Alba Chouza Cruces

Chris Rance

13001

13 November 2021

Life as an Erasmus student in Brno

Being an Erasmus student requires being flexible and not afraid of changes. When someone decides to start this adventure, has to be aware of the positive things, but also the negative ones, since it can be one of the best experiences ever or even a nightmare. Each Erasmus experience is going to be different depending on the person, as there are some choices that people have to make before arriving in a different country, like living in a dormitory or in a flat.

The first step to go on Erasmus is the paperwork. First of all, people need to choose subjects from their home university and search which subjects are compatible in the receiving university. It is not an easy task as the number of credits and subjects are stipulated. Also, it is common that some problems will appear, so, as the students arrive at the receiving university, they will have to make changes in the subjects and ask for exceptions to the teachers. But, when the paperwork is finished, people will be able to focus on other duties.

Being on an Erasmus is the first contact with parents’ independence for a lot of people. When people start being independent, they realized how much time it takes to go to the supermarket or to do the laundry. As it is also a new place, they have to get used to the system that native people use, for example, the schedule of the supermarkets would be different and the language that the workers use too. Moreover, students will probably have to learn how to live with other people, as even in a flat or in a dormitory, they will need to share the kitchen, the bathroom and the washing machine. This takes to another new experience.

Studying abroad leads students to know a lot of new people, which will have a different culture. Usually, this is a rewarding experience, because being in contact with some different cultures means that they will learn many things. Conversations about politics, religion or society will be made from a lot of different perspectives than people normally do not think about. Almost certainly, distinct culture signifies distinct language.

Depending on what part of the Czech Republic people is, it would be easier or harder to communicate in English. For example, in Prague, as it is a tourist place and it has a lot of the world’s most important companies, it is easier to communicate in English. Santiago’s experience about this is: “I think that in Prague you can live without speaking Czech. You can't live without speaking English” (Carlos Ferrer). However, in Brno it is a different situation since even going to a really required place like the supermarket, could be a difficult task. Teresa agrees when she said: “I have been in 5 different supermarkets where I asked some doubts in English to the employees, but none of them could understand me. I ended up using the translator to Czech” (Ana Teresa Cunha Sampaio).

With all these things in mind, we also have to consider how people could feel being so far away from their families and friends. The Erasmus experience could be one semester or one entire academic year. This is a situation that is not easy to handle, and people is not taught how they should manage it.

One thing that probably all Erasmus students agree, is that it is so hard to handle going partying and doing homework. Many organisations provide many activities and different parties per week for these students, like ESN. The majority of teenagers would agree that they would choose going to a party rather than writing an essay. So, Erasmus students require a lot of responsibility and self-control in what leads to studies. This conflict is even harder for people who are staying in dormitories.

Usually, Erasmus students’ dormitories are not very comfortable to study or to feel really cosy (Andrea Krivankova). These places have many floors and many rooms per each. People go on Erasmus to have fun, so, commonly, every night some rooms on their floor are partying. This situation makes it even more difficult doing homework, writing essays or studying.

This essay has analysed the main topics related to the life of an Erasmus student. Even though there are some points that seem to be tough or challenging, as the paperwork, they are immensely compensated by the good ones, like going partying. Also, being forced to deal with a change of culture, would help people to be versatile. Finally, meeting new people from diverse countries will always be a good way to improve the variety of languages spoken by the Erasmus students.

Works Cited

Fariña, Santiago. “En Praga se puede vivir sin hablar checo, pero no sin hablar inglés”. *Radio Prague International,* Carlos Ferrer, 10 December 2008, <https://espanol.radio.cz/en-praga-se-puede-vivir-sin-hablar-checo-pero-no-sin-hablar-ingles-8589292>

Krivankova, Andrea. “What Erasmus Accommodation to Choose in Brno?”. *Foreigners Blog*, Andrea Krivankova, 26 January 2018, <https://blog.foreigners.cz/what-erasmus-accommodation-to-choose-in-brno/>

Cunha Sampaio, Ana Teresa. Personal Interview. 18 October 2021