

ERASMUS-EXPERIENCE REPORT

Name: Anonymous

Field of study:
Agrobiology, Management of Natural resources

Host University: CZU Prague

Year of study: 2024

Duration of stay: from February 2024 to June 2024

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The consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time without giving reasons with immediate future effect.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

Prague is a very lovely city, especially during the spring semester when the city awakens from its grey winter and blossoms with beautiful parks and festivals along the shores of the Moldau. Czech people are initially reserved and a bit skeptical, but they open up quickly and can become fun companions. Similar to Austria, young people can converse in English, but for everyday encounters with all age groups, it might help to learn at least basic Czech phrases to communicate your basic needs.

As an ERASMUS student at CZU Prague, you will likely spend most of your time with other international students, as Czech students do not often participate in the international study programs. The ERASMUS community at CZU tries to connect international students, but if you're interested in more activities outside of the university, I recommend getting in touch with larger ERASMUS chat groups that include students from all Prague universities. There you will find many events to participate in and can start exploring from there.

Finding affordable accommodation in Prague is quite challenging since there are a lot of students but not many housing options. I would suggest avoiding the CZU student housing if possible, as it is quite far from the city center and not very attractive. Facebook groups with private landlords/flatmates and recommendations from former students seem to be the best way to find a room with flatmates. Other options are often quite overpriced. Be cautious of online scammers, as some colleagues have experienced issues. Prague has excellent and affordable public transportation, so I recommend finding a room in the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, or 7th district and commuting to the university. This way, you can enjoy and experience Prague itself more since the university is located on the outskirts of the city but is easily reached by public transport (I would not recommend biking due to the uphill and bike-unfriendly roads in the outskirts).

Housing will be your main expense; in spring 2024, 400-500€ per month was the average for many of us. Public transportation for students is cheap, as is beer, but other living expenses (food, eating out, etc.) are similar to those in Vienna.

For traveling between Prague and Vienna, I strongly recommend taking the train. Book cheaper tickets through the Czech train company or take Railjet trains.

Studying at CZU Prague is somewhat different from studying at BOKU, mainly because the semester is divided into a lecture period and an exam period. The lecture period is more time-consuming and has more hours per course per week than at BOKU. The exam period consists solely of studying for exams, and most courses offer multiple exam dates. If you manage to pass your exams early, you can enjoy the last month without any commitments.



Almost every course requires a final presentation or seminar work at the end of the lecture period, so be aware of potentially stressful weeks at the end of that time (or start sooner with the presentations!). The exam period is quite calm in comparison.

The quality of courses varies as well as the study workload. I found that the best courses were at the Faculty of Agrobiological Sciences, Food, and Natural Resources, followed by the Faculty of Environmental Sciences. I would not recommend any courses at the Faculty of Economics and Management. The university is divided into these different faculties, each with its own buildings. Agrobiological Sciences has the oldest facilities, while Environmental Sciences has the newest and nicest. The campus is quite large and has many places where you can study and spend some free time.

At the beginning of the semester, you will likely experience a stressful week when you discover that "half" of your courses overlap, as the course dates are only published then. A pro tip: courses from the same faculty usually do not overlap, but may overlap with courses from other faculties. I encourage you to ask the lecturers personally or via email if late arrivals to the course or missing some dates are tolerated because some lecturers are very strict regarding attendance, even if it's just a lecture (VO). The process of changing courses is theoretically easy but sometimes chaotic in practice. In general, the Erasmus coordinators at CZU are friendly and try their best.

Some courses take you on excursions which is quite nice and I would recommend to anyone to visit the nearby national parks/conservation areas for hiking and such. Dresden is also just a weekend away.