

# Praktikumsbericht

Auslandspraktikum

## Angaben zur Person und zum Praktikum der/des Studierenden

Studienfach: Economics

Bachelor/Master/Staatsexamen: Master

Praktikumszeitraum: 7. Februar 2025 bis 6. Juni 2025

Praktikumsort: Paris, Frankreich

Praktikumsinstitution: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

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## **Internship at the OECD – Centre for Tax Policy and Administration**

From February 2025 to June 2025, I completed an internship at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris. I was placed in the Centre for Tax Policy and Administration, more specifically within the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. The Global Forum brings together over 160 jurisdictions and focuses on the implementation of global standards on tax transparency. As a Master's student in Economics at LMU Munich, the internship offered me an opportunity to gain insights into how international tax cooperation works in practice and to engage with real-world policy issues that I had previously only encountered in theory.

### **Planning and Preparation**

#### ***Application Process***

I applied through the OECD's online internship platform, which is open year-round and accepts applications from students from a range of academic disciplines. The application was relatively straightforward, requiring a CV and a motivation letter. However, the timeline was long, and I did not hear back for several months. It is important to be patient as many interns I spoke to had experienced a similar waiting time. Once shortlisted, I was asked to complete a short written assessment and participate in a panel interview. My interviewers were kind and professional, and the questions focused on my academic background, interest in international tax policy, and understanding of the OECD's work. I also had to provide references, and these were contacted later in the process. I believe what helped my application stand out was my participation in an advanced seminar on tax policy at LMU, which gave me a strong foundation in the technical language and concepts relevant to the OECD's tax transparency work.

Before my interview, I reviewed OECD publications and recent reports from the Centre for Tax Policy, particularly from the Global Forum. This helped me understand the key priorities and language used in the institution's work.

#### ***Accommodation***

Finding a place to live in Paris proved to be one of the more challenging aspects. I started my search on websites like SeLoger and Jinka and I eventually secured an apartment through a real estate agency. While the agency fees were relatively high (around EUR 300, one-time payment) it was worth it in my case since I was looking for an apartment at short notice and couldn't visit apartments in person as I was abroad. The agency handled all the paperwork and spoke English, which helped.

However, they also required a guarantor through Garantme, housing insurance, and setting up your own electricity contract. Since I was already planning to stay in Paris long-term, it was worth the effort but I wouldn't recommend going through all of this for just a short stay. Another helpful resource is the OECD interns' WhatsApp group, where many outgoing interns share apartment listings or look for roommates. There are also private student residences like UXCO in Boulogne, where a friend of mine stayed.

I chose to live in central Paris rather than near the Boulogne office where I worked. The slightly longer commute was outweighed by the livelier atmosphere and access to cafés, bars, and shops. The OECD also has an office in Paris, in La Muette.

### ***Language Course***

Since I had already studied French before the internship, I did not take a language course. The OECD does not offer language classes for interns, though a few of my colleagues found courses elsewhere in Paris. Day-to-day work at the OECD is usually in English, and I never had to use French in a professional context. That said, being able to communicate in French definitely made daily life in Paris easier – from administrative tasks like setting up a bank account to more casual interactions at cafés or events.

### **Internship Tasks and Structure**

I worked in two separate but related teams: the Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) team and the Group on Risk. This gave me a broad view of the Global Forum's activities and a chance to work on two emerging areas of tax transparency. The CARF initiative aims to develop a framework for the automatic exchange of information on crypto-asset transactions across jurisdictions, while the Group on Risk focuses on identifying and mitigating potential threats to the integrity of global transparency standards.

My responsibilities included researching the regulatory landscape of crypto-asset markets in different countries, compiling internal background notes, and reviewing documents for upcoming meetings with delegates. I also worked on mapping out potential loopholes in reporting systems and analyzing how certain crypto-assets could be used to obscure beneficial ownership or circumvent financial transparency rules.

A typical day started around 9:30 a.m. and ended at 6:00 p.m., with an hour for lunch. I had a fair amount of autonomy in managing my tasks. Some days were quiet and focused on research, while others were packed with internal meetings and document preparation. Every few months, we held

plenary meetings with jurisdictional delegates. These were formal and structured, with representatives from different jurisdictions discussing the implementation of standards. Watching those discussions unfold was one of the highlights of the internship. It made me appreciate the diplomatic complexity of international coordination – something that is easy to underestimate from the outside.

