



Charles University Prague

2023-2024

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The way I made my decision to go to Prague was rather systematic. I first made a list of all the universities in Europe that I could go to on exchange. Then I made a selection based on to whether I could do courses in all PPE disciplines. Then I looked at the specific course offerings of the universities and made a top three based on this. This left me with Oslo, Lidköping and Prague. In the end I chose Prague because it had the most interesting courses, was more affordable than the other two and is centrally located in Europe, which would make travelling around easier.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I did not really need counselling from UU. I only went to the "speeddate" event and the pre-departure information session.
academic preparation
No academic preparation was needed for the courses I did. It took quite some effort to find out what the prerequisites of the courses were, but the professors from the university always responded quickly and were happy to help.
language preparation
I did not do any language preparation, but I did sign up for a language course there. This is not strictly necessary, but quite helpful, as I had quite some encounters in Prague where people couldn't speak English. I also think it is generally polite to study the language if you're staying a different country for a prolonged period of time. Lastly, I made some really great friends during the Intensive Czech Language Course (which takes place before the semester starts), because you spend a lot of time with the people in this language class.
finances
I did not need a job while in studying in Prague and also did not really use any of my savings. I found an apartment for 430 eur a month (quite a good price for an exchange student, although if you stay at the [not very good] dorms, it only costs 110 eur a month). However, there are some factors that allowed me to live without net expenses. Firstly, I did not go clubbing or travelling every weekend, so my expenses were quite low. Secondly, as a Dutch student, I got quite a lot of money from the government. The Erasmus grant of 230 euros a month is in my opinion (and that of every other Dutch student here) way too low, but as a Dutch student I got 110 euro in OV-reimbursement and 430 eur in uitwonende beurs (which was temporarily high because of inflation compensation). Together with my zorgtoeslag, this was an income of ~900 eur a month, which was definitely enough to live here, if you don't live lavishly.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
Intensive Czech Language Course Follow-up Czech Language Course Financial Economics International Trade The Evolution of Sino-American Relations EU Institutions



International Morality between Ethical Ideals and Reality

academic quality of education activities

Academic quality is generally really good and better than I expected. If you are taking courses in natural sciences or economics, be prepared for the fact that these faculties like to include quite a lot of math in their curricula. A friend who went on exchange to Melbourne for example had to learn more practical skills with excel in his finance course, while my finance course in Prague put more of a focus on proving and deriving formulas. But CU also has a great deal of courses at the Faculty of Arts (humanities) that are really interesting; their course offer is larger and more specialized than UU's, so you will definitely find something you are interested in.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The IT system of the university is a bit old, but generally works quite well. The professors are great and really willing to help you. The international office is really sweet, responds fast and helps you well. I didn't need it during my stay, but Charles University also has quite a lot of mental health support on offer should you need it during your exchange.

transfer of credits

All my courses were accepted by the board of examiners without problems. It only took quite a while to get the Intensive Czech Language Course accepted, as it is not directly linked to the university. I believe my credits will also be transferred without issue.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was a small welcome day, but not that much as an introduction period. However, the student organization of the faculty of social sciences, FSV Circle (find them on instagram), is really active and is a great way to meet new people.

accommodation

Accommodation in Prague has been getting harder to find and more expensive as the years go by. However, it is still 100x better than the Netherlands. I stayed a week in the dorms before I could move into my apartment. They are definitely not great, but they are also 110 euros a month, so extremely cheap. Generally, I think everyone I met found accommodation within 2 weeks of arriving in Prague or had already found accommodation before they came. Prague is a really safe city so there are no neighbourhoods I would advise against. As an international student, I think you'll pay around 400-600 euros a month in rent.

leisure & culture

Prague is such a beautiful city and you can spend days walking around finding restaurants bars and study places. Eating out is generally quite cheap in Prague (typical Czech restaurant you can have dinner for <15 eur in total) so I can definitely recommend that. Also visit museums, ice hockey matches, the opera etc. Two organisations I want to specifically recommend are FSV Circle, the social science study association, who organize a ton of different fun activities and Some Like it Czech, an organization that shows Czech films with English subtitles. Also the rest of the country is really really beautiful, as are the surrounding countries (it's quite easy to visit Krakow, Vienna or Budapest).

