

**Hungary - Budapest – Central European University****2018-2019**

Please use Tab to go to the next (text) box.

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

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

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

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	The preparation for the exchange started rather early as the first of December 2017 was already the deadline for the application. Therefore you have to start to think about your destination as soon as possible. At first I wasn't completely sure about my destination, but the choice was an easy one when I came across CEU at the UU website of possible destinations. The application process takes a lot of time and I only got news of my nomination mid February. Even though communication with both UU and CEU was smooth, but still it is a lot of paperwork. Also, take into account that the not every single course of choice might be available. It depends on the department, but most course catalogues are only completed and put on the website a few weeks before the start of the semester. The course catalogues of previous years are available, though.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	UU provided multiple opportunities for counselling and support. I got to speak to some professors about my choice for CEU which assured me that I made the right choice.
academic preparation	I did not do any specific preparations for my time at CEU. Make sure you have finished possible assignments or deadlines before starting your exchange, but other than that, it is also important to relax a bit before starting at a new university in a new country.
language preparation	The language of instruction at CEU is English as it is an American university. Even though they are strict with language requirements (C-level) during the application process, the university is a very diverse and international one. So don't worry about accents etcetera. Luckily, I didn't need to take extra language courses as my English level was already C2. For Dutch students this means that you should submit an official language test like TOEFL or IELTS. However, if your current study programme is already in English or you have completed a Bachelor's programme in English, you are exempted from this. In my case, a document signed by my programme coordinator was enough.
finances	When going abroad it is always smart to make a financial plan. Compared to the Netherlands, Hungary is a cheap place. Everything is cheaper than the Netherlands, but bear in mind that you are going to visit a new place so you will need some money for leisure activities. CEU offers financial aid packages, but these are not

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available for exchange students. The CEU website provides more information about monthly expenses and housing costs etc.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

## study programme (content and organisational issues)

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

## academic quality of education activities

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

## counselling &amp; support at receiving university abroad

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

## transfer of credits

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

**STUDENT LIFE**

## welcome &amp; orientation programme

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

## accommodation

CEU offers accomodation to its students on a specal residence center located 20/30 minutes from the university. This is however, not always available for exchange students. Luckily, accomodation is Budapest is cheap. An apartment with two seperated bedrooms located in the city center should not costs you more than €300/400 a person. However, if you are willing to live in a neighborhood further away from the city center and

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the university the costs will be much lower. CEU is located in the middle of the city center so I would recommend staying in the city center if your budget permits. Finding this kind of accommodation is not that hard. There are many facebook groups in which separate rooms, but mostly shared apartments are being offered. Especially during the summer there are many places available, especially for international students.

## leisure &amp; culture

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

## suggestions/tips

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

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

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

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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