



## Charles University Prague

2022-2023

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Firstly, I began researching all the potential destinations for my Erasmus experience. Rome was my initial preference, followed by Prague as my second choice. Eventually, I was allocated Prague, and I couldn't have been happier. Many people had spoken highly of Prague, describing it as a beautiful city that is also budget-friendly. Moreover, I had heard from numerous sources that Prague is known for its student-friendly environment.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
To prepare for my application, I arranged a meeting with a counselor from Utrecht University. During the meeting, we discussed the university's expectations for my application, and the counselor reviewed my documents to ensure they met the required standards. I also took the opportunity to seek clarification on any minor inquiries I had. Throughout the process of completing the necessary documents, I occasionally reached out to the counselor via email for additional guidance. I was pleased to receive prompt and helpful responses, which proved to be invaluable in the application process.
academic preparation
I did not undertake any specific academic preparation for my time in Prague because it was not necessary.
language preparation
Upon enrolling in the Erasmus program, I received an email from OLS stating that I was required to take an English language test to assess my proficiency level. Since my needs for the stay in Prague primarily revolved around speaking, reading, and writing in English, this test served as my sole preparation and requirement for the duration of my stay.
finances
I have been working since a young age, which allowed me to accumulate enough savings, along with the Erasmus grant, to support myself during my time in Prague. Contrary to expectations, I found that Prague is not more expensive than the Netherlands.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The study program you must select should include at least 51% law courses. However, I have chosen to take exclusively law courses. The available courses were all part of the Erasmus Programme designed specifically for international students. We were not integrated with Czech students. The majority of the courses focused on Czech and European law. In my opinion, it was truly beneficial that all international students were placed together in the same class, as it made it easier for me to make friends.
academic quality of education activities
The quality of education at Charles University differs significantly compared to Utrecht University. Charles University offers more contact hours than Utrecht University, but there is less emphasis on reading. All the classes are conducted in English, which shouldn't pose a problem for the average Dutch student.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad



When I was in the Netherlands, I began receiving emails from Mrs. Maresova, the international officer at the Law Faculty of Charles University. She consistently kept us informed about expectations and requirements, such as course registration. Whenever I had a question, I would reach out to Mrs. Maresova, and she would promptly respond. Moreover, during my time in Prague, I had the option to visit her office Monday through Friday from 9 to 11.

## transfer of credits

The grading system in the Czech Republic and the Netherlands varies. In the Czech Republic, the grading scale spans from A to F, with F representing a failure in the course. However, Charles University adheres to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Consequently, if you enroll in a 3 ECTS course in Prague, those 3 ECTS credits can be transferred to Utrecht University.

## STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme



The welcome day was relatively small in scale. It lasted for about 2 hours, during which Mrs. Maresova provided information about what we could expect, and a student guided us around the faculty. Unfortunately, there wasn't a grand welcome week or a similar event. However, there are several Facebook pages you can join, such as Erasmusprague, Warehouse-entertainment, and Ohmyprague. These pages organize various activities, and I recommend attending them, especially in the beginning, to meet new people and have fun.

#### accommodation

Initially, I had a strong preference for having my own room in a student apartment. However, I soon discovered that it was quite expensive and there were numerous scammers to be cautious of. Due to these factors, I made the decision to opt for a dormitory initially and assess whether I liked it or not. If necessary, I could search for an apartment once I arrived. I ended up staying in Troja. I shared a room with a Czech girl who had been living there for 2 years. She was incredibly kind and assisted me with everything in the beginning. The dormitory was conveniently located, not too far from both my faculty and the city center (approximately 20 minutes), which was perfectly acceptable. As a result, I chose to continue staying in the dormitory, primarily due to the significantly lower cost and my limited time I spend in the dorm itself.

#### leisure & culture

To be honest, I was not expecting Prague to be as beautiful as it turned out to be, and there is so much to do here. The city is incredibly welcoming to students, and there is a vibrant nightlife with numerous bars and clubs. If you enjoy partying, Prague is definitely the place to be. Additionally, there is an abundance of excellent restaurants to try. Prague's central location in Eastern Europe also offers many opportunities for trips to other cities. I have visited Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Vienna, Croatia, and many other places in the Czech Republic. However, you don't necessarily need to leave the city if you don't want to, as there are countless things to see and experience right here in Prague itself.

#### suggestions/tips

My advice is to not hesitate but to simply go for it. I went on this adventure all by myself, and I couldn't have been happier with that decision. You quickly make new friends because everyone is eager to make the most of their experience. It's important to ensure that you have saved enough money, as it can be more expensive than you initially anticipate. While it's not necessary, I personally traveled a lot, which made it a bit more costly. However, don't forget that this is an experience you will cherish for a lifetime, and trust me, it is worth every euro spent.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Absolutely, I would highly recommend it. Prague is an enchanting city, and being situated in Central Europe, the Czech Republic provides ample opportunities to visit nearby cities. If your sole focus is on academics and obtaining the highest level of education, Charles University might not be the optimal choice as it is generally regarded as having a lower education level compared to Utrecht. However, if you are seeking an exchange experience that will expand your horizons and promote personal growth, Prague is the ideal destination. I thoroughly enjoyed my time here, and I have no regrets whatsoever.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



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#### suggestions/tips

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## CONCLUSIONS

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do you have any additional advice or comments?



