



2023-2024

Report 1

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Philosophy, Politics and Economics

destination city & country	Vienna, Austria
how did you travel to your destination?	Nighttrain
name university abroad	Central European University
start date	04 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was quite clear. I got an email with the steps I had to follow. I was required to write another motivation letter and submit my CV and grades so far.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The organizers were really supportive and always encouraged to ask questions and send emails when in doubt about something. They responded quickly and were always kind.

academic preparation

I didn't do any academic preparation and I think that coming from UU this also isn't necessary.

language preparation

All courses are given in English at CEU and I had all my courses in English at UU so far, so I didn't have to do any language preparation.

finances

In the months before I went on exchange, I borrowed extra money from DUO so I could pay deposits and a slightly higher rent on my room in Vienna. I subletted my room in Utrecht. Together with the Erasmus grant this was enough to pay my bills.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)



Because CEU is organized according to the American system, there are no real study programs. All students simply apply for courses they think seem interesting. In my case, this meant total chaos. A lot of the courses offered last year were not available this year and in there was only one economics course for the entire uni for example. So I had to take some Master courses to be able to get enough ECTS. A lot of people complained about this and the uni promised to organize course applications better next year, so who knows maybe it will be better for the next generation.

academic quality of education activities

The courses themselves were generally of very good quality. I went on an excursion with my philosophy class for example.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

CEU has a lot of different staff members for different specific issues and it was sometimes a bit confusing to know what person to go to, but everyone is super helpful and always point me to the right person.

transfer of credits

Because of the American system you have to take a lot of courses. Additionally, CEU works with a trimester system, so you need to stuff a semester worth of credits into a trimester. I took 6 courses this semester (together 26.5ECTS) and it was a bit much to be honest. I was very glad that I had completed a few modules at UU of 2.5 ECTS each, so I didn't have to take a 7th one to get to 30 ECTS. But after all the chaos from the course application from the beginning was sorted, I planned my weeks very well and still had time to do other stuff.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

At the start, there is an entire week devoted to students getting to know the university staff, system and each other. Just like everything at CEU it was a bit chaotic, but a lot of fun.

accommodation

I found my place through CoLivi and found it to be a very good accommodation. I lived in an apartment with three other housemates. Friends of mine lived in student dormitories like Stuwo and were also satisfied. Because the public transportation system in Vienna is really good, it generally takes 30 minutes to get anywhere, no matter how far it is. I would therefore recommend getting a place close to the city centre if you have the chance. My place was 25 minutes from uni in not the best neighbourhood because I thought it would be a lot closer to university, but in the end I would have preferred a place in the city centre I think.

leisure & culture

Vienna is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen and the culture is very rich. I visited a lot of museums and there is so much to see and experience. Vienna will not disappoint you in this respect. The city has a lot of amazing swimming spots for example.

suggestions/tips

As I said before, the public transport system is great so try to find a place in one of the better districts near the city centre. It'll only take 5-10 min longer to get to uni and I think it's worth it.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I would recommend it I think. But mostly because the city is amazing and it is the only english speakign university in Vienna. It made an exceptionally chaotic impression on me and I was super busy all the time, but



I'm sure every uni has its problems and it wasn't so bad. So yes I think I would recommend it. Just know what you sign up for and be prepared. Then it cannot dissappoint you in that way and you know what's coming.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Something I didn't realize when going to Vienna is that starting mid November it gets dark outside very early. Mid december the sun starts setting at 3.30pm. There were days were I only saw daylight for the 25 minutes it took me to get to school because I was busy studying all day. So either take vitamins or don't stress as much about deadlines (which I'm sure I sometimes did a bit too much) and then you'll be fine.

