

Vienna Visit - July 2015

Vienna is the capital city of Austria with a population of approx. 1.73 million. The city has immigrants from bordering countries and is now seeing influx of migrants due to various reasons.

I felt Vienna, despite being the capital city of Austria lacked the availability of services it provided generally across to the people of Vienna. It seemed that there were not many open access centres or public domains for example like libraries or adult and children centres where people can go to acquire computer skills to become computer literate. There were not many courses available where people can actually go to learn as to how to use a computer, which in actual facts means if a person doesn't have ICT skills then they will find it difficult to use the internet. The knock on effect of this, is in fact that you would have many people especially adults who will be lacking this skill and be even more apprehensive of acquiring ICT as it is not readily available.

The other thing that was brought to my attention was that many primary schools do not actually teach ICT skills as it is not part of their curriculum. However it is taught in secondary schools at a basic level and now some primary schools are beginning to implement this in their curriculum. This seemed rather contradictory to me as in Vienna Wi-Fi was available everywhere in all areas. You could connect everywhere, in shops, restaurants and supermarkets. The availability and connection was excellent but yet there were many people who actually were unable to use this service as they lacked ICT skills and were not internet equipped and hence would be unable to connect to the internet, Wifi which is really a simple process.

However, there are some international companies, who as part of their social commitment have set up institutes which allow children and adults to learn and acquire some computer and internet skills. These centres have open access and are equipped with the latest technology and resources and also provide help to those who wish to use the service to progress. These centres also provide a variety of

courses and contact local schools independently which allows students to come to the centre and learn what they have to offer. However these provisions by far are not enough or have sufficient resources to meet the needs of the people of Vienna.

There is also the lack of interest by the government in providing these courses, resources and institutes and for not embedding ICT into the curriculum for children at an earlier age, I feel has created a deficiency in the knowledge and ICT skills in people especially in adults and children.

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