

Travel Report

GENERAL INFORMATION

What was your semester abroad like?

I agree to the publication of the report and attached photos (there are no third parties rights to these photos)	Yes
New outgoing students sometimes ask us for a way to contact former outgoings. Are we allowed to pass on your contact details in case of inquiries?	Yes
My stay (this information will not be displayed if the report is published)	
Academic year	2022/2023
Start semester	Herbst/Fall 2022/23
Duration in semesters	1
Study program at EUF	BA European Cultures and Society
Subject 1 (only applicable to teacher training students)	
Subject 2 (only applicable to teacher training students)	
Subject 3 (only applicable to teacher training students)	
Host country	Czech Republic
Host university	Metropolitní Univerzita Praha

YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

How did you prepare for the semester abroad? What should be organized in advance?

I did not had to prepare a lot in advance. Besides looking for accommodation, I took care of a foreign travel health insurance (mine did not cover everything and I just wanted to be insured in every possible scenario). I booked my train ticket and luckily there is a direct train connection from Flensburg to Prague Main Station running nearly every day. The journey takes around nine hours and you can enjoy the pretty landscapes around the Czech border (Saxon Switzerland, Elbe Sandstone Mountains). So, the journey does not involve much planning and you are not limited regarding luggage.

Where did you live and how did you find your accommodation (self-organized/provided by host university, dormitory/private etc.)?

The Metropolitan University does not offer student accommodation, which made flat hunting quite hard. I joined several Facebook groups and connected with other Erasmus students. Together with nine other internationals, I rented a flat in Prague 2 via „Erasmus in Prague“, an organisation which offers accommodation for incoming international students and organises events to socialise (<https://erasmusinprague.com/>). We had to pay our rent in cash at their office and at the end of our stay we had to leave our apartment two weeks earlier than planned because there was a misunderstanding with our contract. So, I am not sure if I would recommend the organisation for renting, but maybe the issues just happened in our particular case. I heard that others had good experiences with „student-room-flat“ (<https://student-room-flat.com/>). Also, after being accepted at the MUP, their international office sent me a guide which also included suggestions for accommodation.

Did you participate in events for exchange students? How did you establish social contacts in other ways?

Sadly, the Metropolitan University did not organise a lot of events to socialise with other students in the beginning of the semester. However, I heard that they are planning to change that and that they did it more before Covid and want to resume it. Nevertheless, there are two big organisations, focused on international students and the planning of events. One is called 'Oh my Prague!' (<http://ohmyprague.com/home/>) and the other one is 'Erasmus in Prague', as mentioned previously. They organise weekend trips, walking tours, parties, drinking games, pub crawls, karaoke and much more. I often went to the Dogsbar on Wednesdays (definitely recommend that). In the beginning, I spent lots of time with my roommates but later on I also met other people. I would also recommend to take part in the MUP buddy program. My buddy was great and it's really helpful to have someone there who knows their way around.

How satisfied were you with the host university (facilities, staff etc.) and the course offer (workload etc.)?

I really liked the Metropolitan University. Before my arrival, the communication with the international office was easy and they replied quite quickly to any of my questions. They offer a lot of interesting courses in the realm of International Relations / European Studies and I learned a lot about the EU accession of the post-Soviet countries and in particular of the Czech Republic. In my opinion, the educational standards were a bit higher than in Flensburg and some courses were pretty challenging. The lecturers were all very professional and passionate about their field and they put a lot of effort in the preparation of their lectures. The University has two buildings which are both located a bit on the outskirts of Prague and can be reached via tram or via the metro (main building).

Did you learn the local language? How important was the language for your stay?

I did not learn Czech during my stay in Prague. But I know that the MUP offers Czech classes for beginners and you can even get ECTS for them. I decided against such a course because my timetable was already packed and I am not the best in learning languages. Looking back, I regret not doing the course and learning at least some basics. Nevertheless, most of the Czech people and especially the younger generations speak English. So, one can navigate through Prague without knowing any Czech even though the language barrier was sometimes challenging (e.g., when the cashier talks to you and you do not understand anything and she becomes angry)

What intercultural experiences/skills have marked your stay?