## PREPARATION

### exchange application process

In my case, I didn't experience any trouble during the application process. I think the process is clearly described in several meetings, documents and websites from the IEO. However, it's important to do your own research regarding the universities for which you want to apply (because there are so many universities, the IEO cannot answer all detailed questions).

### counselling & support at Utrecht University

The people from the IEO were a big help during the preparation for my Exchange. First of all, they provided very detailed information about the application process, but also about the topics you need to think of when going abroad. They also organised a few meetings where you could ask all of your questions and they usually replied very quickly to e-mails or questions.

### academic preparation

I didn't really have any academic preparation for my exchange. The courses I was going to take were accessible for exchange students and didn't require any specific knowledge, other than just the basic knowledge of the law in your own country.

### language preparation

Language preparation was not necessary for me really, because my courses were all taught in English. There was however a possibility to take an intensive Czech language course here in Prague (for free, I think) so that you could get by in your daily life and use Czech. I didn't take this course and I don't think it's necessary, since a lot of people there speak English. However, I've heard a lot of good things about the language course, so if you have the time and opportunity, I would certainly give it a try.

### finances

You can apply to some grants to help you financially. The Exchange office will provide you with a lot of information on this. I applied for the Erasmus+ grant and the 'Public transport' grant (this means you get around 100 euro's every month for not using your student public transport ticket). It's also possible to apply for other grants, but I did not do this. Besides, it might be smart to save some money before going on your Erasmus, because it will generally cost you quite some money and the grants are not enough to cover all. Moreover, you can get an ISIC student card at the Charles University which gives you a lot of discounts. I would advise you to NOT buy one in the Netherlands, but to get it in Prague at the University.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

The law faculty of Charles University offers a wide range of Erasmus courses taught in English. Some of the courses are 'bigger' courses of 6 ECTS and some are 'specialized' courses of 3 ECTS. For all courses, both 3 and 6 ECTS, you have around an 1,5 hours of class in a week (a lecture). Most courses had just one final exam (written, oral) and some also included a presentation/moot court.

About 1 or 2 weeks before the start of the semester you get the semester schedule of the courses. Here you can see when and where the courses are given. On the basis of this general schedule, you can choose the courses you want to take. After a few days, there will be an online registration for the courses (information is provided by the Charles University) and you can enroll in the courses you want. There were a lot of different courses available in my semester (winter 2022-2023), so everyone can find something that they like.

### academic quality of education activities

Some courses were taught better than others, in my opinion. I also think that in general the courses were a lot easier to pass than the courses at Utrecht University. While all courses were pretty interesting, I wouldn't say



the material is too hard. Almost everyone passes all of their exams in one try (with high grades), since the exam questions are not very in depth. I think that the academic quality is good, but this differs per course. Moreover, some professors speak better English than others, which also affects the quality sometimes.

#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

There was a general introduction meeting with the Erasmus coordinators and they were really helpful throughout the semester. You can visit them during their office hours or e-mail them anytime. Also, a lot of teachers and professors are there to help you. They give you their office hours, room numbers and e-mail addresses at the beginning of the semester and encourage you to contact them if something is up. I didn't need a lot of counselling or support, but I knew that there would not have been a problem if I had needed it.

#### transfer of credits

The grading system in the Czech Republic is different from the one in the Netherlands; it goes from A through F and F means you failed the course. Charles University does use the ECTS system, which means that if you take a 3 ECTS course in Prague, you will get 3 ECTS transferred to Utrecht University.

## STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

The Faculty of Law organized a welcome programme at the University to tell us more about the courses, the building, ISIC student cards, etc. This meeting was very helpful and you already got the opportunity to meet some fellow Erasmus law students there.

Moreover, the Charles University introduced the incoming erasmus students to ESN (Erasmus Student Network) for some social activities in their Welcome Week. I would definitely recommend going to some activities of ESN to meet some new people in your first weeks in Prague.

#### accommodation

I found a private accomodation on the internet (Flatio.com). But you can also find a lot of private rooms or accomodations by joining Facebook or Whatsapp groups.

You can also apply for a bed in a dormitory. I didn't do this, but some of my friends did. You will have to share the room with one other person and the bathroom and kitchen often with 4 through 10 people. It is a lot cheaper than finding private accomodation and you live in a big complex with a lot of students. However, when you apply for the dorm, you can't choose which location and you can end up in one of the dorms that is really far away from the city center and the university. This is not necessarily a bad thing because in general the public transport in Prague is really good, but you have to think about this before making any decisions.