As far as the culture goes, Czech people are not that open or welcoming at the start. Speaking a bit of Czech definitely makes them more likely to help you. Once they get to know you, they are great to hang out with!

suggestions/tips



**Utrecht
University**

Oof I can't really think up anything on the spot as there is quite a lot to see and do. Feel free to send me an email if you want restaurant recommendations or places to hang out in Prague (or just generally want to know anything about the city)!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes definitely. Great professors, great courses with a lot of variety, warm university. Also a beautiful city and a beautiful country, located in between lots of other beautiful countries. City is bustling with life, but really safe (for a big city ofc) and I really want to go back tbh.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Same applies as above, send me an email if you have any questions about Prague, I will be happy to talk to you about it!



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The exchange application process went well. I found it doable to follow all the steps. The Charles University was helpful and provided information via email about the application process.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support from Utrecht University was exceptionally helpful. Feel free to ask questions, as they consistently offered clear and informative answers.

academic preparation

Beforehand, You need to look up which type of courses you want to follow. The Charles University works with the program SIS (Student Information System). On this website you can find all the different type of courses you can follow. They have a large amount of different courses. I was interested in Economic and European Union master courses. It's worth noting that upon my arrival, some of the initially selected courses were either full or nonexistent. Consequently, I had to make adjustments to my course selection in the first weeks.

language preparation

All the courses were in English. So learning Czech was not necessary.
Before my exchange period, I could choose to follow a language course at the Charles University of four weeks. I did not choose to do it. However, I heard from other students that those were interesting lessons. Please be aware that the Czech language is quite hard to learn for a Dutch person.

Finances

I applied for the Erasmus+ grant and the Dutch OV (transport) compensation.
The Public transport is really cheap in Prague. You pay 15 euros for a three month public transport pass with your ISIC card. The living costs could be expensive, it depends if you want to live in the dorms or in an apartment in the centre. Living in the dorms is not expensive. What is more expensive is living in the city centre. I found an apartment in the city centre to share with other Erasmus students. Despite the expense, this decision added significant value to my exchange experience.
Overall, bars and restaurants were cheaper than in the Netherlands. However, the groceries costs are quite the same price.
Traveling to other places in the Czech Republic by plane or bus was really cheap.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The content of my student programme:

EU institutions

EU in international affaires

Banking and risk management

Monetary economics

All these courses are master courses.

I had less courses to choose from because I needed to follow master courses (I already completed my bachelor). Moreover, I needed to be fast with signing in because most of the courses are really full easily. I appreciated the flexibility of being able to choose courses that were not directly related to economics as well.

academic quality of education activities

I expected that the quality of education would have been lower than at UU. However, the quality of education was at a good level. Notably, some of my instructors were professionals employed by the Czech central bank.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The professors were kind and answered quickly to my questions.

transfer of credits

My credits are not transferred yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Before my arrival, there were teams meetings with all the Erasmus students and some professors. This was really nice because it provided all the necessary information I needed before arrival.

In the first week of my exchange, there was an orientation week. During this week all kind of activities were organized, like a city tour. There was a welcome day whereby a lot of information was given and you could easily meet all your fellow students.

accommodation

You could apply for university dormitories in advance, but I found an apartment to share with other international students in the city centre. I wanted to find a private accommodation, because the dorms are far away from the centre and you had to share a room with another roommate. Moreover, I heard stories about bed bugs and I did not want to take that risk.

However, at the dorms you can easily meet new people, because a lot of international students are living there.

As I mentioned before, living in the centre is expensive. For instance, renting a room in the city center may amount to approximately 650 euros per month.

leisure & culture

Prague is a really beautiful city with a lot of historical buildings like the Prague Castle, Charles Bridge, and Old Town Square. Moreover, the river makes the city really special and it served as a reference point, making it easier to navigate through the city.