2022-2023

Report 1

faculty/college	Philosophy
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Philosophy, Politics and Economics

destination city & country	Vienna, Austria
how did you travel to your destination?	Nighttrain
name university abroad	Central European University
start date	19 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	16 / 12 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process	The applications process was quite clear and didn't require that much work.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The organizers were quite supportive, answered questions comprehensively, responded quickly and as such left a positive impression on me.
academic preparation	I didn't do any academic preparation, but it all worked out fine.
language preparation	Since all courses were given in English, I didn't prepare that much. I did do some Duolingo so I would also be able to speak with people outside of my university.
finances	



The half year before I went on exchange, I borrowed some extra from DUO, which was really useful because I apparently had to pay a lot of deposits to my dormitory. Other than that, and in combination with the Erasmus+ grant, I didn't really need it, but it was nice to not have to stress about it.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The courses I chose were really interesting, and it was also very nice to have teachers who had personal experience with the subject. For example, I did courses on East-Europe, China and the EU, and I got teachers who had lived and worked in those places, which was great. There weren't many problems, and if there were problems, I could always ask my fellow students and teachers for help.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of my university was as high as that of Utrecht University, of which I am very glad.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

After almost 6 months, I still don't know who I should ask for a specific problem or question, but the people are very friendly and always help me in finding the right person. It's not the most efficient system but it works.

transfer of credits

I didn't have any problems with my abroad university, and Utrecht is still checking it.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

At the start, there were several week in which the students got to know the university, their fellow students and their fellow exchange students. This was really well done, and I managed to learn a lot of people and studentclubs.

accommodation

I lived in a student dormitory quite far from both the campus and the dormitories from my fellow students, which made making friends a bit harder. However, I did make some good friends in my dormitory with whom I started bouldering weekly.

leisure & culture

Vienna has a lot of culture and I visited a lot of theater, opera and museums. There were also a lot of studentclubs at my university, with which I went hiking in the mountains and bouldering.

suggestions/tips

Student clubs are a really good way to get to know people, so you should try to join as many as possible. You can always later leave them. It is also smart to live relatively close to the university and the city centre, since this makes it easier to meet your fellow students without a lot of planning.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, most certainly. The university taught at a very high level, the people, both teachers, students and citizens, were friendly, the city was beautiful, safe and welcomig... What more do you need?

do you have any additional advice or comments?



If you want to go to Vienna, try to go in the second semester. The weather is great during spring, summer and autumn, but there is no sun in the winter. Sometimes there's snow, there are really cute christmas markets and there is a skating rink of two floors in the city centre, but I would advice against seeing the suns once every three weeks. I also think it's more fun to go from grey and depressing weather to a more sunny type, so I would advice going in the second semester.

2018-2019

This student experience was written when Central European University was still located in Budapest.

faculty/college	History
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Research Master History

destination city & country	Budapest, Hungary
name university abroad	Central European University (CEU)
start date	01 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	21 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The preparation for the exchange started rather early as the first of December 2017 was already the deadline for the application. Therefore you have to start to think about your destination as soon as possible. At first I wasn't completely sure about my destination, but the choice was an easy one when I came across CEU at the UU website of possible destinations. The application process takes a lot of time and I only got news of my nomination mid February. Even though communication with both UU and CEU was smooth, but still it is a lot of paperwork. Also, take into account that the not every single course of choice might be available. It depends on the department, but most course catalogues are only completed and put on the website a few weeks before the start of the semester. The course catalogues of previous years are available, though.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

UU provided multiple opportunities for counselling and support. I got to speak to some professors about my choice for CEU which assured me that I made the right choice.

academic preparation

I did not do any specific preparations for my time at CEU. Make sure you have finished possible assignments or deadlines before starting your exchange, but other than that, it is also important to relax a bit before starting at a new university in a new country.

language preparation



The language of instruction at CEU is English as it is an American university. Even though they are strict with language requirements (C-level) during the application process, the university is a very diverse and international one. So don't worry about accents etcetera. Luckily, I didn't need to take extra language courses as my English level was already C2. For Dutch students this means that you should submit a official language test like TOEFL or IELTS. However, if your current study programme is already in English or you have completed a Bachelor's programme in English, you are exempted from this. In my case, a document signed by my programme coordinator was enough.

