

2016-2017

Report 1

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Media & Culture

destination city & country	Brno, Czech Republic
name university abroad	Masaryk University
start date	16 / 02 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 05 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The process of applying went smoothly. Both UU and Masaryk University (MU) provide a lot of information and respond to questions quickly. The MU has instruction videos in English and the coordinator is very helpful and friendly.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I did not use a lot of support from the UU, but I did not encounter any problems when I consulted them about practical questions.
academic preparation	I did not do any specific academic preparation before leaving.
language preparation	I also did not do any language preparation, since all my courses were in English.
finances	Brno is a very cheap destination, so I did not use a lot of savings. I financed everything with my student loans (stufi), the Erasmus fund, the public transport refund (ov-studenten reisvergoeding) and a small stipend from my parents. For instance, the rent in the dormitory is only 130 euros a month, 0,5 liter beer is around 1 euro and for 3 months of public transport in Brno you only pay 25 euros. So compared to Utrecht the lifestyle is a lot cheaper.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	The courses I took were really interesting, although the general level is definitely lower than at UU. They offer many courses in English so there are probably enough courses to choose from. All of them have different credits and different timetables so it can be a puzzle to make a schedule with enough credits and without overlapping courses. However if you take some time to do this there will not be a problem. Teachers were nice

and spoke good English. They expect less of you preparation-wise: there are not really critical discussions in the classrooms and they do not give a lot of homework. The exam period is a little busier but I found it still relaxed compared to UU.

academic quality of education activities

As told above, the academic quality is lower. The courses had interesting content/literature however a lot less is expected from the student. For instance, for a course on master level I only had to write a 2000 word essay as a final paper. At the UU I sometimes for bachelor courses write 4000/5000 word papers.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The coordinator is really friendly and kind, and always willing to help you. I did not need a lot of support since I did not encounter many problems. When I did however Radka (the coordinator) responded to my questions quickly by email. She is also in her office for a few hours everyday, so for urgent questions you can drop by.

transfer of credits

I have not transferred my credits yet but I expect this to go smoothly since the support from MU has been quick and easy.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The orientation programme was great! It was a full week of 5 days of introduction. This meant many different activities, from practical introductions and lectures to a lot of social activities. There was a city tour to discover the nicest pubs and cafés, a city game, dinners and parties next to a lot of guidance with practical stuff. I truly enjoyed this week since I met a lot of new people, because with every activity you were placed in a different group. The 'fun' part of the introweek is not mandatory, however I would recommend everybody to participate because this makes it really easy to meet new people.

accommodation

There are three dormitories to choose from: Vinarska, Komarov and Kounicova. You can choose in which one of these dormitories you want to live. You can also search for private accommodation in a flat which will be more expensive but still cheaper than living in Utrecht. In 2 of the dormitories you will have a roommate (meaning, sharing a bedroom with somebody). I truly enjoyed this experience since my roommate was from Brazil and we became best friends over the semester. In Komarov you can have a single room however this dorm is the furthest from the city centre. I lived in Kounicova which is 20 min walking to my faculty and 25 to the city centre. Also a tram stops right in front of the dorm, taking you in 10 min. If you have more questions about which dorm would suit you best please send me an email!

leisure & culture

The city is really great: around the same size as Utrecht and many students since there are 3 universities. A lot of international students as well. The ISC (International Student Club) organizes many activities so you never have to be bored. I for instance every Sunday joined the hiking club where we went on a 15 km hike in nature around Brno (with pub breaks). I also went weekly to the pubquiz, the parties and sometimes to the weekly board game night (all organized by ISC). Because there are so many students the city is full of bars, restaurants etc. The city is not yet discovered by tourists which I loved: it is not overcrowded and prices are very friendly. It is 2,5 hours to Prague, 2 hours to Vienna and 2 to Bratislava so I took many weekend and daytrips with the cheap buscompany Regiojet (major tip). Also the Alps, Budapest and Krakov are very close. So if you like to travel in the weekends and see more of central Europe Brno is the place to be for you.

suggestions/tips

I do not have any specific tips or advices. Generally I would say this Erasmus was one of the best experiences of my life so I highly recommend others to go. Also I would recommend you to participate in many activities and keep an open mind to these activities and the different kinds of people you will meet. You will make friendships that will last forever and have a lot of fun, even though saying goodbye will be very hard.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

I would highly recommend this destination to others. Brno is not very known (I also did not know it before going there) even though it is the second city of the Czech Republic after Prague. There are many international students, the student club is very active, you live in a dormitory full of other international students, living and eating/drinking out are extremely cheap, you escape the tourist crowds, many weekend trips within reach etc. etc. Brno itself is also a really modern city with all the conveniences of "Western European life" since many people seem to be prejudiced about the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic is also full of cute villages (many with UNESCO heritage) and has really good nature for hiking. The weather is also good: from April on it was mostly 20/25 degrees and sunny. The least appealing thing was the academic quality which I found higher at UU. However, the lower academic quality gives you plenty of time to enjoy Erasmus life with little worries and stress.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Nop! If you have more questions or are considering Brno as a destination, please send me an email and I can answer your questions :)