

Summary of my memories on my Erasmus in Liberec

2017/2018 winter semester

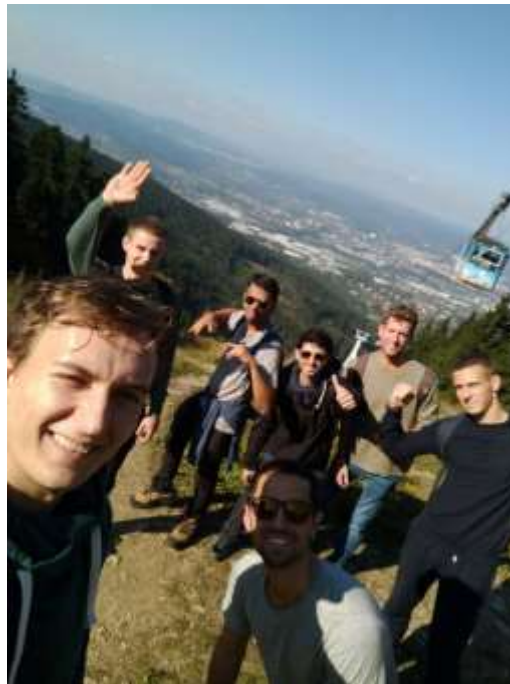
I completed one of my old wishes when I applied for Erasmus+ scholarship in 2017. I have always dreamed about an opportunity that could help me experience how it is to live abroad far from my family, my relatives and out of my comfort zone.

During the application it was hard to choose the right university where I can continue my studies. Finally, I have chosen the Technical University of Liberec in the northern part of Czech Republic. The place was attractive, the homepage of the uni was so well-organised that I could find everything easily. In addition, I have never been in Czechia so I was curious about that country.

Before the starting date of the program I had more purposes: I wanted to get on well with everything in a foreign environment, find new friends, get as many memories as I can, travel a lot and improve my English. On the other hand, I was worried about some things too: what will happen if I can't speak English so well? How can I get new friends? Where will I live? etc...

After I got the results I tried to prepare myself for all the unexpected things I could imagine. I took some private English lessons, applied for a summer job in the US to get experience on how to achieve well on my Erasmus. Fortunately, the university from Liberec helped me and offered accommodation in the local dormitory so I didn't have to deal with it anymore. I didn't have any problem when the date for my departure came, I was just excited about a new adventure.

My first journey wasn't as easy as I expected (my train broke down and I missed my transfer from Prague to Liberec) but finally I arrived. I realized in the first moment that I was going to be the only Hungarian student from our Erasmus group, which included about 150 people. But I wasn't afraid of it. Actually, I calculated with it so I found it a good challenge (and now I can tell to you that I wasn't disappointed and if I could restart it I would be alone again 😊). Of course, the first few days (especially because of this) were a little bit harder. I had some problems with my internet connection and the closed shops 'cause of national holidays. Anyway, the helpful local ESN coordinators did everything during the Welcome Days to find our place in the new group so I felt better after the first week. I didn't have any problem with my English, I felt that my communication improved from day to day. I discovered the town, found a wide choice of entertainment facilities and hiked the local 800-1000 metre-high mountains. I was glad with the opportunities of doing sport as well because there were almost all kinds of pitches or courts of every popular sports in 5 minutes distance by walk from my dorm.



Of course, I could experience the famous Erasmus parties too. They were spent with greetings and introducing each other. Beside these, our helpers organised a trip to Prague for a weekend where we could spend some amazing days.



So for the 2nd week I already felt that I had friends and after the beginning of the schoolyear I could spend usefully my free hours as well. I could get on well with my 3 flatmates from the first second and we helped each other in the next 4 months without any kind of conflicts.



From week to week I completed the exercises of my subjects successfully, moreover, I took part in the programmes of our community where I tried to be active as much as it was possible. I think the key was to be open-minded and that's why I got so much kindness from the first day. When everyone found his/her place in our new home we started to organise trips in the near. So we reached for Dresden, Görlitz or Zgorzelec.



I had some trips alone too where I went to Jablonec, Jicín, Hradec Králové, Olomouc and I visited my brother in Ostrava where he was studying on the same scholarship.

Sometimes it happened that my relatives visited me in Liberec and I could meet my girlfriend, my brother (again ☺) and his girlfriend.

In my classes I had to present actually in every week, so I couldn't skip to learn (in addition in English) but it wasn't a problem for me, I passed all my exams. Next to my studies I got other tasks as well which showed interesting challenges. For example we got invitation to present from our countries during the semester where we had to show our home to the others. It is one of the best memories when I talked about Hungary in front of 100 people. The result was big applause that made me so happy. I won't forget it in the future. At the end of the night I invited them for a Hungarian meal where my friends helped me to serve the food. They could eat sausages and drink wines. Of course, for the bravest volunteers I gave pálinka, which is the strongest Hungarian drink I have ever tried. I guess these nights were the most interesting ones because these ones offered us the easiest ways to get closer to each other's culture.

On the weekdays I looked for the opportunities to keep in touch with the local Czech people. At the uni I searched for a court for playing basketball and I found one! Every Wednesday there were basketball games for the students of TUL. After a time, I invited my friends and these events became a little bit Erasmus ones.



I enjoyed my days in this beautiful town which was surrounded by high mountains, hills, forests and clean nature. Although the weather turned colder in October and it was raining for almost 2 months without any longer breaks. In spite of this, my mood stayed the same happy that it was at the beginning. From the middle of November

the snow came and gave new impulses for us. It was so strange but great to live in a country where I could see everything covered by white snow. Unfortunately, it is different in my country for now. But here, sometimes it approached 30 centimetres and was just snowing from morning to night during more days!



The winter holiday arrived earlier than I thought. I spent these days at home in the circle of my family but many of my friends travelled to see Hungary for 3 days and I went to help and show Budapest to them. I guess they enjoyed it and we had a great time together.



The examination period started and I studied a lot but attempted to visit the erasmus events as well. The Goodbye party was also one of the best nights here. The

coordinators arranged a funny election where we could vote for each other in different categories. I was so surprised when I was elected to the best 2 nominees in the category of SmartErasmus. Finally, I finished on the second place but this price was a good feedback from my semester. So I was sad when my last day arrived and I had to say good bye to my friends but life went on and I had to accept that everything finishes once.



I got lots of gifts, kind words, hugs and I gave a lot as well. My best friends invited me to visit them in the future and I also asked the same from them. I think we will definitely see each other one day. Who knows, maybe in the near future. Although I know I won't see all of them but I am sure that my memories with them will stay with me forever and I never forget any of them, our mutual moments, minutes, hours, days, weeks and months that we lived in Liberec in this awesome town in this hidden part of Europe.

I got many new friends and memories. I got to know a new culture, a new country that I wasn't so familiar with before and visited many countries in the neighbourhood. I feel more self-confident than ever. My personality had a huge improvement in all fields. I learned languages, my English reached for a much higher level and I learned a lot of Czech words and expressions too. I got so many love, happiness and positive moments that I can't explain. It was one of the best decisions in my life when I applied for this program! Without this experience I wouldn't be a different person but I would definitely lack a lot of fantastic memories that nothing can replace at home in my original life.

I heard about different statistics that still just few percents of the students apply for foreign scholarships and I don't know the reasons why. The only thing I can say is that if someone starts it he/she won't regret it. In my opinion, all the students should

try minimum 1 kind of exchange student program (It can be Erasmus or another one) during their uni studies. In the near and far future they will only benefit from it.