It was definitely new to me to be in a country where I do not speak or understand the native language. Also, I would not necessarily say that the Czech Republic is a country marked by hospitality and openness to foreigners (my perception and definitely not generalisable). For instance, in many Czech restaurants, the waiters do not greet you with a smile or are overly friendly as it is the case in Germany. This is something I noticed quickly and which kind of confused me in the beginning. However, later when uni started they told us at the introduction day that this is normal and just the Czech mentality. My roommates came from all around Europe and I learned a lot about their cultures and traditions, especially during Christmas time.

Which perspectives on your host country/home country have changed - and why?

I gained new insights regarding the whole East-West thematic and I learned a lot about the Eastern bloc, and especially about the Czech Republic under Soviet rule. So, if you are interested in this topic, Prague and the MUP is your place to go. Also, after my semester abroad, I really valued the German bread again.

How was your everyday life (leisure, shopping, transportation, inclusion etc.)?

I went on weekend trips to Krakow and Vienna and on day trips to Brno ,Cesky Krumlov and Pilsen. I also explored Prague and all it has to offer (and there is a lot!). As a student, you can buy a three month pass for little money and use all public transportation in Prague. In general, public transportation is pretty cheap in the Czech Republic, especially in comparison to the high prices in Germany. The same applies for the beer, making going out really affordable. Prague has many great clubs, pubs and bars and I really enjoyed the nightlife.

How did you manage financially? How much did you spend on visa (if applicable), travel, accommodation (per month), living expenses, leisure activities, other expenses (books etc.)?

My rent was pretty high for Prague, I paid around 400 Euros for a shared room. So, I think one can definitely find something cheaper accommodation wise. If you go to the right places (not necessarily in the city centre) eating out is really cheap and there are many good restaurants, where you can get a nice meal for around 10 Euros. As already mentioned, public transportation, to travel and beer is also quite affordable. I received "Auslandsbafög" during my semester abroad and I had no financial struggles at all. Overall, I would say that my costs of living were lower in Prague than in Flensburg, so if you are on a budget for your Erasmus, the Czech Republic might be the right destination for you.

What was your best/worst experience? Is there anything else you would like to share?

I have never been to Prague before my semester abroad and I was really positively surprised! It is such a pretty and culturally rich city and has so much to offer. I had many good experiences, such as the weekend trips, the great nights out I had, and the amazing people I have met (just to name some). However, of course it was sometimes hard to live with nine people and I was in desperate need for some me-time after I returned to Flensburg. Also, the grey, dark and really cold weather during autumn and winter made my question my decision for Prague every now and then. So, maybe rather go during the Spring semester if you want to

Would you recommend a semester abroad at your host university? For what reasons?

I would recommend a semester abroad at the Metropolitan University. Their staff and their lecturers are all really friendly and obliging. The communication was easy, they offer interesting courses and the process of course selection was simple.

PHOTOS

In this section, you may upload some photos that represent your stay abroad. When selecting the photos, please bear in mind that the pictures will be visible online if you have given us the permission to publish your report.

- Photo (1)** file_6409bbc24f414-42f1e131-2237-47b9-90b2-7ddfc9942798.jpeg
- Photo (2)** file_6409bc11acdc2-6e65efb6-c4ff-4640-8998-9ee102c8016c.jpeg
- Photo (3)** file_6409bc6fe180f-aa15ebf7-b3bb-46a4-b6bf-aa8666b86b83.jpeg
- Photo (4)** file_6409bc87eed7c-183d89d0-6f31-4205-ae44-2eb51fb5bbc7.jpeg
- Photo (5)** file_6409bcd3ba504-d05e43aa-cb2e-4efb-80d4-f0696aab077a.jpeg
- Photo (6)** file_6409bd04bf99d-2e8f8b51-d625-46c8-a068-2b2d62be0032.jpeg

Here you have the possibility to enter descriptions/explanations for the photos