Besides the cultural part, Prague has a lot of bars, café's, restaurants and clubs to offer, where you can meet a lot of students. In your free time you can also easily make day trips to other cities in the Czech Republic.

Prague is really in the centre of Eastern Europe, so you can make trips to a lot of different European cities like Vienna, Budapest or Krakow. Almost every weekend, trips were organized by organisations to join.

So, it is hard to choose what to do because there is always some activity you can join or a trip. You will not get bored (you need to be aware that you don't have that much time for studying).

suggestions/tips

My first tip is to take extra courses in the beginning, because in the first weeks you can still drop some courses. You can then find out which course you like the most. Moreover, be on time with signing up for the courses you want, because it gets full really quickly. To ensure you secure a spot, it's advisable to sign up for more courses than necessary to fulfil your ECTS requirements. For some courses you can end up at the waiting list and if you wait you can maybe get in still.

My second tip is to join all the Whatsapp groups and Facebook groups. These groups are full of Erasmus students and most of the organized activities are shared in those groups. By joining those activities or day/weekend trips you will get to know a lot of people from all around the world.

My third tip is to avoid focusing solely on connecting with fellow Dutch students. I think that it is really special that you can make a lot of friends from all around the world.



My fourth tip is that you need to be cautious when withdrawing cash. Some banks charge high commissions, like ATMs. Always check the fees associated with withdrawing money to make informed decisions about where to get cash.

My last tip is to be aware of scammers. When I was searching for an apartment in Prague I was careful. I know some stories that people were scammed and did not have an accommodation to stay in. Always ask for a videocall to see if the place exists.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend to go to Prague and the Charles University. It is a safe, student-friendly, not too big and historical city. The level of education of the Charles University is high but you can still do fun activities next to studying.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

no



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process is quite easy. The Czech coordinator is very kind and helpful. I also received very clear instructions on how to apply.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The UU support was nice. The questions I had regarding the UU-part of the application and the destinations were answered quickly and clearly.

academic preparation

language preparation

The courses were all in English. Since EBE is also fully in English, no language preparation was necessary.

finances

The finances weren't a big issue. Personally, I had my regular finances + I applied for the Erasmus grant. I also got the Dutch 'OV-vergoeding', which was a nice bonus since the public transport in Prague is very cheap.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed the courses

- Economic sociology and European Capitalism
- International trade
- Behavioral economics and finance
- European economic integration

The choices for me were limited, since I already had my bachelor's degree so I already did most of the courses offered. Nevertheless, these courses were fun and easy to combine with leisure activities.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of education is in my opinion worse than in The Netherlands. This could be due to the fact that the first weeks were mostly recap of already known material. After the first weeks, the courses became more challenging but in my opinion still of a lesser quality than at the UU.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The support was great. The professors I mailed for questions always answered quickly and were very nice to communicate with. Since there are a lot of exchange students in Prague, some professors are very openminded with regards to shifting dates for exams.

transfer of credits

The credits are just the usual EC.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was an orientation week during the first week of the semester. I didn't really participate so I can't tell much about it.



accommodation

I applied to one of the uni dormitories in advance, but I kept searching for something more in the city centre since most of the dormitories are pretty far. Unfortunately, all the private housing was full or too long-term so I stayed in the dorm. I was assigned to dormitory in Hostivar, which I didn't really like. On the plus side, the rent was very cheap (€170/month) so I had enough money to do fun things in the city centre. The connection between my dorm and Prague centre was good, with trams going throughout the whole night. You just have to get used to the system. I recommend you use Google Maps and push the public transport button which worked really good in Prague.

leisure & culture

There are a lot of fun things to do in Prague. There are bars and clubs everywhere. Some are cash only but there is an ATM on practically every corner. You can also do trips to other cities in the Czech Republic, which are often organised via the student organisations. Prague also has a wonderful culture with beautiful architecture.

