

MY STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE


GIUSY DI CONSTANZO, ITALY

"My UHK experience"



My experience in Hradec Kralove was really good even though I spent my exchange semester during a pandemic. The first month was tough because I was "unlucky" regarding the flat I was assigned to in the dormitories of the University. I was one of the few people that did not have a roommate, my Czech flatmates were unfriendly, and I did not know anyone around. Therefore, I was lonely during the first days. Also, I had to face a cultural shock and it was difficult for me to adapt to the new things, starting from the weather and the language to the currency and the local people. But, gradually, I started to meet the rest of the Erasmus students and I attended the ESN events where I got to know a lot of amazing people!

When I could completely get used to my new life, the pandemic happened and everything was canceled. I did not know what was the best decision: If staying in the Czech Republic or coming back to Italy since the situation there was critical and my parents were very worried about me. But I decided to stay because I felt safe here and I did not want to put my family at risk by taking a plane and going home.



The quarantine was kinda tough and alienating. Everyone in the dormitory was feeling sad and worried but I was lucky because I could spend that time with few friends and it was easier to cope with the situation. Actually, during quarantine, I could get to know well some people that became my best friends and I am sure I will have them in my life forever!

Studying and focusing during those times was hard but the teachers were understanding, especially during the exams. The communication with the university was always the best, they always solved my problems quickly and they also provided us a free psychologist (via Skype) as a support during the quarantine, which I decided to use and it helped me a little bit!

Then the lockdown ended... It felt weird to go back on the streets but as soon as I got used to normal life again, it was amazing. We had a lot of trips to nature throughout the Czech Republic, and I used to go to Prague pretty often; that city is amazing!

With the ISIC card, we have the chance to travel around Europe easily and it is cheap, so I decided to extend my stay for one more month, until July, when all the borders were open and we had the chance to travel again safely.

I had some personal issues during my stay, not linked to the University (I broke my left arm, for instance), but these things did not change my perspective about my experience.

I am really thankful for all the people I met here and the beautiful places I visited. I will remember this experience forever!

