

ERASMUS-EXPERIENCE REPORT

Name: Natasa Maksimovic

Field of study: Natural resource management and ecological engineering

Host University: Czech University of Life Sciences

Year of study: 2022/2023

Duration of stay: from 7.9.2022 to 5.02.2023

Publication of the report

I consent to the publication of this experience report including the above data (field of study, host university, year of study, duration of stay) on the website of BOKU-International Relations for the purpose of sharing information related to the study visit, so that future interested outgoings can inform themselves about your experience at the host institution.

☒ yes ☐ no

The consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time without giving reasons with immediate future effect. Any withdrawal can be declared at any time by e-mail to erasmus@boku.ac.at.

THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS WOULD BE INTERESTING FOR FUTURE OUTGOINGS:

1. City, country and people + social integration
2. Accommodation
3. Costs and expenses
4. Arrival and departure (mean of transport)
5. Other (visa, insurance, etc.)
6. Description of host university
7. Application and enrollment formalities and orientation phase
8. Course offer and attended courses (short description and possibly grading)
9. "Study workload" (ECTS) per semester + grading
10. Academic counseling/support
11. Tips and summary

1. I have done my semester abroad last semester 2022/2023 Prague in the Czech Republic. The Czech University of Life sciences (CZU) was the institution I was sent to which has a lovely campus and offers interesting courses, people were nice and kind.

2. My accommodation was not on campus but at a student dormitory held by CZU (Dormitory West) that was away from the university but offered fine accommodation for a decent price. Accommodation made my Erasmus experience more interesting as it was full of Erasmus students.

3. Generally it was enough to live with 1000 euros in Prague, food was cheaper but accommodation not than in most of European countries.

4. I arrived on 31.08 and left on 31.1 by train. I used the Austrian train OBB and made my trip fast and smooth.

5. I needed to have a visa in the Czech Republic even though I have a visa in Austria. As I am a student from a third-world country, this was an obligation I was not quite told by the university, but only by the Ministry of Interior in Prague. I didn't pay for insurance as I was told I don't need to have one since it is not a requirement for Visa in my case also I as a Serbian have a right to go to a doctor in urgent cases through some political agreements.

6. Host university has a lovely multicultural campus places outside the city centre, there I was able to meet not only international people but Czech local people too which made the experience more upgraded. The professors were kind but didn't always have good English skills, which is fine since this university still needs more time to establish more international courses in English.

7. Application and first weeks of enrollment were easy and well explained by Erasmus's tutors upon the semester's beginning. Orientation was rather easy but I was also helped by my Erasmus Buddy which made this week even easier.

8. The course offer was fine and I attended 7 of them: Environmental and Agricultural microbiology where we focused on microbiology and its basics, we were graded with laboratory protocols, presentations and tests as an exam at the end of the semester. Environmental soil science focused on principal and theories of soil science and also laboratory work, we were graded with a presentation, laboratory work and protocol and



written and oral exams at the end of the semester. Agricultural ecology was a very interesting course where I learned a lot of new stuff and the professor was professional, we were graded with a presentation and written exam at the end of the semester. Environmental pollution and remediation were focused on its theory, we were graded with seminar, presentation and multiple choice questioner at the end of the semester. Soil Protection and Conservation was a great course where all protection and conservation measures were deeply explained along with the laboratory work where we were expected to do sampling and write protocols based on laboratory results. This was my favourite course. We were graded based on laboratory protocols and a written exam at the end of the semester. Water resource management was a course where we learned a lot about water as a resource and how to manage it, we were graded on performance during the class, project work and a written exam at the end of the semester. Additionally, I took an intensive Czech course at beginning of the semester which helped me learn the basics of the Czech language and understand the culture.

9. Most of the courses had 5 ECTS which is based on how many hours should a student spend to pass and have a grade. Grading was a bit different than in BOKU cause it had only 3 grades (1,2,3). For that reason, when a student gets 3, BOKU deserved 4. I found this unfair.

10 . We had amazing academic counselling and were well supported by our international relations coordinator Ondrej Votinsky. I am thankful to him as he helped all of us and made our stay more original.

11. Overall, my Erasmus stay was a wonderful intercultural experience where I learned a lot. I would suggest anyone go to the Czech Republic and do Erasmus as it's a Slavic country with a special mentality in the middle of Europe. I enjoyed the city and how charming it is. Also, it would great for everyone to learn Czech there and have a real experience of the culture.