Though the workload was balanced, there were weeks when deadlines required longer hours. I was given responsibility for certain deliverables, and it was clear that interns were treated as members of the team. I really valued that trust, and it made me more confident in my own abilities.

I worked closely with a small, highly collaborative team made up of policy analysts and legal experts. Everyone was incredibly approachable and supportive, and I felt comfortable asking questions or sharing ideas in meetings. The teams were diverse not just in terms of nationality but also in professional background, which created a dynamic work environment. The team leads made an effort to involve interns in substantive work rather than just administrative tasks, and I appreciated the openness with which they shared insights into their own career paths and experiences at the OECD. My supervisors also made a point of introducing me to colleagues from other teams and to delegates during meetings or events, which helped me expand my understanding of the broader work happening across the OECD and build connections beyond my immediate unit.

### **Social Life and Networking**

One of the best parts of the internship was the OECD's large and active intern community. With dozens of interns from around the world, there was always someone to grab coffee with or explore Paris on the weekend. The intern board regularly organized social events, including after-work drinks, coffee breaks, and brown bag lunches with senior OECD staff. These events were great not only for making friends but also for learning about the variety of work happening across the organization. The other interns are very open to meeting new people as most of the interns are new to the city and happy making friends.

I also attended a few events organized by internal groups, such as the Women's Association and the LGBTQ+ Network. In addition, some embassies – like the Austrian one in my case – host receptions for their nationals working at the OECD. These offered an interesting look at the more diplomatic side of international work.

### **Daily Life and Leisure**

Having grown up in Vienna and studied in Munich, moving to Paris offered an interesting point of comparison. Paris felt much faster-paced and more spontaneous. The city is larger, louder, and more

intense in many ways but also more diverse and vibrant – there is always something happening, and people take their time to enjoy it.

Outside of work, Paris offered more than I could ever fully explore. I quickly settled into a routine of meeting friends after work – sometimes for bouldering, for dinner or to share a bottle of wine at the Seine or in a café. On weekends, I visited different neighborhoods, attended art exhibitions, or took day trips to nearby towns like Versailles or Fontainebleau.

Public transportation is efficient (but always full) and the velib city bikes made commuting relatively easy as well. I also appreciated the option to work from home twice a week, which gave me flexibility.

Paris offers countless leisure opportunities, from cultural events to dining and nightlife, which made my time outside of work enjoyable and enriching.

### **Costs and Financing**

The internship is unpaid in the traditional sense, but the OECD provides a EUR 1000 monthly stipend to help with living costs. That amount covered my rent, and the Erasmus+ grant I received as well as my savings helped with food, transport, and other daily expenses. Paris is not cheap, but it is manageable with budgeting. It might be worth noting that lunch and coffee at the OECD are not subsidised and some colleagues brought their own lunch or bought food outside, which can add up quickly.

### **Internship and Academic Relevance**

The connection between my studies and the internship was strong. Theoretical concepts from my coursework, especially regarding tax avoidance and international economic cooperation, came alive during the internship. I had read about automatic exchange of information (AEOI) and tax transparency before, but participating in the discussions and seeing the real-world implementation gave me a much clearer understanding. More importantly, the internship changed how I think about policy work. At university, we often frame problems in terms of efficiency and optimal outcomes. At the OECD, I learned that policymaking is as much about compromise and negotiation as it is about theory. The experience also helped me clarify my professional goals: I want to continue working on tax policy in international organizations and further explore the regulation of crypto-assets from a policy perspective, possibly even in relation to anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.

## Conclusion

The OECD internship was without a doubt one of the most valuable experiences of my academic career so far. I not only learned a great deal about international tax policy, but also gained practical insight into how global standards are developed, negotiated, and implemented. I built friendships, expanded my professional network, and clarified my own career interests.

For future applicants, I recommend tailoring your motivation letter specifically to two or three directorates or units – avoid generic applications. Be patient during the process, and clearly indicate availability for at least six months (four months or less is generally insufficient).

The OECD internship offers valuable experience for those interested in international policy, economics, or tax law. I am grateful to have taken part and encourage other students pursuing careers in these fields to apply.

Best of luck to anyone applying! It is a great opportunity, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.