suggestions/tips

Apply for the Prague public transport card after you've received your ISIC (student) card. This will save you 75% on you plan (+- €45). Also, be aware of scammers when searching for private housing.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes. I really liked that it's close to the Netherlands, which made it possible for me to fly back for, for example, the Christmas holidays. The university is also pretty good and it's easy to combine your studies with fun activities.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2021-2022

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	The application process was fairly easy. I had to submit a learning agreement and apply for a grant, but most of the trouble came from the uncertainty of the exchange going through due to Corona measures. It was sometimes frustrating to contact the host university (Charles University) during the summer with some questions because they weren't fast to respond.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	I felt that the support from Utrecht was sufficient, albeit contacting and getting a response from the study advisors always takes quite a while
academic preparation	
	I did not do any sort of academic preparation before the exchange
language preparation	
	I had already done IELTS language exam before applying to Utrecht University, so I didn't need any preparation since the courses were in English. It is definitely helpful to learn some Czech though, but I did not learn it because of how short the exchange was. A lot of people in Prague do not speak English well or at all, so it would've come in handy.
finances	
	Prague is a surprisingly expensive city when it comes to grocery stores. I feel like cooking yourself in Prague costs the same amount as in Utrecht, but the ingredients are a lot worse quality and less fresh. Surprisingly eating out in restaurants did not actually cost more than cooking yourself most of the time. A meal at an Asian restaurant was 4 euros at the cheapest, and on average about 5 euros. Same goes for drinking at bars, a half a litre beer costs 2 euros or less sometimes, while from a store you will pay about 1 euro, so most of the time I ended up drinking at bars. The fact that restaurants and bars are amazing and super cheap also meant that I ended up spending a lot in Prague, so do not let the cheap prices fool you. Living at dorms only costs about 100 euros a month but you will be living in a small room with another person, so it comes at a cost. A lot of people ended up moving away from dorms, but it was also a lot easier to make friends there and meet up with people. The dorms are usually about 40 minutes from centre, so I ended up just renting Airbnb apartments from the centre for the whole exchange. The places I booked early were only 400 euros a month for a whole apartment, but when I booked late it was 800 euros a month sometimes. Generally rents are 400-600 euros a month in Prague so Airbnb long term was surprisingly cheap. Travelling during the exchange was also dirt cheap with the Czech train, so I definitely recommend taking advantage of that. Public transport in Prague was 14 euros for 3 month pass, which meant unlimited bus/metro/tram which was extremely convenient.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	I had trouble figuring out which courses are level 3/ advanced which meant that I had to just pick the only 2 courses that had the word "advanced" in them. These courses were really hard, but the exams / passing the course was definitely easier than in Utrecht. In Charles University each course's professor felt like they had their authority, which meant that courses weren't really standardized across the university at all. It really depends on your luck how good the lectures are and how hard the exam is, because the difficulty can be the polar opposite of some other course and the amount of work was also very arbitrary. I recommend taking some extra courses



at the start because you can still change your choices with-in the first month and it's very difficult to get all of the courses you want, because they are full instantly when signing up opens.

academic quality of education activities

Sometimes great, sometimes not so much, very dependent on the specific course's professor

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The people at the international office are very nice, but most of the time you feel like your on your own and nothing seems organized

transfer of credits

Still yet to get the credits transferred

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Orientation was non existent, and a lot of people struggled to make friends, especially people who did not live at dorms. Recommend joining groupchats on whatsapp (links in facebook or word of mouth from other people) and just going to those meetups. Erasmus orientation week was full instantly (corona measures I think) so I didn't really even have an orientation, but made most of my friends at bars etc.

accommodation

Already mention about the accomodation in the finances part, but dorms have positives and negatives: mostly the far distance from the centre(tram runs overnight though), lack of a nice room, rarely own room, easy to meet people and make friends, easy to plan trips abroad with the people from the building etc. while living in the centre is more expensive, can have a nice apartment, always close to centre etc.