#### leisure & culture

Prague is a beautiful city full of culture and fun. The sights of Prague are great and can ofcourse be visited a lot during your exchange (the Law faculty is located at the river and has beautiful views over the Prage Castle). Besides, there are a lot of fun activities for students organised by ESN, but also by other organisations such as Erasmus In Prague or OhMyPrague (even trips to some cities outside of Prague and outside of the Czech Republic). There are also some great bars and clubs where you can go with your friends, but also some really nice and affordable restaurants and cafés to meet with fellow students. You will never be bored in Prague, because there is so much to do!

Also, definitely take some trips to nearby cities in the Czech Republic (e.g. Karlovy Vary, Cesky Krumlov, Kutna Hora) or even outside the Czech Republic (Vienna, Budapest, Krakow, Berlin, etc.). The tickets for Flixbuses or trains are generally pretty cheap, so it is the perfect time to travel!

#### suggestions/tips

Get an ISIC card from the Charles University to enjoy a lot of discounts!

With your ISIC card, you get a lot of discount on public transport. You can get a pass for a month, 3 months or a





year and you can use all kinds of public transport within Prague (tram, metro, bus, train).  
You will need some cash (Czech Crowns) to enter clubs/bars. When you need money, go to machines of real and trusted banks, because other machines will scam you.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely! Like described above, Prague is a beautiful city and there is always something to do. It is also very affordable, in comparison to the Netherlands (except accomodation, which is around the same prices if you go for private accomodation). There are also a lot of opportunities to meet other students and you will definitely have a great time there. Also, the studies are pretty high in quality but don't require constant studying, which will give you enough time to enjoy your free time to make some fun trips for example.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I would start early with looking for accomodation, because there are a lot of students coming to Prague and you want to secure a nice and affordable room.

I also would like to advice you to be a bit more patient in your communication with the Charles University. It may sometimes be a bit more chaotic and it will take a bit longer than at the UU, but in the end they always make sure you know what you need to know in time.



## PREPARATION

### exchange application process

I prepared by following all requirements on the UU website. It is important to do all required things in time to not miss any deadlines. There is a possibility to get several financial supports which have to be applied for in time.

### counselling & support at Utrecht University

The website is very clear. I also could easily contact the exchange department with any questions I had.

### academic preparation

I didn't study anything. I researched the studying system a bit and made sure to know about the grading system and so on.

### language preparation

I didn't prepare any English before I went to Prague. The level of an average Dutch student should be more than enough.

### finances

I have been receiving the possible Erasmus grants and kept my DUO loan during my stay.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

It can be quite chaotic in the beginning since there is a lot to apply for yourself. This means that you get complete schedules with all courses and have to pick things yourself. The best thing to do is to contact other students and to just literally do what the instructions say. This counts for applications as for tasks. Some of the teachers would tell to write an essay about the course we had (10 pages). This would be all instructions you would get for the exam. No topics, no relevant literature, just picking something. In the end you should just start writing and you're quite free. The university here is aware of the way it is organised so they are flexible if you miss something.

### academic quality of education activities

The quality was very good. The lectures were very interesting and all of the teachers had a high level of English (apart from some accents). There even were American teachers. The exams were relatively easy, but the lectures were on a high level. Therefore you don't have to worry about passing, but at the same time learn everything on a high level. I can safely say that the level in the lectures doesn't match the exam.

### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

You are quite alone in this. They send you emails with instructions but in the end a lot is your own responsibility. Some teachers will be replying faster and more specific than others.

### transfer of credits

This happens through the Transcript of records which you receive at the end of the semester after having finished all exams.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

This is mainly done by other organisations than the university. Make sure to get in some welcome Erasmus groupchats on WhatsApp. They organise parties and events for the Erasmus students such as ski-trips, pub crawls or city tours (more in the beginning of the semester, later just parties). Be aware that they make a profit.



They invite everyone for a pub crawl but those bars can be twice as expensive as average (they have a deal with those bars and probably this is their business model). However it is expensive it is nice to meet people there in the beginning to later hang out with somewhere else so I would definitely recommend that.

ps. When I say expensive and double price, a 0,5L beer is still just 4 or 5 euro. But there is plenty places with beer for 1.50 till 2 euro. tip: Popocafepetl. A lot of erasmus students there and cheapest drinks in town.

#### accommodation

I have found my accommodation before I went to Prague. The university makes it possible to get a room in their dormitory for sure. This will cost you (around) just 150 euro per month. You will have to share a room here. I heard a lot of good stories from there because it is full of erasmus students and people would gather in the common areas to hang out. I decided to rent something private because the dormitory is located 70!!! minutes travelling from the city centre. At night the connection is also worse so its harder to get home. I have found a room on facebook and had my brother (who was on a holiday in Prague at that time) visit the place for me. I then organised the rent with the owner on distance. This costed me 300 euro's per month and was 15 minutes by bus to the city centre and faculty (which is in the city centre).