finances

When going abroad it is always smart to make a financial plan. Compared to the Netherlands, Hungary is a cheap place. Everything is cheaper than the Netherlands, but bare in mind that you are going to visit a new place so you will need some money for leisure activities. CEU offers financial aid packages, but these are not available for exchange students. The CEU website provides more information about monthly expenses and housing costs etc.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme of CEU history department is focussed on Central and Eastern Europe. There is, however, a broad variety of courses available. I chose courses on sound studies, media and communism, social movements, and visual culture. You have to do 50% of the courses within your department, so there is a lot of room to choose courses from other departments or one of the university wide courses.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of CEU is generally quite similar to UU. Compared to UU it might be easier to get higher grades, but this does not mean that the quality is lower. Generally I have perceived the available courses as being more inspiring. There are also more opportunities to develop skills beyond the standard 'paper writing' examinations. There are various kinds of extra programme's that you can participate in. It is possible to make of podcasts and documentaries or to join the visual studies track.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Counselling and support from the receiving university is great. Communication with its students is transparant and there are many feedback possibilities. There are multiple contactpersons for exchange students and all your questions are quickly answered. Because it is such a international university, not only the administrative stuff is well organised and transparant, there is also a lot of other suport available. For example, medical support is free and available on campus, but also other forms of personal guidance are available.

transfer of credits

CEU does not work with ECTS which might seem complicated at first. However, it is actually quite simple, one CEU credit is worth 2 ECTS. The fact that CEU works with a trimester system -which means that you will not manage to get 30 ECTS which is the standard workload for a semester- is more inconvenient. I took courses worth 12 CEU credits as this was the recommended workload. The transfer to ECTS and the transfer to UU ECTS credits was, however, an easy going process. Although the teachers took more than a few weeks to grade my work, when the grades were submitted it took just a week or so before I got an official transcript by mail.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme



CEU has a very convenient introduction time. The first week of the semester is a welcome and orientational period with a variety of guided tours and introductions to the university, extracurricular activities, and all kinds of committees and clubs ranging from music, games and theater to sustainability and debate clubs. The second week is called zero week. During this week all teachers give presentations on the courses they will offer. From this moment on you can choose the courses you really like and drop the ones you thought were interesting but turned out to be different than you expected. This is a great way to get to know the university, make the right decisions concerning your courses and start the semester in a relaxed and confident way.

accommodation

CEU offers accommodation to its students on a special residence center located 20/30 minutes from the university. This is however, not always available for exchange students. Luckily, accommodation in Budapest is cheap. An apartment with two separated bedrooms located in the city center should not cost you more than €300/400 a person. However, if you are willing to live in a neighborhood further away from the city center and the university the costs will be much lower. CEU is located in the middle of the city center so I would recommend staying in the city center if your budget permits. Finding this kind of accommodation is not that hard. There are many Facebook groups in which separate rooms, but mostly shared apartments are being offered. Especially during the summer there are many places available, especially for international students.

leisure & culture

Budapest is a lovely city. Culture and history are everywhere. There are incredibly large numbers of bars/restaurants/clubs/cinemas as well. I was in Budapest for 5 months but this was not enough to do all the fun things Budapest has to offer. Definitely one of my favorite cities of Europe.

suggestions/tips

My suggestion is, go to Budapest a few weeks before the semester starts. In this way you can find your way and get used to the city. This is also very useful for finding accommodation. You often have to go to a place to sign the contract. However, I strongly recommend not to sign any contract before you have seen the apartment itself.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I most definitely would recommend CEU to other students. The university is diverse and international, but remains an intimate place as it is not that big (around 1500 students total). This is not only pleasant for personal 'social' reasons, but also because it means that you have a close bond with your professors and that you will never be 'just one of many students'. The university itself is beautiful and of high standard. Budapest is a beautiful vibrant place full of history and culture.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Even though I love CEU and Budapest, there are some things that you should be aware of before choosing CEU. Keep in mind that the university is partly moving to Vienna in the 2019/2020 year and becoming a bi-campus university. Even though teaching activities and the library etc. will remain in Budapest for now, there are changes coming in the structure of this university. This is happening because of the tense political situation in Hungary at the moment in which CEU is used as a scapegoat and portrayed very negatively by the government and 90% of all (state-controlled) media. Be aware that xenophobic, racist, and antisemitic tendencies are present in the ruling government and media. Budapest and the rest of Hungary is a safe place so there is no reason to be afraid, however it is something to keep in mind.