leisure & culture

The restaurants of Prague are incredible, especially Vietnamese and Indian food. I tried a new restaurant almost every single day and still didn't have time to try most of them. Bars are great but customer service is terrible in prague. Clubs have problems with harrassing but they are otherwise very grandiose and cool. The central location of prague in Europe is great for travelling and some people visited other countries almost every weekend. There is also amazing nature like Bohemian Switzerland about 2 hours away (2 euros by train) that I highly recommend visiting, especially during autumn colors. Renting houses from the nature is super cheap, especially with big groups. There is definitely a lot to do in Prague so it doesn't get boring most of the time and bars and clubs are full basically every day.

suggestions/tips

Try to pick courses that aren't much work, it is usually quite difficult to focus on studying in Prague when there's so much to do and trips abroad are constantly being suggested.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend prague, but I would've preferred it during spring semester, since the semester in autumn starts almost in October and there was only one warm month, which meant activities outside were more rare. I would personally not stay for a whole year in Prague, the lack of fresh and good products in the grocery store gets a bit annoying, besides the lack of functional things in Prague (anything related to customer service, eg. postal system is notoriously so bad that people do not recommend ordering anything by mail since it will get lost and they will not help you). Tourists aren't exactly treated warmly in Prague but that's quite



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common in a capital. Czech people outside of Prague are much nicer to you, but in Prague if you don't speak czech (or if you dare speaking russian) you aren't treated that nicely.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



2019-2020

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Once you have an overview over what exactly is required for the application, it is easy. Just make sure to not miss the deadline!
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The support of Utrecht University was good. There were several information meetings, and the study advisor and International Office helped with all the steps.
academic preparation
Generally I would say that the level in Utrecht is quite good, so there were no problems when it comes to the academic level and I could follow all courses I wanted in Prague without further preparation.
language preparation
Since the studies in Utrecht and in Prague are both in English, I didn't have to do any language preparation. It is nice to learn a few words of Czech, but definitely not necessary. The university offers a language course before the start of the classes, so if you want to learn Czech and get to know the city already that is a good option (I didn't do it).
finances
The living costs in Prague are lower, so together with the Erasmus grant I didn't need to worry about the money there at all. In January we could pick up an accommodation grant by the Czech state of around 100€ which was a nice surprise.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I was attending the faculty of social sciences which was nice because I could follow all the courses there and they have a wide variety of courses. In the first two weeks you can go to any class and still change your courses. Just be aware that some courses have a limited capacity and therefore have a waiting list, so it might be useful to sign up for classes early and then drop them in case you do not want to follow them.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality really varies from course to course. I had some classes that were pretty much the same level as in Utrecht, but also a few easier ones. Half of my courses were Master courses, but there was not much difference between Master and Bachelor courses.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
When I had a problem in the beginning of the semester with signing up for the courses, they were quick to solve it.
transfer of credits
My credits haven't been transferred yet, so I can't say anything at this point. But all my courses got approved by the Board of Examiners, so that shouldn't be a problem.



STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was an introduction week at the beginning of the semester, but since the faculty of social sciences is so big and the esn student organization only consists of volunteers, there were always limited capacities and you had to be super quick to sign up. Also there was a huge line to sign up for weekend trips in the first week, because the organization was not the greatest. But I wouldn't worry if you do not participate in every activity in the first week, you will meet new people all the time and everywhere. There are also a few private organizations that organize more activities during the semester.

accommodation

You could choose to stay in dorms where you share a room with another student, and those accommodations are very cheap. However, I chose to find a flat together with a friend, which is also not too hard if you look in time. Most of it works through facebook, but be aware that there are always a lot of people who answer the offers. The neighborhood we stayed in (Zizkov) was great because there were a lot of other Erasmus students staying there and it has a lot of bars.

leisure & culture

You will always have something to do in Prague! The city is beautiful and has many interesting places to see. As a student things like the opera or sports events are super cheap. Prague also has a great location to explore more cities in Central Europe, like Berlin, Budapest and Vienna. And if you want to get out of the city for a while Prague has lovely parks and there is beautiful nature surrounding Prague, such as Bohemian Paradise. You never get bored in Prague, because everyone is on Erasmus there and wants to explore.