#### leisure & culture

The culture differs in the city centre. There it is very touristic and people will speak english and treat you different. Over all Czech people are nice to Dutch people (but this can be different for people from other countries).

#### suggestions/tips

See above

## CONCLUSIONS

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

I definitely would. Prague is a city that never sleeps and there is much to do. There is unlimited bars and cultural area's to visit. One of the most beautiful city's in Europe.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Finding a room can be very hard, especially lately. I know many people who refused the dormitory offer and wanted to find something private here. Many of them ended up sharing a room with another student for 400 euro's per month!!! Or lived in an Airbnb for 2 months till they found something (800 euro's per month). Private places under 500 euro's per month are very rare and I was very lucky to find something. Starting in the dormitory at least gives you the chance to have a roof above your head till you find something else.



## 2021-2022

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Even though I had to apply during the time when COVID-measures were still enforced, it was overall quite easy to go through the exchange application process. Looking back I am happy I started early with my application, so I didn't need to rush anything and I could ask the Erasmus Coordinators ahead of time about questions I had. The International Office explains all the steps very clear, and the presentations they gave helped me with it. If I needed any signatures or other documents, the International Office was fairly quick to reply to it. I believe reading the website about the application process carefully is enough to go through the process without any problems.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The counselling and support from Utrecht University was from the beginning on very nice. I had some questions about the subjects that I could choose to follow in Prague, for example if some subjects were too similar to ones I followed at Utrecht University already. I always got a fairly quick reply back. If I had an urgent question, it helped to call the International Office at their available hours. In that case you would get an immediate answer to your question. Also the website of the International Office provides good information about studying abroad, which was also very helpful for me.
academic preparation	I did not academically prepare anything for my study at Charles University. Because I have already followed English courses at Utrecht University and my English level is sufficient, academic preparation was not necessary. Looking back on my time abroad I can confirm that it is indeed not needed to prepare academically for the semester, albeit if you know that your English is sufficient. Similar to what others mentioned after their semester at Charles University, I agree that the academic level at Charles University is much lower compared to Utrecht University. If studying in Utrecht is going alright, then I can guarantee that studying at Charles University will be anything but stressful.
language preparation	Before going abroad, I made the OLS English language test in order to determine whether or not I need to improve my English. The result of the test showed that my English level is C1, which means that I did not need extra lessons in English. I chose not to follow the Czech language course that was offered before going abroad. However, on my phone I practiced Czech whenever I had some free time (apps such as Duolingo are very handy). Because of this little preparation, I could greet and thank people and say some basic sentences. I noticed Czech people on the street or in shops really appreciate this gesture, so it is a win win situation!
finances	Before going abroad I heard that Prague is a fairly inexpensive city to live in. However, since it is still a popular capital city the prices can become quite high. This is why I think it is a good idea to save as much as possible. I saved some money I earned with my work in the Netherlands, and besides that I used my student loan (DUO) as well as the Erasmus grant to pay all my expenses. Looking back there were no issues with this. I was also able to go on different day and week trips in and outside of Czech Republic.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	My study programme at Charles University consisted of 6 subjects from the Faculty of Law. 51% of the courses you follow have to be from the Law Faculty. I was thinking of following a few history subjects, however it was quite difficult to make a request on this as Charles University does not respond that quick or that often. Nevertheless, I was very happy with the law subjects I chose and it was easy to enroll in them as they were all



part of the Erasmus programme the Faculty of Law created. The Erasmus law coordinator from Charles University is called "Mama Erasmus" for a reason: she was very helpful with any questions you had and you were always welcome to come by her office with any issues you have. In total I followed 4 subjects of 6 ECTS and 2 subjects of 3 ECTS, so I earned 30 ECTS in total during my stay. The courses I followed were: Czech Contract law, Czech Criminal law, Commercial law and International Transactions, Labour law and social security law, Theory and Practice of the ECHR and Out-of-Court Dispute Resolution.

#### academic quality of education activities

In my opinion, the academic quality of the education differed quite a lot between the subjects. For example, for two courses the teacher would simply show a Powerpoint presentation and would read aloud the literal text that was visible on the board. This demotivated me to pay attention quite often, as I would only copy the text that I read on the presentation and then get distracted again. However, some courses I followed were very interactive, and you really had to pay attention to stay prepared for any questions that might be asked to you. I noticed I preferred going to these classes, and these classes would go by much quicker than the other ones. Also the level of English from the professors differed. Sometimes it was difficult to understand what the professor said, which would leave gaps in my notes. However, it was nice that due to COVID measures all the lectures were recorded, so it was easy to watch the lecture again at your own speed.

