

USING YOUR PHONE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Important Phone Decisions to Make Before Departure

During your time in Prague, you are **required to have an operating smartphone that can make/receive calls, send/receive text messages, and that has a [data plan](#)**. This is important so that Verto is able to contact you in the event of an emergency. This is mandatory – as outlined in the [Cell Phone Requirements Policy](#) – and is in the interest of your safety and well-being while abroad.

PLEASE NOTE: **Your phone must be unlocked prior to arriving in the Czech Republic.** Unlocking your U.S. phone in the Czech Republic is impossible – this must be done by your U.S. provider before you depart. It can be a lengthy process so start unlocking your phone IMMEDIATELY. *If your U.S. phone is not unlocked when you arrive in the Czech Republic, and you do not have an international data plan from the U.S., you will be required to purchase a second smartphone for use in the Czech Republic.*

No matter which option you choose, your phone (including data) must be on at all times while in the Czech Republic so that you can be contacted by Verto, doctor's offices, your flatmates, etc.

Option 1:

Local SIM Card

With a prepaid local SIM card you will get your own Czech phone number for texting and calling, and you can connect on apps like iMessage, Facetime, and the internet. Your old number will still work on your phone via iMessage, Whatsapp, or other messaging platforms.

Your phone must be unlocked in order to use a local SIM card. **Only your at-home network provider can unlock your iPhone.** Contact your network provider and request an unlock. Your account may need to meet specific requirements for unlocking. After you've submitted the request, it may take a few days for the process to be completed.

During the first days of orientation, we will travel as a group to the Vodafone store to get you set-up with a Czech SIM card. This will include unlimited data, calling, and texting throughout the European Union and costs approximately 899 CZK monthly (approximately \$38 per month).

Option 2:

International Plan With Home Carrier

Although not recommended due to the high cost, you may choose to purchase an international phone plan with your current at-home phone provider prior to your departure to the Czech Republic. This option allows you to keep your current phone number. You must ensure that your plan will have both data and calls/texts available internationally.

Below is an example of what an international phone plan with your U.S. carrier may look like:

International phone plan with home carrier

Verizon TravelPass or AT&T International Day Pass

1. Use your phone like you do at home with unlimited calling and texting along with 4G LTE data. Once added, you'll be charged in 24 hour increments for the days you call, send texts or use data on your device while abroad, so there's no need to remove TravelPass once you return.
2. \$10/line/per day
3. Available in 185+ countries

Overall cost: Average Program length = 105 days, If used everyday on trip= 105 days x \$10 = \$1,050 USD

IMPORTANT: Regardless of which option you choose, you may want to consider purchasing a comprehensive insurance plan for your phone in case it gets broken, lost, or stolen. Keep in mind that phones and electronics in general cost more in the Czech Republic than in the U.S. so any headphones and phone accessories are best brought from home and kept safe.

Option 3:

eSIM

An eSIM is a digital version of a physical SIM card that is built into some devices and allows them to connect to a mobile network. Before buying an eSIM plan, you should check if your device is eSIM compatible (most Androids and iPhone manufactured after 2018 are compatible) and ensure your phone is unlocked; otherwise, your eSIM will not work.

To use an eSIM, you'll need to buy a data plan online that works best for you based on how many GBs you will be using (the average traveler uses around 10GBs per month). It is recommended to download and purchase your eSIM plan before you travel so that when you land in the airport you can easily activate it.

Be sure to select a data plan that includes phone calls and text messages in case of emergencies, **as you are required to be in possession of a working cell phone with the ability to make and receive voice calls, SMS, and internet data capability per our [Cell Phone Policy](#).**

Please note that if you will be traveling out of the country while on-site, your plan may not cover the international destination, so be sure to purchase a plan that will cover your weekend travel plans.

eSIMs and SIMs can be purchased during Discovery Week. Staff will accompany interested students to a local provider (Vodafone) where you can sign up for a monthly Student Plan that includes voice calls, SMS (text), and unlimited data throughout the European Union.

You must give your cell number to Verto staff during the first few days in Prague. Always keep your data switched on so that you can be contacted in an emergency.

Add Verto Prague's phone number to your contacts so that we can reach you during an emergency.