

**EXCHANGE REPORT****Name**

Maya Diab

**Year and semester for exchange**

year4 , spring semester

**Exchange university**

UMPRUM

**Degree programme**

Master

## Spring semester in Prague!

### Before departure

I applied for exchange studies because I wanted to experience a new culture while pursuing my education. I chose Prague as my destination because of its rich history, vibrant cultural scene, and central location in Europe. The university I selected had a strong academic reputation and offered courses that aligned with my field of study and my personal interests.

My expectations were to immerse myself in a different educational system, make new friends from around the world, and explore the city's historical landmarks and attractions. I anticipated a challenging yet rewarding academic experience.

In terms of preparations, I completed the necessary paperwork well in advance.

### Upon arrival

I arrived in Prague four days before the start of my studies. The university organized a social introduction program for incoming exchange students, which included a guided tour of the city. It was a great opportunity to get acquainted with the campus, meet other students, and explore some of Prague's famous landmarks together.

The university provided us with the opportunity to try out different courses during the first week. This trial period allowed us to explore various subjects and get a sense of what interested us the most. It was an excellent way for us to make an informed decision when selecting our final course schedule. This flexibility and freedom in choosing courses contributed to a more personalized and enjoyable academic experience.

### Financials

I received financial support from Erasmus, an extra loan from CSN, the availability of these funding options was beneficial in managing my expenses during the exchange period there were no additional fees imposed by the university.

In general, the cost of living in Prague was cheaper compared to Sweden. However, I want to highlight that accommodation costs were quite high. It's important for future students to be cautious and plan their budget accordingly, especially when it comes to finding affordable accommodation options.

## **Accommodation**

Finding suitable accommodation during my exchange studies was challenging due to online fraud and high prices. Luckily, I connected with two fellow Erasmus students and rented an apartment through a reliable website called Erasmus in Prague. When signing the rental contract, it's important to be careful and read it thoroughly. Although I lived close to the city center, Prague's accessible transportation system allows for cheaper housing options further away, helping to stay within budget.

## **University and studies**

was smaller compared to KTH, but it offered a diverse range of courses and workshops focused on art, product design, and architecture. What I particularly enjoyed was the accessibility to various workshops for prototyping and experimenting with different techniques and materials. These facilities provided valuable hands-on experience and enhanced my learning in those fields.

However, one challenge I encountered was the language barrier. Not everyone was proficient in English, which could make communication and understanding certain aspects of the courses or interactions with peers a bit difficult at times. It was important to be patient and find alternative ways to overcome language barriers, such as seeking clarification from instructors or relying on visual aids and demonstrations.

Overall, despite the language challenge, the school provided a great opportunity to explore and develop my skills in art, product design, and architecture through its diverse range of courses and hands-on workshops.

## **Courses**

The university offered a variety of courses with smaller credit values (2 to 3 credits), which allowed us to take multiple courses. During the first week, we had the opportunity to try different courses before finalizing our choices. Two standout courses for Erasmus students were "Czech Modern and Contemporary Art and Architecture" and "Genius Loci of Prague 1," which included on-site visits and study trips around the city. I also enjoyed practical courses like "Clay Modelling," "Bookbinding," and "Lithography," which allowed me to try different techniques and methods. Overall, the university provided a diverse range of courses that catered to various interests and allowed for exploration within Prague. I was enrolled in Architecture 3 studio, which was an experimental studio that provided me with a great deal of freedom to explore materials and concepts.

## **City and country**

Prague offers a vibrant student life with a diverse range of cultural events, festivals, and a thriving nightlife. The city's historical sites provide a unique backdrop for exploration, while universities organize student clubs and activities. Prague's central location and efficient public transportation system make it easy to travel and explore neighboring cities and countries. Overall, Prague offers a dynamic and enriching experience for students. The Czech people take pride in their artistic traditions, with Prague being a hub for music, theater, and visual arts. The city hosts a variety of cultural events, including classical music concerts, opera performances, theater productions, and contemporary art exhibitions. The National Theatre and Rudolfinum are renowned venues that showcase the best of Czech and international talent.

## **Leisure and social activities**

I enjoyed exploring Prague through walks and took advantage of student discounts for opera, ballet, and theater tickets, costing only 2 euros. The city's beer gardens were also a great experience, offering a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy Czech beer and socialize.

**Sustainability**

I travelled by bus to Prague, and although it was a long journey, it was worthwhile. UMRUM has a recycle station on campus. This station proved to be a valuable resource as it offered a variety of materials such as cloth, books, and other study aids.

**Other recommendations and observations**

Tips: be cautious with accommodation, try out different courses, and take advantage of student perks. Enjoy Prague's vibrant student life and cultural offerings!