#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

As I mentioned above, the counseling and support at Charles University was very nice. The Erasmus coordinator answered all the questions I had and could also help me with some technical issues I experienced. The coordinator would answer her emails quite quickly, however if you were in need of a quick answer to your question, it was also easy to go to her office with your problem. Besides the Erasmus coordinator, the librarians and technicians at Charles University were also very helpful with fixing wifi problems, or with finding a specific book.

#### transfer of credits

I am currently waiting on a last grade to receive, so I am not yet in the process of the transfer of credits. However, considering my experience with the International Office of the UU and the coordinator at Charles University, I believe the transfer of credits will have no problems.

## STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

Because COVID was still active when I arrived, a Teams call was planned for all incoming law students in which the practical information was given about studying at Charles University. This meeting helped me a lot with applying for the subjects and where the lessons will be given. The faculty however did not have another welcome programme where the students could meet physically. However, with organizations such as Erasmus in Prague, you can join different welcome week activities. I chose to join lasergaming, a city tour and a pubcrawl, where I met loads of other students.

#### accommodation

I chose to live in a flat with other students, because I wanted to live with people of different nationalities and to be close to the city center. I ended up living in Prague 5 close to the river, where everything is easily reachable by foot or public transport. I would highly recommend living with other students in an accommodation, as you learn a lot from each other and can do a lot of great things together. It was also very nice to have your own room. That was one of the reasons I also chose for a private accommodation. However, it is also not bad to live in the student dormitories of Charles University. I have visited the Troja dormitories, which are in my opinion really good (and cheap; 150 eur/month!). The Hostivar dormitories are much further in Prague, which I would not recommend. If you look for a private accommodation, I would look months in advance to assure yourself a good accommodation for a reasonable price. I would recommend the districts 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 to live in.



#### leisure & culture

I have done much more in 5 months than I anticipated. I feel like Prague has infinite things to do, and looking back on my Erasmus I still haven't seen and done everything on my to-do list. Firstly, the pubs, bars and clubs in Prague are diverse and each have their own quality. Whether you like techno, 80/90s or latino music, for everyone there is a suitable place to go out. In terms of culture there are many nice museums, parks and other (historical) places to visit in Prague. As you will live for a longer time in Prague, you will discover much more than just the typical touristic places. In the summer semester there were a lot of outdoor markets, festivals and other social evenings which were great to visit. Prague also has a nice 'coffee culture', there are many beautiful cafés and lunch places to visit in every Prague district, so it was great to go for a coffee with friends. Around Prague there is a lot to do as well, such as visiting the surrounding cities like Pilsen (birthplace of Pilsen beer), Karlovy Vary, Cesky Krumlov and the beautiful Bohemian Switzerland. I would highly recommend to also visit these places, to get a better feel of Czech Republic.

The local people in Prague really appreciate it if you learn the basics to greet and thank them in Czech. If you for example say hello and thank you or "by card please" to a cashier they will immediately treat you kinder. I would therefore also recommend to learn just the basic phrases in Czech, which are quite easy to learn.

#### suggestions/tips

During your stay in Prague I would highly recommend also visiting cities from other countries in (Eastern) Europe. It is a great advantage that Prague is located in the middle of Europe and you can access different countries quite easily, which was also one of my reasons to choose Prague for Erasmus. I have visited cities such as Budapest, Vienna, Krakow and Vabriga (Croatia), which are all accessible via bus or tram. As a student studying in Prague, you get 85% discount for the trams, which makes for example a train ticket to and from Budapest around 15-20 euro. It really adds to the Erasmus experience and you will learn much more about other cultures in Europe.

Another tip is to not worry too much about the academic pressure of Charles University. If you know from yourself that you are able to pass the subjects at Utrecht University, it is assured you will also pass the subjects at Charles University. If you pay attention in the classes and you understand the study matter, studying will be short and easy. If you will study for an exam, there are great places to study such as the CU library, the library of the Technical University (CTU), or the beautiful Clementinum library.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Looking back on my Erasmus in Prague I would recommend Charles University to everyone. I am super happy I was able to go to this destination, and my stay exceeded my expectations a lot. I have met friends from all over the world with whom I have done unforgettable trips and made a lot of memories. Prague has a lot to offer, no matter what you are interested in. It also helps that it is not the most expensive city to study, as students get a lot of discount in many shops, restaurants and public transport. Although Prague is quite a big city, everything was easily reachable by foot or public transport. Prague also has a lot of history and it was fascinating to find out more about Prague during the past. Also because Prague is situated in the center of Europe, it was perfect for travelling to other cities.

#### do you have any additional advice or comments?

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**2017-2018**



## PREPARATION

### exchange application process

At first I thought the application process would be quite difficult. I thought you had to fill in a lot of documents, get a lot of signatures etc. But it all was explained really clearly and the International Office was really helpful in my opinion. Every time I had questions or needed signatures, they were always available to help me and explain what was necessary to do. And most of the time the university website of the UU was sufficient enough to help me go through the application process.