suggestions/tips

Just try to make the most of your time in Prague (and never pay more than 50 CZK (2€) for a beer!;) Also ask if they have ISIC discount wherever you go since in Czech Republic you basically have them everywhere, such as 75% off on trains.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend going to Prague and Charles University, I had a great time there and would always go back. You will never get bored there and since things are a bit cheaper, you can also do a lot more things. I could follow a lot of interesting courses which didn't require too much workload, met great people and went on awesome trips all around the country and the neighbouring countries which are really easy to reach.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process for the exchange was not really complex. All the required steps are clearly explained on the website of the uu. You should think well about your second and third choice because it is not for granted that you can go to your first choice university.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The international office of USE is really helpful and in my experience they always replied really quick on questions asked by email. Also while being abroad they are there to help you with questions or problems you might have.

academic preparation

I did not need any prerequisite courses for the courses I took in Prague so this was not applicable to me.

language preparation

All my courses were in English. As I was already used to studying in English, this was no problem for me. Before departure I had to do an English test, which I passed without preparation.

finances

Living in Prague is a bit cheaper than in Utrecht, especially eating out and partying is cheaper. My rent was 400 euros a month for a big apartment shared with 2 other guys. I saved up some money during summer holiday by working extra hours. My erasmus grant was about 240 euros a month. Next to that I got "OV vergoeding," which was 95 euros a month. In January I got a grant of 120 euros from the Czech Government. I did a lot of trips, so I spent a bit more than I would usually do in Utrecht, but because of the extra money from the grants I did not have any financial troubles.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

All my courses had just one session a week. Some of them were just lectures of 90 minutes, and a few had a lecture of 90 minutes and then a tutorial of 90 minutes. At the Charles University they only have two semesters which means you have about 4-6 courses together. The summer semester was from October till Christmas, and after Christmas you had exams. For Erasmus students there was the option to already do your exams in December.

academic quality of education activities

The academic level differed per course and was in my opinion quite dependent on the professor of the course. The courses which I took in economics were quite good and comparable to the level in Utrecht.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The international office of the Faculty of Social Science in Prague was really helpful, they provided us with a lot of information at the moment of arrival. Also they were really helpful in case of helping me with the required documents that needed to be signed.

transfer of credits

I passed all my courses and the grades are entered in the grade system of the Charles University. The transcript of records, which includes the grades and the courses, has still to be sent to Utrecht board of examiners. I expect no trouble in the transferring of these credits because the board of examiners has approved all the courses before the start of the semester.



STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was an orientation week in the week before the semester. Personally I did not attend a lot of these activities, because I already attended a language course provided by the university. During this language course I already met a lot of people and explored the city.

accommodation

At first I booked a room at the campus of the university. I had a shared room which was not really comfortable and it was also located about 45 minutes from the city centre. I knew this upfront, so I started searching for a room in a shared flat from the moment I arrived. On facebook there are a few groups called "flatshare in prague" Or accomadation for Erasmus students Prague." It is really doable to find a nice room on these pages.

leisure & culture

There is really big and active Erasmuss community in Prague, they organize a lot of events and trips. I would really recommend to make trips in the surroundings of Prague. It is located in the centre of Europe, cities like Budapest and Vienna are really close and travelling there by bus or train is cheap. Also I would recommend to do hiking trips in Czech Republic, Swiss Bohemia and the Krkonose mountains are really beautiful.

