



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Health and Society (social sciences)
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	15/08/2022 until 16/12/2022
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Norway
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Oslo
<b>University (exchange)</b>	Oslo Metropolitan University
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Faculty of Health Sciences – Business School

## 2. Motivation for exchange

### Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I chose to go on exchange because I wanted to find out what it is like to take courses at another university, especially one in a foreign country. I wanted to experience student life in a different city and to learn the culture of the country that city is in.

### What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

Since I study Health Sciences, Scandinavia has always been an interesting area for me. This area is known for its well-organised health care system. I was very excited to learn more about the Norwegian view on health and the connection to lifestyle that they apply in daily life. That is why I chose to go to Oslo.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

### Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination? (E.g. bus, train, etc.)

I would recommend to go to Norway by boat with the Holland-Norway lines. This takes 18 hours, but you can book your own room for the journey and once you arrive on the boat you can just relax and enjoy the view. The boat arrives in Kristiansand, so from there you can take the train to Oslo. This takes 4-5 hours, but the view is really worth it!

## 4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	EU Law and Politics	10	Introduction course to EU law and political institutions of the EU. Focuses on questions as: how does the EU make decisions?, how do these decisions apply in the member states?, which institution has the most power?, and also looks at the Treaties.	4	Good balance between law and politics. Also a lot of practical applications on daily issues.
2	Integration and Challenges of Modern Society	10	This course looks at the question of integration in our modern society. How much integration is preferable? How have past events (such as the Holocaust) shaped our modern society? Should we be content with modern society or should we be more careful of the dangers that it brings?	3	
3	Evolution and Behaviour	10	The course discusses different views on evolution. Discussing several evolutionary theories, processes, scholars, species, but also the influence of culture on evolution.	2	I personally missed a focus on humans. Also a lot of repetition from high school.

### How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

All the courses are followed for the whole semester, however, most courses have a break of at least one week. The courses I took all had a midterm, which meant that we had to do an assignment and you could only take the exam if you passed the assignment. The workload for my courses was small compared to WUR, mostly because we only had lectures, no tutorials or group work. I do feel that it is academically at the same level as the WUR when it comes to most of the courses I took.

**What is the culture of the university? (E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?)**

The culture of the university is quite informal. The lecturers are very approachable and prefer to be called by their first name (which is common in Norway). All of my courses were open to both Norwegian as international students, so usually the students were equally divided between both. Norwegians are, however, a bit less approachable, so it might take some extra work to engage with them. Everyone is very friendly though and speaks English very well.

**What does the university offer the student additionally? (E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?)**

The university does not offer any sport facilities at campus, but you can join Athletica, which is a student fitness centre. I would really recommend this, because it is quite cheap (for Norwegian prices) and there are 6 different locations. It is also a great way to get to know Norwegians, because you can take all sorts of classes there. The university offers catering of course, which is quite good. They also have a student health centre at campus.

## 5.Housing-travelling-living

**What are the possibilities for housing? (E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?)**

There is a student housing organisation SIO, where you can sign up for rooms. Unfortunately, there is a very long waiting list, so a lot of students have to look for private housing (including myself). Oslo is a very expensive city to live, especially compared to Wageningen. Plus it is difficult to find accommodation. But the university was quite helpful once I arrived there, they can help you look for a room if you have trouble finding one. Sites like hybel.no or finn.no offer the most private accommodations.

**What is the culture of the country like? (E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?)**

Norway is not that different from the Netherlands when it comes to cultural elements like shops, manners and food. A big difference is that Norwegians are quite closed people, they are not likely to approach you or start a conversation. They are very friendly though and they spend a lot of their time outside! Also Oslo is definitely a world city, so there are a lot of different cultures there.

**Could you give a general price indication of the place of residence compared to living in Wageningen?**

Private housing ranges from 6000-8000 NOK per month per room. Student housing is a bit cheaper, ranges from 4000-6000 NOK usually.

**Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure? (E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)**

Public transport is very well organised in Oslo and also quite cheap. You can get a 30 day ticket with student discount, which costs about 500 NOK. With that ticket you can travel by any type of public

transport (tram, train, subway, bus, ferry) unlimited for 30 days. The university is very accessible by public transport, as are most places in and around Oslo.

## 6. Free time

### **What are must-sees in the area? (E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?)**

Norway is known for its beautiful hikes, but you can only go hiking when the weather is good enough. So I would recommend to go on hiking trips between march-october and save the city trips for the colder months. There are also a lot of beautiful hikes around Oslo, just 20 minutes from the city centre by public transport. So you really don't have to spend a lot of money to travel up north or west. Of course I would recommend to go to the west coast for the fjords or go up north to Tromsø or Bergen. Also a lot of places are accessible by train, which is a great way to see more of the country. It is not cheap however, and can take a lot of time. Flights are often quite cheap.

### **What does not appear in the travel guide, but is worth a visit?**

As I mentioned before, there are already a lot of beautiful hikes around Oslo, so I would definitely try to do as many of those as you can (depending on the weather of course). There are also a lot of cabins you can stay in on the way (often for free). You can also rent professional hiking gear at the tourist station in the city centre.

### **Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time (E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?)**

Even though going out is expensive in Oslo, it is a fun way to get to know the locals. Also, during weekends there are a lot of flea markets (in Grunerlokka, Birkelunden or Majorstuen). Oslo has a lot of parks, so if the weather is nice I would recommend to spend your time there!

## 7. Challenges & best moment abroad

### **What was a challenge you have experienced?**

The biggest challenge for me was finding accommodation. That did not go very smoothly and it caused me quite some stress. But it was definitely worth it because I found a really nice place with other international students in the centre of Oslo.

### **What was your best memory abroad?**

My best memory is the trip I took to the Lofoten Islands in the north of Norway. The landscape is so beautiful and the islands are very quiet. It is definitely my number 1 travel trip!

## 8. Contact details (optional)

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name/e-mail</b>	Iben Vermunt iben.vermunt@wur.nl	