### counselling & support at Utrecht University

As I mentioned above, the counselling and support at UU was really helpful and clear. Mails with questions were always replied to quickly and if needed you could always stop by at their 'office' for help. Most of the time the website and pages concerning the Erasmus Exchange programme was really helpful.

### academic preparation

I did not do really much for academic preparation. I noticed from other people's experience and stories who went to Prague that the academic level was not that much higher in Prague, so that the academic I had from the UU was enough.

### language preparation

When I signed up for the Erasmus programme, I got a mail from OLS which told I had to do an English language test in order to determine what my level of English was. Since I only needed to be able to speak, read and write English for my stay in Prague, this was all the preparation I did and needed for my stay there.

### finances

I read from other people's experiences that life in Prague was not that expensive, so with my finances I used in Utrecht I knew I had enough to hold up in Prague. That in combination with some savings I had I was able to do some extra stuff like little trips to other countries and/or cities.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

My study programme in Prague consisted out of courses that had to be law courses 55% (if I remember correctly). The other courses were free to pick. For example, I chose a course called Cybersecurity and I followed a Czech language course. The courses we could choose were all part of the Erasmus Programme they had made for international students. Organisational-wise the Charles University had an International Office that was very helpful and coordinated all the incoming Erasmus students really well.

### academic quality of education activities

In my opinion, the academic quality of the courses were okay, but the teachers were not that good at English. The things they were teaching us were from a decent academic level but how they were teaching it was not that high of an academic level if you ask me.

### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

As I said the counselling and support at the receiving university (Charles University) was good. They handled the incoming students really well and it was clear what we had to do. They were helpful with choosing our courses and making sure all the documents that had to be signed and sent to our home universities were fine.

### transfer of credits

## STUDENT LIFE



welcome & orientation programme
The welcome was quiet formal but it was okay. It was short introduction and it was mainly about some explanation of the student systems from the university we had to use. There was a so called 'buddy programm' which I did not signed up for, but I think some people really enjoyed that.
accommodation
I searched for a room myself with a friend and did not use the possibility to sleep at the dorms. Before I went to Prague I read that the dorms were not that nice and they advised to look for a room yourself more in the city centre. I fiex a room via an student agency with provided me and my friend of a really nice apartment for four people in the middle of the city (Prague 1). I really enjoyed living there and the agency was was fine to work with.
leisure & culture
Prague has a lot to offer when it comes to leisure and culture. First of all it is a beautiful city with a lot to see and a lot of interesting culture. And what I also enjoyed it the position Prague has in Europe. It is really easy to go from prague by bus to other cities and countries like Poland (Warsaw, Wroclaw), Berlin, but also smaller towns nearby like Karlovy Vary and Cesky Krumlov.
suggestions/tips
I suggest other people who go to Prague to search for a room yourself in like Prague 1, 2 or 3 and not use the dorms. That way you will experience the city way better and it is more fun for yourself because for example you do not have to travel half an hour or more to go to the city center.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
My expectations of Prague were high but it was even beter that I expected. The city is, in my opinion, one of the best cities in Europe and the Charles University is a really nice university with interesting courses and helpful people who really love having international students.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

## 2016-2017

PREPARATION
exchange application process
In preparation for my application I started with searching for possible destinations on the website of Utrecht University. When something caught my eye I read through the reports of other students to see if I was interested. I considered various things like the distance, the costs of living, the language of the courses thought and just my own feeling.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
In preparation for the application I had one appointment with a counselor of Utrecht University to ask about their expectations of my appication, to let them check if my documents were sufficient and for other small questions. While filling in the documents I sometimes emailed the counselor with small questions. They were always very quick to answer and very helpful.
academic preparation





I didn't do much academic preparation except for the Legal English course I will describe at language preparation.

#### language preparation

I knew my English would be sufficient for my stay abroad but since I only had one course on the last part of the year before my exchange I decided to participate in the Babel Course - Legal english for Academic Purposes. It is not mandatory to take an English or Czech course for the Charles University in Prague but the course did help me to get familiar with legal jargon in English. Since most of my studies in utrecht were in Dutch and all the courses in Prague were taught in English this was pretty helpful. It is however not necessary, since the English of most Dutch students is wel over the level that is required here.

#### finances

Because I have had a job since I was 15 and never spent money too excessive I had quite a lot of money saved. And since the living costs in the Czech Republic are relatively low this with my scholarship was sufficient.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)

Charles University provides international students with a special programme that is only available for international students. It is a shame that we are not mixed with the Czech students so we never really get in contact with them, however, with all the international students together it is easier to make new friends in the classes with people who are there the same experience as you. Most courses were courses containing introductions to various aspects of Czech law. The courses I took were: Introduction to Czech Private Law, Introduction to the Central European Judicial Culture, Introduction to Public International Law, International Protection of Human Rights, Czech Legal History, Introduction to Czech Constitutional Law, Intellectual Property Law and Basics of Czech Language. I didn't really have any big organisational issues.