suggestions/tips

I would suggest to search for a flat in the city centre, because it will save you a lot of travelling time compared to living in one of the student dorms.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would really recommend Prague and the Charles University as a study abroad destination for other students. It is a beautiful city to live in and the University has a nice historical character. Prague is centrally located in Europe so it offers the opportunity to see more beautiful places in Europe.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2017-2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
This process is quite simple if you just follow the steps given online. In OSIRIS I was able to give my top three universities and for my first choice, Prague, I had to write a motivation and make a financial and study plan. This does not take a lot of time and is useful because it makes you look critically at your first choice university.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Anytime I had any questions I was able to email the exchange office of U.S.E and they were always very helpful in providing me with the answers and the documents I needed.
academic preparation
I did not have any academic preparation apart from looking and selecting the courses I would like to follow.
language preparation
I only followed English courses so I did not have any language preparation for this. I did decide to learn some Czech through Duolingo before going, this was not necessary but it was definitely nice to learn some phrases before going.
finances
The financial plan was helpful in getting a full picture. What is important to do before departure is to apply for the Erasmus grant and OV-vergoeding (If you are Dutch and have OV). Together this provided a buffer of around 300 euros per month. Moreover, in January we were able to pick up a one time academic scholarship from Charles University of 115 euros.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I had to deviate from my original study plan in the end because some classes were full and because I discovered that I had filled in only master courses on the study plan. Signing up for courses was very different from in Utrecht. Czech students are able to sign up before the exchange students. Once you pick up your student card you are able to go in the system and choose the courses you want to follow, if they are full you can apply for the waiting list. I would definitely recommend doing this as students have three weeks to change their minds about courses so even if you are on the waiting list you have a big chance of getting in in the end. If you are not sure about which courses to follow you can also register for more courses and drop some within three weeks, without consequence.
academic quality of education activities
The courses varied a lot in quality and difficulty. Two of my courses were very do-able (Bachelor), one course was a bit more challenging (Master) and two other courses were very challenging for me (Master). Overall my teachers were quite good and had a good level of English.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The staff was very helpful and was good at replying to emails. I did not have much contact with them, only for my learning agreement at the beginning of the semester and my certificate of attendance at the end of my stay.
transfer of credits
I still have not received my transcript of grades, but all my credits should count as I checked with the Board of Examiners before departure.



STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The introduction day with the official welcome was quite brief. The orientation programme in the first week was nice, sadly there were limited places and thus many activities were already full. I recommend joining some activities to meet new people. Some activities also included going around Prague which was a nice way to get to know the city.

accommodation

Many friends of mine stayed in dorms, very cheap but far from the city and no private rooms. I looked for accommodation on Facebook and this was quite challenging. Many people reply on Facebook and many rooms have high commission or other fees. In the end I found a room through Facebook close to the city centre in an apartment with two Czech girls. I would recommend looking in Prague 1,2,3,4,5,6,7. As long as public transport is nearby it does not really matter where you live.

leisure & culture

Prague is a wonderful city with a lot to offer, and a lot of tourists as well. I would really recommend visiting the touristic places in the beginning so when people come over you can show them your favourite places. Also look online at Honest guide Prague (YouTube), they recommend places you may not ever come otherwise. While in the Czech Republic definitely visit Bohemian paradise if you like hiking or being in nature. It is a beautiful place that can easily be visited by train, when you buy tickets with more people there is discount and only 8 euro return. Prague has a rich culture, definitely go on one of the free tours in the city centre to enrich your knowledge.

suggestions/tips

Learn the basics of Czech and people will be much more friendly, they really appreciate you trying:

Dobrý den - good day (can be used anytime of the day)

Děkuji - Thank you

Prosím - Please/ you're welcome

Ano - Yes

Ne - No

Na schledanou - Good bye (This pronunciation takes some practice)

CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely! The university has a large variety of subjects to choose from and the ambiance of the city is amazing which makes it an even more enriching experience. I can honestly say that Prague is one of my favourite cities in the world. It is beautiful, has so much to see and experience. The public transport system is amazing which allows you to go anywhere in the city.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

- Compared to the Netherlands going out to dinner is very cheap (less than 10 for dinner and drinks), so while you are there enjoy going out for food. They have every type of restaurant you can imagine and because the beer is so cheap make the most of it. I learned to drink beer here, if you are still not a fan of beer go to a Vinoteka in Prague 3. Here wine is also cheap and really good!

- Also plan lots of trips to surrounding countries, with bus and trains central Europe is very accessible.