

Sanny Bakker

Exchange report - University of Economics, Prague, Fall 2017

The exchange semester was a free choice of the master program I follow at Stockholm University. During my bachelor I had already been on exchange, which was a great experience. Therefore, I decided to go again during my master degree. I really wanted to go to Prague, because of the large variety of management courses with an international focus. I had been to the Czech Republic before and really wanted to explore the country and its culture better, including the language.

Education and organisation

The university organises an orientation week the first week of the semester, which exists of fun activities to get to know many new people. In addition, this week is also important to arrange a lot of paper work, public transport card, sim card and information about all kind of activities during the semester will be given. Therefore, I really recommend to attend it. Moreover, the university has a Buddy System which links you to a Czech student who will pick you up from the airport and can help you out with questions or other practical matters during the semester.

The school system at VSE is different from SU. Most classes exists of lectures and seminars in smaller groups and are more practically oriented. You learn most by attending the classes. Most of the courses exist of group work, presentations, individual assignments, case studies and exams. The courses at VSE are easy to pass, but it is good to start early on the assignments in the beginning of the semester since most deadlines are at the end of the semester when you will also have all the exams. Most courses allow exchange students to take all the exams in the last week of class before Christmas, otherwise you can take the exams in January together with the Czech students if you want to stay longer in Prague.

I took 6 courses of 30 ECTS in total. There is a list available of all courses for international students where you can find details on the courses and the assignments in the syllabus of each course. When you sign up for the courses, it is not sure if you get all chosen courses in the first round, but you can fix it usually still in the second round since students are switching a lot. I took courses e.g.

Opportunity recognition and Business Model Development, Managers in an international environment, International Management, Czech language, which I can all recommend. The teachers in these courses were very good in explaining and all courses were very interactive. The course *Information System Management* I would not recommend, since the teacher was not good in explaining and tedious. I did not take any intensive courses, but I wish I had done it. I heard from other students that it is rather easy to do these courses and it usually takes only a few (usually 3)

days to pass it, so it will lower your regular weekly workload a lot. You can take up to two intensive courses. Moreover, on Tuesdays there are Nation 2 Nation parties organised by ESN for all exchange students, which you want to go to every week, so make sure to keep Wednesday mornings free in your schedule.

Housing

During the semester in Prague I chose to live in a single room at the VSE dormitory Jarov III F, which I could really recommend. The rooms are renovated. When taking a single room you share the kitchen, toilet and bathroom with only one other person. The room has a balcony and the kitchen has a stove, microwave and fridge. The dorms really provide you with the social network. Since most of the students will be living there, you will get to know many people to hang out with from different countries very easily. The dormitories have sports fields next door for tennis, basketball and football and there is a school canteen next door where you can buy daily meals for around 50 CZK. There is a Kaufland, Lidl, Albert close to the dorms to get groceries. And a Vietnamese supermarket next to the tram stop for quick shopping. The tram stop is in front of the dorms and takes only 15 minutes directly to the university and 20 minutes to the city centre.

Tips in Prague

The first day of the introduction week ESN sells packages that include a Vodafone sim card which is very cheap to have during your stay in Prague and a N2N card for free entry to every Tuesday party. The public transport card is 260 CZK per month for students till 25 years old, the school will provide you with documents to get it the first day of the introduction week. The tram also go from the city to the dorms during the night every day of the week. Though Uber is also cheap, especially when you share it with more friends from the dorms.

Prague is an old city with beautiful architecture and history. There are different districts all with their own character and everywhere many restaurants and cafes to have lunch, dinner, coffee or a beer, which is not expensive compared to Sweden. Since the courses are not too hard and by arranging your schedule well, you will have time to travel around the beautiful Czech Republic as well, like a day trip to Kutna Hora, Plzen, Karlovy Vary, Český Krumlov, České Budějovice, Karlštejn, Brno. Or to the mountains e.g. Šumava, České Švýcarsko, Krkonoše. Many students do trips to Dresden, Munich, Vienna or Krakow, but Czech Republic has a lot of beautiful places to see as well.

If you have any questions, you can contact me on sanny_bakker@hotmail.com