#### academic quality of education activities

The level of education was lower and the education was less structured than I was used to in Utrecht. I did do more courses though (8 courses - 32 ECTS) so I had quite a lot of contact hours and enough reading to do. Everything was in English but for the average Dutch student this shouldn't be a problem.

#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

While in the Netherlands we already started to receive e-mails from Mrs. Maresova. She is the international officer at the Law Faculty of Charles University. She provided us with frequent e-mails about what was expected of us and with instructions about things we had to do, for example registration for courses. We could always e-mail her with questions and she usually answered within 24 hours. Besides that she has office hours every day from 9-11 and when she wasn't available for a day she would always inform us in advance by e-mails. When we had specific questions about a course we could usually also e-mail the professors directly.

#### transfer of credits

I am currently working on my transfer of credits so I am not sure how this will end up. However everyone involved is always very helpful so I don't expect any problems in this department.

## STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

The law faculty of Charles University doesn't have a specific welcome and orientation programme. However most of the other faculties do have a joint programme and law students can also subscribe for the different activities. I received an e-mail about the different activities and links to subscribe. Besides this there are a lot of Facebook pages you can join (for example: Studentzone). They organize a lot of different activities throughout



the whole semester and especially in the beginning of the semester to meet people.

#### accommodation

I started out in one of the dormitories of the university (Hostivar). My plan was to see if I liked it and then if I didn't I would just find a place and move. I ended up living there for almost two weeks but I did not like it there. The rooms are shared so it could also really depend on your roommate but for me it didn't really feel like a home and it was too far from the city centre. Luckily I found a place pretty quick through one of the Facebookpages that you can join where landlords and other students post rooms and appartments. It is pretty easy to find a good place for around 300-500, the proces vary a lot depending on the area/location, the landlords, and the accomodation.

#### leisure & culture

There is a lot to do in Prague. I could never describe everything I did there. It is a good city to do cultural stuff, to party, to have various daytrips etc. etc. Restaurants are cheap, beer is around 40 czk per 0,5 liter (that is around €1,50). Because of the location of Prague in the centre of Eastern Europe there are also a lot of trips to make to other cities or nature. For example I went to: Budapest, Dresden, Bratislava, Krakow and different other cities in Czech Republic. But you don't have to leave the city if you don't want to cause there are so many things to see and experience in the city itself. So many bars, restaurants, pretty buildings etc. Especially around christmas time the city turns into this beautiful place with christmas markets and lights everywhere. Prague does not feel very Eastern European as some people think. It is an international city. It is an old city, you can see that especially in the Old Town area but everything is very modern.

#### suggestions/tips

Most will show itself when you arrive. You just really have to get out there and meet people. At first that can be a bit scary but it is definitely worth it. I found my closest group of friend by literally going to a hangout meeting in a parc all by myself, I was a bit scared at first but it also feels very good afterwards when you managed to find yourself amazing friends and you did it all by yourself by just putting yourself out there. What I would suggest is to do some research before arriving about the area where you wanna live and what kind of accomodation you would like to stay in. Looking back I would have tried to find an accomodation while I still was in the Netherlands because I found out that most people already did that and when I arrived most good appartments were already taken. I ended up in a great one but more expensive then I would have wanted. Ofcourse you have to be careful with getting in apartment in advance for people who try to rip you off but there are usually a lot of red flags you will notice before that happens and actually none of the people I know got scammed while getting in apartment in Prague.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I definitely would. Prague is an amazing city and the Czech Republic is a great country in Central Europe with so many cities close to see. If you really want to go for academic purposes then Charles University is not the best option because the level of education is much lower then in Utrecht. But if you wanna go on exchange for the experience and to develop yourself as a person Prague is the perfect place. I loved my time there and I don't regret anything.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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**2015-2016**



## PREPARATION

### exchange application process

This is a long and somewhat complicated process. A lot of paperwork and deadlines are involved in this. Luckily, the international office is very helpful. For me the most frustrating was waiting for the Erasmus office in Prague to approve my learning agreement. They were late with their response which prompted me to ask the international office in Utrecht to ask for an extension of the deadline. This was luckily not an issue and easy to achieve. The best advice I can give is to start working on your preparation as soon as you know what you want to do.

### counselling & support at Utrecht University

Preparing all the paperwork is a lot of work and keeping an eye on the deadlines despite all the other things that are going on in your life can be difficult at times. You will have to do the work alone, but in my experience the international office was always ready to help me if I encountered a problem.

### academic preparation

I did not take any classes or partake in any special academic preparation for my study in Prague.

### language preparation

All the courses given in Prague are in English and are easy to follow. I did not take any extra English test for my Erasmus period. The English you've been taught in high school should be sufficient to understand everything and everyone.

