

An amazing experience in an unknown country and city

General information

I studied at the University of Economics in Prague, Czech Republic. It started in September and ended in December, 2015.

Preparation

The places I chose for my study abroad were as follows: Stockholm University, University of Bergen and the University of Economics in Prague. In your motivation letter you had to write which of the three was your first, second and third option. It happened to be my third option, Prague, which was the one being selected for my study abroad. It happily turned out to be one of the greatest experiences of my life. So it all starts with your motivation letter.

It is useful to think about your accommodation already, because this will make your arrival a lot easier than if you still have to look for a room.

There are a couple of things to fix beforehand, like financial issues but also your insurance for abroad. I had a lot of trouble figuring out how to get the subsidy for not using the Dutch public transportation and the financial support for living on your own. If you already have the financial support for living on your own this will be one thing less to be bothered about.

On the other hand the preparation was easy and simple. The University of Economics in Prague will contact you and tell you everything you need to know in order to make your stay run smoothly. If you choose to sleep in the dormitory, your accommodation will be coordinated perfectly and without any problems. Make sure you join the Prague exchange facebook group as soon as you can, because this made my arrival perfect. People will ask when everyone is arriving in Prague and if you want to have a welcome drink.

Arrival

As soon as you are selected for Prague you will be contacted about their buddy system. I recommend you to take this opportunity, because it is nice to meet someone the moment you arrive who can tell you the important stuff of staying in Prague. I also chose a buddy and she helped me upon my arrival with bringing me to the dormitory, doing some grocery shopping and telling me where to get a transportation ticket. Upon arrival at my dormitory they asked for a photo, which I didn't have. My buddy told me where to get a photo and also what I could do about mobile internet. When I arrived in Prague I used the facebook group to see if there was anyone nearby and luckily they were drinking in a bar five minutes away from the dormitory. Do not hesitate and just go there as soon as you arrive! I made new friends the same day I arrived and that made the rest of my stay unforgettable. After some days they told me there was also an Ice Breaking Weekend upcoming. This was a weekend of activities and fun organized by the buddy system. I did not attend this weekend, but I heard stories that it was definitely worth it.

Courses

It is mandatory to obtain 24 credits during your stay abroad, so I chose 6 courses with a total amount of 25 credits.

Basic Czech for Foreigners (A1) (2RUI35) 3 ECTS

This was the course which I was most excited about beforehand, but also after all the lectures and exams. It was a basic introduction to the Czech language, learning you their pronunciation, days of the week, colors, and so on. The grade was divided into four parts. Attendance/activity during the lectures,

a midterm, a presentation and at last the final exam. There are two lecturers, so I am not sure how the other lecturer is, but mine was a young female who was very nice and clear about the course. It was an easy course and it is almost impossible to fail, unless you skip all the lectures and do not study even a little for your midterm or exam.

Economics and Psychology I (5IE362) 4 ECTS

I chose this course, because the course layout made it look like it was something familiar with behavioral economics and I was right. It was mainly about basic economical concepts together with some basic Psychology. For those who already have a lot of knowledge of Psychology, this course might be a bit boring. I thought it was a decent course, with a nice and understandable lecturer. The only downside was the time of the lecture. It was at nine o'clock and for me this was a real obstacle. The first few weeks were doable, but after a while I started skipping those early lectures. Luckily enough this course was doable even without attending all the lectures, with an easy midterm and final exam.

Economics of Life (5IE252) 5 ECTS

I took this course mainly, because I thought it was nice to apply economics on something from daily life. The course started as fun, with interesting subjects about how economics can influence subjects like drugs, criminality and marriage. I thought this was a very interesting course, but the main downside was the way the lecturer(s) handled everything. They gave little to no information about what to expect on the midterm or final exam. The lectures were quite chaotic, with random guest lectures every week. The guest lecturers didn't even know if the information they gave was needed to be learned for the midterm or final exam. In the end I just passed this course, but the final exam was unclear and most of the class was unsatisfied about the way this course ended.

Intercultural Communication in Tourism and Hospitality Industry (2CR313) 3 ECTS

I chose this course, because I always wanted to study something related to Tourism, so I thought this was a nice opportunity to finally do so. It turned out to be a very boring course, with a boring course layout. I would not recommend this course, because it was really hard to concentrate during the lectures, because it was that uninteresting. In the end it was an easy course, but it was not a real pleasure to attend.

Introduction to Game Theory (5EN254) 4 ECTS

I mainly took this course, because I read that it was hard to fail this course. I came to Prague to study, but also to have a great time, so I was not looking for a lot of work to do while I was there. It turned out to be one of my hardest courses. It started real simple with the basic ideas of games, like the prisoner dilemma. However after some weeks it began to increase in difficulty and it was harder every time to understand the course. On the other hand I thought this course was quite interesting and once you understood what was told, I thought the course was alright after all. The courses contained 2 home assignments, a midterm and a final exam. It was definitely not an easy course, but pretty useful for other studies.

World Economy – for exchange students 6 ECTS

This course was about the European crisis and what factors were a part of causing this crisis. It was a one lecture per week course for 3 hours. I found it very hard to concentrate for 3 hours straight and this was one of the main reasons I was not so happy with my choice for this course. Learning for this course was mainly about learning years and the main storyline of the world economy. It was not about understanding, it was all about learning and knowing. The course on the other hand was more than doable and it was 6 ECTS, which is a lot.

Finances

Rent: 210 euro a month

Social life: 100 a week

Gym membership: 27 euro a month (Maximus)

Mobile phone: 15 euro a month (O2)

Transportation: 30 euro for three months

Groceries: 50 a week

Daily Life

Prague is an awesome city with some beautiful sights, but I liked it the most because of the daily (mostly night) life. Be prepared that there will be a party every single day, from Monday till Sunday. I used to party here in the Netherlands like once a week, but during my stay I sort of changed this, resulting in going out 2 to 3 times a week. I slept in the dormitories and made a lot of friends, which meant that there was always someone who was willing to go out or have a drink. Of course it is also a very beautiful city with amazing buildings and a huge castle. At first you will feel a real tourist, looking at all the amazing sights, but after 2 weeks or so you will feel like a real Prague inhabitant. Public transportation is just awesome. Trams are coming by every few minutes and even after a night out you will not have a hard time coming home.

There are a lot of clubs in Prague, but the best were Roxy, Chapeau Rouge and Duplex. If I have to do it all over again, I would choose Prague again without a doubt. I had the best time of my life and made amazing friends. Everyone is open and kind to each other and you will feel very welcome. Studying is fun, but studying in Prague is amazing.