

Praha, February 13th, 2024

High quality of education and life in Czechia attracts international students, research shows

Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS) has been working with international students in Czechia for 20 years as part of the Study in Czechia initiative. In our latest research, we learn about their motivations for choosing Czechia as a study destination and their perceptions of the study process. The research focused on the pre-departure support for international students, the quality of Czech university study programmes, and the services and living conditions for international students.

Study in Czechia has long represented Czechia as an innovative country for study and science. Through the Czechia Alumni programme, it also maintains contact with international graduates of Czech universities, develops their relationship with the country, and thus strengthens the country's image abroad. Surveying international students at Czech universities was one of the key activities in 2023.

Who are the international students in Czechia?

The number of international students in Czechia has been rising steadily since 2002.¹ At the time of data collection, they consisted of **18 %** (54 770) of the total 304 518 students of Czech universities,² today this number has grown to **55 493**.³ **Two thirds** of them study in the Czech language. Most of them study at the bachelor's level (62 %), followed by 32 % at the master's level and 6 % at the doctoral level of study. Most students come from Slovakia, followed by Russian and Ukrainian students. India, Turkey and Bangladesh are also rising rapidly in the top 20 countries from which students come to Czechia.⁴

Reasons for choosing Czechia as a study destination

The research focused on international students currently studying full-time at Czech universities at all levels, i.e. bachelor's, master's, and doctoral, in both Czech and English. According to the research, the **quality of education** is their main reason for choosing to study at a Czech university. 9 out of 10 international students consider their study programme in Czechia to be of high quality. 8 out of 10 also believe that more than 70% of their teachers are top in their field of study.

International students also seek **specific study programmes** (32 %). They also listed the cultural or linguistic proximity of the country and the level of **quality of life** that Czechia offers. Overall, **85 %** of international students would choose Czechia as a study destination again. **9 out of 10** international students would also recommend studying in Czechia to their friends or family.

"It is also interesting to observe regional differences in the motivation to study at Czech universities. While the main motivation for students in North America is the balance between the quality of study and the cost of study, Central and Latin America, Western Europe and parts of the Middle East appreciate the opportunity to study in English," says Michal Uhl, Director of the DZS.

Study and living conditions for international students in Czechia

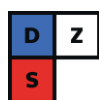
Most international students find the **pre-arrival procedures** clear and understandable. However, the **visa process** is still seen as problematic. A total of 52 % of the surveyed students come from non-EU

¹ Source: MŠMT, Student data, 2022

² Source: SIMS, 31. 12. 2022

³ Source: SIMS, 22. 1. 2024

⁴ Source: SIMS, 31. 12. 2022



**Study in
Czechia**



**Czechia
Alumni**

**Czech National Agency
for International Education
and Research**
Na Poříčí 1035/4 110 00 Prague 1
+ 420 221 850 100 | info@dzs.cz
www.dzs.cz/en

countries and have applied for a visa for a stay of more than 90 days (long-term for study purposes). Up to 75 % of these students stated that they found the visa application process time-consuming or administratively demanding. Although there has been a 10 percentage point improvement in the perception of the process compared to 2020, the level of dissatisfaction is still the highest in this category.

In the pre-arrival process, the recognition of previous studies helps, according to students. This is rated up to **23 %** better than in the previous 2020 research, which is likely due to **institutional accreditation** (competence in assessment is in the hands of accredited universities).

Despite some challenges, the **living conditions** of international students are rated **well**. Students particularly appreciate the **clear and informative approach** of the staff at the schools in terms of the services provided for study and life. Respondents also expressed satisfaction with the **facilities** at the universities.

In terms of integration, **8 out of 10** international students felt integrated with other international students. However, the results show that integration is more difficult for students in English-speaking programmes. Another challenge is the integration of international students among local classmates, where only **6 out of 10** out of them rate this aspect positively. However, the majority find the local community **welcoming**.

Importance of international students at Czech universities

"International students bring diversity and cultural enrichment to Czech universities, which increases the quality of education. Their presence also has a positive impact on the country's economy. During their studies they contribute to the labour market through tuition fees, tax and insurance payments, and after their studies through their employment in Czech companies. The recruitment of international students can also counterbalance the decline in the demographic development of the population," summarises the main reasons Soňa Lippmann, Head of Communication and Analytical Division.

Research shows that **64 %** of international students work while studying and **45 %** of those, who graduate, stay in Czechia for employment reasons. Almost **half of the students** say they would like to **stay** in Czechia to enter the labour market or continue their studies. Thus, systematic work is essential not only with international students but also with **alumni**.

"Through their naturalisation, we gain well-educated, integrated alumni who form ties with this country. The students who return to their home country help to shape and promote a positive image of Czechia abroad, which then benefits us in the long term for the rest of the alumni's life in terms of our economic, cultural and diplomatic interests," says Michal Uhl, referring to the **Czechia Alumni** programme. This programme contributes to maintaining and making better use of these ties with alumni, supports the retention of talented people for the Czech labour market and generally promotes Czech higher education abroad. This makes Czechia a **smart choice** for international students.

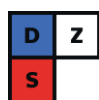
The full publication will be available soon on the DZS website. The presentation and a recording from the press conference is available at medialnisnidane.cz. Source: DZS, Study in Czechia

Contact:

Martina Nevolná
Head of Communication and Regional Cooperation Unit
Phone No.: (+420) 778 975 881, e-mail: press@dzs.cz

Czech National Agency for International Education and Research

The main objective of the Czech National Agency for International Education is to facilitate international cooperation in education. It is responsible for administration of European educational programmes, for example Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. More information can be found at dzs.cz/en. Find out more about the Study in Czechia initiative at studyin.cz or czechialumni.cz.



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