### finances

Your student grant, Erasmus grant and the extra OV money provide for a solid basis to have a comfortable life here in Prague. It doesn't hurt to have a little extra money saved up though, because Prague can be an expensive city. For me money was never an issue here. I stayed in one of the dorms and quickly learnt where all the cheap student places are. In general the cost of living is a lot lower than in the Netherlands.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme is very clear. There are a limited number of courses they offer to Erasmus students. In the beginning of the semester there is a period of three weeks where you can join any class to see whether or not you like it. Before the end of this period you have to select which subjects you want to follow in the online Student Information System the university uses. This is an easy process and it will be explained during the orientation meeting. Other than that you don't have to organise anything. The faculty of law is well-used to receiving Erasmus students, so there aren't any organisational issues, at least, that I can think of.

### academic quality of education activities

The quality of a course really depends on the teacher. If the teacher can speak English very well, then the course will be interesting to follow. If not, then it will be harder to learn anything. One or two teachers couldn't speak very well during my stay. In general the courses aren't that difficult. If you can handle the courses at your home university, then you should have no problem passing the courses here in Prague.

### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Like I said, the faculty of law here in Prague is well-used to receiving Erasmus students. They are familiar with the documents you bring to them and never have any problems signing them. I did not require any support or counselling so I don't have that much to tell about this subject. Only problem I encountered was that not every Erasmus coordinator spoke English that well, but this problem can be circumvented by just asking them questions via email.

### transfer of credits



Your Transcript of Records will be completely handled by the faculty. They will make sure everything is on there and that it arrives to your university in time.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

The faculty of law does not have a welcome/orientation week, but you can join the one organised by the faculty of social sciences. I arrived a week too late so I didn't have the chance to participate. From what I've heard this program is a very good way to get to know the city and some students, so arriving in Prague a week before the start of the official semester is not a bad idea. The faculty of law only organises an obligatory orientation meeting where they will hand out the schedules and give some basic information.

### accommodation

When you apply for the Charles University they will ask if you want to live in a dorm. I chose to live in the Hostivar dorm. You can also try to get private accommodation, but that is more expensive. The Hostivar dorm is very cheap (about 100 Euro per month). However, it is very basic. There are only double bedrooms and you share a small kitchen (with no oven or microwave) with the rest of the floor (around 12 people). A bathroom is included into the room, so you only have to share that with your roommate. The Hostivar dorm is also located somewhat far from the city centre. It takes about 35-40 minutes to get there by tram, metro or bus. Now, before you decide to arrange your own private accommodation, there is one thing that makes up for all of it. In this dorm you will live with loads and loads of other Erasmus students from all over Europe. You will make so many friends here and learn so much about other cultures that you won't even notice all of the downsides of this dorm. If you encounter a problem you can always ask for help from your fellow dormmates. I can really recommend living here!

### leisure & culture

Now to the important part. When it comes to leisure and culture Prague has everything to offer. The Czech Republic has an even higher beer consumption than Germany, so you can expect that there are loads of bars and clubs here. Beer is served only per half a litre and is usually cheaper than water. There are lots of different bars and clubs, each with their own style and music. Each night Prague has something to offer for each person, no matter how eccentric. It is important to note that some places in Prague are very expensive and others very cheap. This mostly depends on the location. The city centre tends to be a more expensive. Apart from a bustling night life there are also plenty of museums, nice parks to hang-out in, a big zoo, beautiful opera's, and of course ice hockey matches to see. The Czechs are very fanatic when it comes to hockey. I can really recommend to at least once go to a match and see them go crazy (good kind of crazy). Prague is best explored on foot, but if you get tired the public transportation system is very good too. I recommend buying a 5 month ticket so you don't have to worry about having change with you to constantly buy tickets with. If you need a break from Prague, you could always go on a hiking trip to national parks such as the Bohemia-Switzerland park. Other than that you can of course visit other cities, like Budapest, Krakow, Dresden, Karlovy Vary, or Vienna. The bus is a cheap and quick way to get there. The university has an International Club which organises trips, bbq's, walking tours, and other social events for students of each faculty. There are also other organisations, like Student Zone Prague, which organise various parties and trips to other cities that are a lot of fun. In short, there is always something to do in and around Prague and there are plenty of students here to have an awesome time with!

### suggestions/tips

It might be easier to make a lot of new friends quickly if you arrive in the first semester, since everyone here will be new to the place. This is not a big issue though, because everyone here has the same kind of party mindset and fitting in is really easy.

## CONCLUSIONS



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

A thousand times yes! I've had the time of my life here. Academically I may not have learnt that much here, but the experience of living in another country, away from your old life, and among different people from all over Europe and the rest of the world will teach you things no university or school could ever teach you. My Erasmus stay here showed me that the world is filled with awesome people. Even if you decide not to go to Prague I can highly recommend to at least make use of the Erasmus programme and have an amazing experience you will never forget for the rest of your life!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Do/make all the paperwork/preparatoin as soon as possible, don't wait until the last moment. Sometimes some issues may pop up unexpectedly and you don't want to deal with them when you have almost no time left.