

Guidance Exchange Placement March 2007 Czech Republic – Prague



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Introduction

This guidance exchange placement was organised by Career Europe funded by the LEONARDO programme. The placement programme was developed around looking at ***Guidance in the sphere of Labour and Education. An introduction to guidance activities in the education and labour market in the Czech Republic.***

Situated in the heart of Europe bordering countries of Slovakia, Poland, Germany and Austria, The Czech Republic is buzzing with people visiting the historical city of Prague and regions of Bohemia, Moravia. It has a current population of around 10.2 million.

Some current interesting facts include

- An unemployment Rate of 7.9%
- Current minimum monthly wage 8000CZK £190
- Average gross monthly wage 19 968CZK £475

Day to Day Diary



Our Guide Thomas ensured that our group were escorted from our hotel each morning and arrived safely and timely to all of our destinations. We travelled each day on public transport trams, buses and metro. At times this was very challenging to ensure the whole group were together however there was Only one occasion when some members of our group were left on a tram!!



Monday 19th March

AM

National Training Fund – Guidance Services Support Unit (NTF-GSSU)

Presentation - around the socio-economic and cultural background of the Czech Republic.

Presentation - informing re NTF-GSSU and the Czech Educational system

The central body that govern the education system is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, it formulates:

- Education policies
- Bills
- Framework education programmes
- Is in charge of the schools and student registers
- Accredits educational programmes:
 - Tertiary professional schools
 - Higher education schools
 - Further education of teachers
 - Courses for retraining of work force

Financing the Educational Sector

- Ministry of Education is responsible to gain finances from the state budget
- Regions are responsible to finance education on its territory – except higher education
- Schools obtain finance from two sources;
 - Investment and running costs from the owner
 - Salaries and teaching aids from the state budget
- Schools are financed on the per capita principle

Foreigners in the Czech Education System

Citizens of other EU countries and non-EU citizens, who are legally in the Czech Republic, have access to education and school services.

Nursery school age 3-6 years is non compulsory under the education system

Basic compulsory education is 6-15 years

Secondary compulsory education 15-19 years

PM

Individual presentations from all European Colleagues taking part in the placement including Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and England. This allowed the group to gain a vast amount of information regarding guidance and information services across Europe

Tuesday 20th March

AM

Visit to – **The Educational and Psychological Counselling Institute of the Czech Republic (IPPC)**

Presentation – informing re the function of the IPPC, how it supports and co-operates within the field of education



PM

Visit to – **National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education**

Presentation introducing NITVE which is run by the Ministry of Education to develop vocational education in the Czech Republic

Information was centred around two main projects

Entrepreneurship Step by Step

This program's main aim is an introduction to the World of Work for secondary school pupils

It consists of a handbook for use with teachers and covers such areas as

Information-Orientation-Decision Making

Employment-Entrepreneurship-Career

Labour Market-Communication-Self presentation

eCareer

This is a program of elearning courses consisting of 10 consequential modules which individuals work through at their own leisure.

The target group would be educational and career counsellors in primary and secondary education, teachers of vocational areas and others interested in career guidance and counselling.

Modules would include areas such as introduction to career guidance, decision making, communication, education systems. LMI and the law governing this area

This can be viewed on line at www.ekariera.nuov.cz

Wednesday 21st March

AM

Visit to - **Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling Centre**

Presentation – informing of the work within the centre the tasks, activities and the work they do with children 3-18 years

This school counselling system dates back to the 1970's and the present system consists of

School counsellors

School psychologists and special education teachers

Educational and psychological counselling centres (70 state run, 1 church run and 2 private)

The centre is an integral part of the Educational and Psychological Counselling system in the Czech Republic

Staffed by 16 fully qualified psychologists

4 special education teachers

4 social workers

2 technical staff

Forms of work include

Psychological assessment

Special education Assessment

Intervention

Consultation

Methodological guidance of teachers

Programs for children with learning disorders, ADHD and other problems

Pre school children preparation programs

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Visit to – **School of International and Public Relations**

Presentation - from the schools guidance and educational counsellor regarding the systems within the school. Followed by a walk around some classes and the opportunity to talk to pupils.

Thursday 22nd March

AM

Visit to – **University of Western Bohemia in Pilsen**

Presentation – regarding the activities of the information and counselling centre within the university supporting higher education students



The centre offers counselling in large, small groups and individual depending on issues, areas discussed are similar ie., study related issues, personal situations and circumstances and careers counselling. At the start of each academic session thematic workshops are arranged to give support to new students

The centre offers support to 16398 full time students and 1069 teachers

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Visit to – **Labour Office Pilsen**

Presentation – informing regarding the current trends of the labour market and unemployment. Followed by a visit to the career guidance office within the labour office and a walk round their very modern environment.

Main Issues of the Czech labour market

- Regional unemployment
- Low labour force mobility
- Absence of life long learning system and system of further education
- Lower level of foreign language skills
- Lack of new graduates of traditional vocational training

Within the labour office the vacancies are advertised and promoted in a variety of ways

- Displayed on information boards
- Eures portals
- PC self service stations

EURES vacancies are promoted on
<http://portal.mpsv.cz/eures/praceveu/inzeraty>

Jobseekers interested in working abroad are encouraged to register.

Other means of advertising is via recruitment agencies

There are more than 1575 licensed agencies in the CR.
Agencies can be specialised in recruiting certain educational and professional levels

Friday 23rd March

AM

Visit to – **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – Employment Services Administration**

Presentation – Career Guidance Service provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Employment Service Administration at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is a central body responsible for employment and labour market issues.

Divided into 4 departments

- Labour Market Department
- Counselling and Mediation Department
- Department of Methodology and Administration
- Department of European Social Fund Programmes

Discussions regarding Job Clubs organised under the Employment Services Administration and managed by Andrea Piblova. Individuals are offered

- Group counselling focused primarily on the training in skills for effective job seeking and facilitating return to work for the long term unemployed.
- The club is arranged over a period of 5-6 meetings
- Approx 8-12 participants

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Final evaluation and debriefing of our visit followed by a lovely glass of wine to send us all on our way.

Conclusion

A fascinating experience of meeting a group European colleagues. A number of links have now been established, in particular with Denmark, as discussions have already taken place regarding partnership working. I certainly gained a wealth of knowledge during my week and hope through these establish links to continue to do so.