you come early in the morning or book a study room. Language Centre and Sports Centre were also about 15 and 20 minutes walking distance away, respectively. My dorm was located at the Hubland campus, which is a convenient location when you have classes in that area. However, if your department is located in the city, I would recommend you to find a place closer to the city centre. There are several canteens scattered around the city. The food is good and prices affordable if you have your student card with you. The only thing that I found quite disappointing was, that there was only one canteen that provided dinner meals, but even that was only until 5pm.

Study at the University in Bavaria

The University of Würzburg provided a rich academic environment. The offered courses were diverse and of high quality, some of them were conducted in English and some in German. Exams vary from course to course as well. You have either an oral exam, written exam, final group project or a term paper. Exam period is a challenging time. All your exams are crammed into a period of about two weeks, and you have no say in the date and time of your exams, so it can happen that three exams on each subsequent day. That's why you need to prepare diligently throughout the semester. If you fail the exam, your next chance is at the beginning of the following semester.

I had the opportunity to participate in various conferences and seminars offered by my department, but also the university which undoubtedly enriched my academic journey. The university's libraries were well-equipped and played a crucial role in supporting my research and studies, however, as I mentioned previously, it was quite challenging to find a spot there during the exam period.

Involvement at the Department

My involvement with the academic department was very fruitful. I benefited from a supportive supervisory relationship and had the chance to collaborate on research projects. This experience allowed me to develop valuable skills, work in a team of like-minded people and gain insights into a different academic world. The aforementioned research projects varied from minor group presentations to term papers and more extensive policy suggestions and analysis. The members of the department

were always ready to advise me and provide me with guidance whenever I had questions. Despite their busy schedules, they were always willing to help.

Further Professional Qualification

My time at the University of Würzburg allowed me to refine my academic focus and engage in methodological training. Thanks to classes that I attended I gained insight into various branches of business and economics as well as management, entrepreneurship, and marketing. Apart from that there is an opportunity to participate in various language classes such as Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Swedish as well as German, no matter what level you are at. I was also able to contribute to research projects that resulted in valuable findings. This hands-on experience greatly enhanced my professional development and gave me a glimpse into what a professional setting could possibly look like in the future.

Assessment of the Results and Future Career

The results of my study visit in Bavaria have been highly beneficial. I have acquired a deeper understanding of my field of study, developed research skills, and expanded my academic network. The rigorous grading process and a rather strict attitude at this university helped me challenge myself and improve my work ethic. These experiences will undoubtedly have a positive impact on my future career and academic pursuits. Even though I am still undecided whether I will continue in my studies or opt for a career instead, it is safe to say that my experience in Germany has widened my horizon and helped me see the multitude of options that lie ahead of me.

Plans or Activities After the BAYHOST Funding

Following the conclusion of the BAYHOST funding, I might continue my academic journey, building on the knowledge and skills I acquired during my stay in Würzburg; perhaps pursue further research in my field and explore opportunities for collaboration and publication. Additionally, I hope to continue engaging with the academic community, sharing my experiences, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge in my area of expertise. However, a start of my professional career is not out of the question. I hope I could become a valuable member of the business and economy field with focus on China and possibly the Far East in general. My studies have prepared me well for China-related topics and research questions and I am confident I will be able to tackle all the future challenges that come with it.