

UPCES FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

DUE TO RAPID DEVELOPMENTS OF OMICRON VARIANT, THIS DOCUMENT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEW INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE

BEFORE FLYING TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Arriving UPCES students are required to fill out the [online arrival form](#) before entry and present the confirmation (typically QR code) at boarder crossing if requested.

Testing prior entering the Czech Republic

- A) Students with **2 doses of covid vaccine and a booster covid vaccine** are exempt from testing prior to their departure. Those students do not need to quarantine after arrival nor do they need to undergo PCR/antigen testing.
- B) Students with **only 2 doses of covid vaccine** do need to have a negative PCR test no more than 72 hours before entry into the Czech Republic (it is possible to show proof of the negative test in paper format or with an EU digital COVID certificate). Students with only two doses do not need to quarantine after arrival nor do they need to undergo PCR/antigen testing.

Full disclaimer can be found on the website of [Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic](#) together with specific [Rules for entry to the Czech Republic](#).

Note: Please make sure you possess the right type of certificate accepted in the Czech Republic, typically the EU digital COVID certificate (EU Green Pass) or another official proof of completed vaccination.

All aspects of student life in Prague and the EU are made easier if you possess EU Green Pass. Converting your CDC card into EU Green Pass is possible even before your arrival, please contact Anna.Cudova@cerge-ei.cz.

ARRIVALS/HOUSING

What will happen when I arrive?

There will be an UPCES representative at the airport to help make sure you get from the airport to your flat without difficulties. They will also help you get Czech money (exchange it or take you to the closest ATM). If you have delayed luggage, they will assist you in dealing with it.

How will housing work?

The UPCES representative who meets you at the airport will arrange transportation directly to Hotel Prokopka. Upon arrival, all students are required to stay at the Hotel Prokopka the first 3-4 nights (included in your tuition) because it's a visa requirement to stay there upon arrival. This was the address given on your Confirmation of Accommodation on your visa application because you didn't have an address at the time you submitted your visa application. This is also an opportunity to meet the other students. At the Hotel Prokopka, the rooms are actually small "suites" consisting of two bedrooms and a shared bathroom and common kitchenette area. There are four students to a "suite" and two students to a bedroom. It's a very small hotel and UPCES students will likely be the only guests. Only fully vaccinated guests are allowed.

Will the flats be move-in-ready?

Students will move into their apartments on Wednesday during the first week of Orientation. All apartments are fully equipped and functional. UPCES guarantees that all the appliances and electronics including Wi-Fi will work properly from the first day. Washing machines and dryers or laundry service are provided by the landlords at no extra cost.

How will I sign my apartment lease?

Students will be able to sign their lease prior to their arrival as they received them from landlords via email. If the lease is not signed before arrival the lease will be signed during the first week of Orientation. An UPCES staff member will be present to answer questions, deal with the security deposits, and explain the conditions of the lease.

How should I pay the housing deposit?

The deposit is paid in cash in US dollars so students do not lose money due to the exchange rate. The deposit will be returned to students at the end of the semester, about a week or so before departure, assuming there is no loss or damage at the apartment.

Who will take care of a student who is sick or hospitalized?

If students are hospitalized (including COVID-19 infection), they will be fully covered by the Czech commercial insurance that students obtained from UPCES when they applied for their visa. UPCES will provide full support to students with any medical issues that may occur throughout the semester. UPCES will help arrange grocery delivery in case students must stay in their apartments (including Covid-related quarantine) as well as anything else they might need. If a student is hospitalized, UPCES staff will support the student. UPCES staff will be in close

contact if allowed to visit the student. Please note that students are required to have insurance of their own to be covered internationally, i.e., outside the Czech Republic.

Is there counseling available for students with emotional issues such as difficulty with culture shock, stress, and homesickness?

Yes. The UPCES program works with [City Practice Prague](#) clinic for confidential counseling services. They have [various locations](#) throughout the city.

Each student has four free visits included in their tuition so they can seek support as and when necessary. Students may make appointments directly with the clinic to maintain privacy. However, UPCES staff are happy to assist if necessary.

How many students are in the UPCES program? How many countries are they coming from?

The Spring 22 semester will host 33 students coming from various parts of the USA. UPCES students will have an opportunity to meet students from the Czech Republic as well as students visiting Charles University from various parts of Europe, typically via the Erasmus study exchange program.

COVID PROTOCOL AND BUILDING RULES

Is there mandatory social distancing in the classrooms?

