



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	International Development
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	09/2022 until 01/2023
Country (exchange)	Latvia
City (exchange)	Riga
University (exchange)	Latvijas Universitate (LU)
Faculty (exchange)	Faculty of Social Sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to broaden my horizon and study also somewhere else.

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

I wanted to go to a country that I normally would not go to so easily and was not very known. Besides that I always found Soviet history interesting, and since Latvia used to be a part of the Soviet Union, I thought that it would be a nice fit.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Take a Bolt taxi from the Riga airport (very cheap 5 to 15 euro's) or the bus (I believe it is nr. 22 called Lidosta). The city is very close, only a 15 min car ride.

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	Social and Cultural anthropology	6		2	
2	Historical narratives in propaganda: case studies of Russia and Ukraine	3		5	Course was given by a teacher in Kyiv, very informative
3	Anthropology of performance	3		5	
4	Urban anthropology	6	Exploring Riga using different concepts and doing a lot of fieldwork	4	You get to go a lot of fieldwork with mixed groups, so also with Latvian students which was very nice
5	Populism and the populist radical right	3		3	
6	Social and cultural planning	6	Working together with 9 other students on a case study, exploring Riga, interviewing residents.	5	

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

It differs a bit from the WUR, since one semester is from September till January. You have lectures till December and only exams in January.

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?)

Very open, lecturers want to be called by their first name and are very nice.

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

Sports for very low prices, activities and celebrations on national holidays. There is catering, but nothing compared to at the WUR.

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 are dormitories that the university owns (e.g. Prima), very cheap, but not very clean and far away from the nice city parts. I rented an own apartment and then found flatmates myself. It is also possible to do interviews for rooms (rooms can be found on Riga Student Market)

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

People are rather introvert and quiet (concerning the history of the country that is not very strange), but extremely friendly if you need help. However, they will bump into you on the streets, that is something that happened on a daily basis. They eat a lot of dill and garlic, it is everywhere.

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

Living in the city centre I paid 320€ per month, including utilities for a room of 18m², with a huge living room, kitchen and bathroom.

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

There are mainly busses in Riga, you have to pay €16,- for unlimited rides during one month. You can get almost everywhere within Riga by bus. The trains are always on time and a ticket to the beach (Jurmala) costs around €1,60 and takes 30 min.

6. Free time

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

The architecture, the KGB museum, the occupation museum, all the karaoke bars in old town, the embassy district, the market halls etc.

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

Karosta, an old military Soviet base, 2 hours driving from Riga. There is a documentary on Netflix about it.

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

If you like partying old town is the place to be, but there are also raves at an old Soviet airport, or in the Talinnas Kvarrels. ESN provides a welcome week, which I can recommend since you can meet a lot of people in a short time, which really helps you during the semester.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

I had to get used to the introverted people.

What was your best memory abroad?

The trip to Lapland with timetravels was amazing.

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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