

Press release

Prague, September 1st, 2020

9 out of 10 foreign students recommend studying in the Czech Republic

The Czech National Agency for International Education (DZS) released results of a research conducted among foreign university students in the Czech Republic. It was focused on evaluation of life and study quality in the Czech Republic. A representative sample of 10,248 respondents makes it the largest survey of its kind ever conducted in the Czech Republic.

Who are foreign students in the Czech Republic / Czech foreign students' characteristics

Since 2000, when the SIMS¹ statistics began to monitor the number of foreign university students in the Czech Republic, the number has been increasing constantly. As there are fewer Czech university students every year due to the demographic development, the share of foreign students is also growing in the total number. Currently, 16 % of university students in the Czech Republic are foreigners; almost a half of them (44.8 %) comes from Slovakia. The second most represented group are students from Russia (13.2%), followed by students from Ukraine (7.8%), Kazakhstan (4.2%) and India (2%). More than three quarters of students participating in the survey study their study programme in the Czech language. *"Apart from Slovaks, students studying in Czech are mostly from the countries of the former Soviet Union, such as Russia, Ukraine or Kazakhstan, who speak Slavic languages or have a good knowledge of Russian,"* Soňa Lippmann, Head of the Department of Internationalization of Studies commented.

Why foreigners choose to study in the Czech Republic

One of the examined areas was the students' motivation to study in the Czech Republic. The answers indicate that one of the most important factors is specific study programmes (49 % of answers). In addition to the study programme, the most common reasons for deciding to study in the Czech Republic are: a specific university (46 %), the geographical location of the country (32 %), relatively low living costs (26 %), low or absent tuition fees (25 %), good security situation (20 %) and friends and family living in the Czech Republic (18 %). Regional differences can be observed in the motives for choosing to study in the Czech Republic - while Slovak students have a good knowledge of Czech universities and awareness of the quality of a particular university plays a crucial role in their decision-making, students in English study programmes emphasize the financial affordability of studying in the Czech Republic.

How foreign students evaluate the study quality in the Czech Republic

International students are generally satisfied with the equipment of classrooms and laboratories (89 %) and the quality of study materials (84 %), although there is a relatively large difference between students studying in English (74% satisfaction with study materials) and Czech (88% satisfaction). Students are slightly less satisfied with faculty staff approach to their needs (75 %) – again, students studying in English are slightly less satisfied (64 % compared to 79 % of students studying in Czech) –, and also with the interconnectedness to work experience in the study

¹ <https://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/vysoke-skolstvi/sdruzene-informace-matrik-studentu-sims>

programme (70% of students are satisfied or rather satisfied). *"Generally, Slovak students are among the most satisfied, which may be caused mainly by linguistic and cultural proximity and similarity of the Czech and Slovak higher education systems. On the contrary, German students are the least satisfied,"* Jakub Tesař, Head of the DZS higher education department explained.

Three quarters of foreign students (74 %) evaluate the share of high-quality teachers at their university as 70 % or higher. If we compare these results with the satisfaction with the quality of teaching based on the pan-European Eurostudent research², according to which a quarter of Czech students are rather dissatisfied with the quality of teaching, the overall satisfaction of foreign students is slightly higher. The best rated study fields are law, information and communication technology, and art.

Satisfaction with the students' Czech experience is reflected in their willingness to recommend study in the Czech Republic to their friends and acquaintances. While Slovak students are generally satisfied and are therefore inclined to do so (97%), students from Western Europe are slightly less inclined to recommend study in the Czech Republic (75%), as are the students from India or the Middle East (76%). However, in general, 9 out of 10 foreign students would recommend study in the Czech Republic.

Integration of foreign students into the Czech community

We can argue that about two thirds of foreign students are successfully integrated among Czech students. Naturally, inclusion is easier for students from Slovakia; students from other countries, and especially those studying in English programmes, feel integrated rather in the community of foreign students than in the Czech student community. More than half (54%) of the students from other countries than Slovakia do not feel included among other Czech students.

A number of other aspects of living and studying in the Czech Republic were examined by the research and its results were provided to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and to the universities participating in the survey to help them in their internationalization concept creation.

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https://www.msmt.cz/uploads/odbor_30/TF/Analyticke_materialy/Eurostudent/E_VI_zaverecna_zprava.pdf