Yes, social distancing in all indoor places including classrooms is required. UPCES classes are operating in relatively small groups where the recommended distance of 1,5 meters (5 ft.) is possible.

How much COVID is there in Prague, and what about its Omicron variant?

Just like everywhere in the world, the Czech Republic will be predominantly facing the newest Omicron variant of COVID in the coming weeks.

The Czech Republic, similarly to other EU countries, has decided to adopt even stricter preventive measures in order to deal efficiently with the gradually spreading Omicron strain. All school children and university students living in dorms are tested regularly by PCR or high-quality antigen tests. As of January 17th, all employees will have to undergo bi-weekly testing country-wide, regardless of their immunity or vaccination status, with mandatory quarantine if positive. The Government's Covid vaccination promotion seems to have paid off, with the majority of adults already getting their Pfizer or Moderna booster jab as well as rising parent demand for vaccination of children 5-18 years old. Masks continue to be worn in all Czech university buildings including CERGE-EI/UPCES as well as in all other public buildings including all means of public transport. Mandatory vaccination for people of certain occupations and those over 60 is to be introduced soon. In general, the Covid-prevention measures in place in the Czech Rep. are identical to or stricter than those currently applied in the U.S.

UPCES nevertheless highly recommends that students follow all precautions such as washing hands, keeping a distance, and wearing masks. Vaccination is of course a big plus.

Will I have to be tested and quarantined when I first arrive in Prague? If so, how will it work?

Before their departure, students are required to fill in the **Public Health Passenger Locator Form** and save the confirmation email (typically including a QR code). Please use this link: <https://plf.uzis.cz/> Students need to make sure they know their address in Prague, Czech Republic. UPCES recommends writing the address down and keeping it safe and accessible if needed. Also see “[Before the Arrival](#)” section in the beginning.

Will masks be worn in the building and classrooms?

Masks (FFP2/KN95 or more advanced face masks or nano-masks) are required indoors in the Czech Republic. UPCES and CERGE-EI (which hosts UPCES classes and other activities) strictly enforces this requirement.

Will vaccinated, COVID-immune and unvaccinated students interact?

Unvaccinated students will not share apartments with vaccinated and COVID-immune students (i.e., students who had COVID within the past 180 days, testing PCR-positive). However, all UPCES students may of course attend any UPCES classes or meet otherwise. In addition, other students visiting Charles University and attending UPCES classes may be unvaccinated, as under the Czech and EU law, Czech Universities cannot mandate vaccinations for students.

What if my roommate tests COVID-positive? How will they be isolated from me and the flat?

The majority of UPCES students are COVID-vaccinated or COVID-immune (i.e., students who have had COVID within the past 180 days, testing PCR-positive), so their likelihood of contracting COVID is generally very low. In the unlikely event of a student testing positive, all contacts of such a student within the last 72 hours will be analyzed by relevant Czech authorities, and to be cautious during these times of the COVID Omicron variant, the Czech Republic practice is to isolate at least all household members of a positively tested person. This means that students from the whole apartment of a positively tested person will have to undergo self-isolation in their flats for the next 5-7 days. All UPCES classes will continue, yet in hybrid format with online participation of affected isolated students.

COVID VACCINATION ISSUES

Will my vaccination record be accepted?

Yes, the Czech Republic recognizes the vaccinations students received in the U.S.A. Students should bring their original CDC vaccination cards with them. They should also scan and forward their CDC cards to UPCES staff as soon as possible, which permits arranging the EU digital COVID certificates (EU Green Pass) for students prior to arrival. The certificate will ensure that students vaccination gets recognized in as many places and EU countries as possible.

Will the UPCES staff, professors, and employees be fully vaccinated? If not, will they be tested regularly and wear masks at all times?

All UPCES faculty and staff without valid medical exceptions are vaccinated. As stated above, all personnel will undergo mandatory testing twice a week. In addition, face masks are mandatory for everyone in the building.

Will there be an EU COVID pass issued to UPCES students?

Students will receive an EU digital COVID certificates (EU Green Pass) as long as they have sent a copy of their CDC card (both sides) to the UPCES staff in advance. Students will, however, still need to follow the COVID rules of each European country if and when traveling, and it is their own responsibility to adhere to the relevant quarantine and testing measures outside the Czech Republic. Students need to understand that some countries might require people to quarantine or test even if vaccinated or COVID-immune, especially if they come from high-risk countries such as the U.S.A. Please note that being in quarantine due to traveling outside the Czech Republic may lead to an unexcused class absence, which may lead to lowering the final grade.