



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	BSc Soil, Water, Atmosphere
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	8/8/2022 until 16/12/2022
Country (exchange)	Norway
City (exchange)	Sogndal
University (exchange)	Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (Høgskulen på Vestlandet)
Faculty (exchange)	Environmental Sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To see the beautiful country, to experience a different country/culture and to challenge myself in starting a new social circle.

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

Because of the program (from mountain to fjord), which sounded very nice to me and also because of the location of Sogndal, in the heart of the fjords region!

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Plane is definitely the easiest, since you can fly to Bergen/Oslo and then to Sogndal airport or fly to Bergen/Oslo and then take the bus/boat to Sogndal (bus/boat is 6 hours); but this is of course not very WURlife ;)

Train or bus to Oslo and then the bus to Sogndal is possible but it will take you some days!

Personally I came to Norway by boat from Eemshaven to Kristiansand and then made a tour with car through Norway, to end in Sogndal and this I can really recommend, since you also already get a taste of the country and in the first course it helped me that I already knew a little what the country looks like.

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	Geology of Western Norway	10 (6)	Learn about geology and get to see it a lot in real life.	5	
2	Glaciers and Ecology	10 (6)	Mostly glaciology (with a lot of glacier visits!) and some ecology of glaciers	3,5	
3	Fjord Processes	10 (6)	What happens in the fjord (marine science, ecology, toxicology etc.), including research project	4	
4					
5					
6					

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

It is a minor program, so with a group of 30-40 students you follow these three courses, with a lot of support from the program leader. It is a university of applied sciences (hogeschool in Dutch) so it is sometimes quite easy, it is not a program where you study a lot in your free time, but with quite some contact hours.

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?)

Everything is quite laid-back, little distance between student and teacher (that is Norway!) and mountain to fjord has a program coordinator who is very engaged with students and does everything to make you feel at home (he picked people up from the airport, you can always ask for help, there is a first week with language classes and nice activities)

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

There is catering, sport facilities and a company called Saman who is also the landlord that offers the canteen, coffee bar etc.

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 housing guarantee for exchange students – though these are shared rooms (which I can really recommend!), three housing locations, max 10 minutes walk from the university and all within walking distance from university, city center, stores, forest, sea etc. Rent is like 300 eu/month

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

Quite cold culture, Norwegians are not the most social and warm people, but they are very honest at least. Cuisine.... Euhm... There is an interesting drinking culture with a lot of drunk Norwegians that are suddenly very social and outgoing. What is very nice is that I did swing classes, since Norwegians like to do this dance at parties! That is also culture right? Also friluftsliv (outdoor life) is very important in Norway.

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

It was cheaper than Wageningen, and every room has own shower/toilet, and generally quite good quality. But you also share the room of course.

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

Everything in the town and surrounding nature can be explored by foot, but to go further a car is very handy since in the fjord region public transport is good for big distances but not for closeby.

6. Free time

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

The Sognefjord is beautiful! Also Stedjeåsen mountain (next to my house, 1h climb) and a lot of hikes nearby. Great plus is that you see a lot of the Western Norway highlights with excursions. But Norway is so variable that I can really recommend to rent a car and travel for like a week. Coast, fjords, high mountain, slopes... every few kilometres the landscape is completely different.

What does not appear in the travel guide, but is worth a visit? Stedjeåsen, as I said above.

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

Join the student sport organisations; sjøspretten, lukarlaget, meieriet, sportspretten
Sea kayaking!!

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

You might feel lonely when you don't know too many people yet and are an extravert in an introvert country. But don't forget that you have friends and family at home that love to call with you. And it is so easy to approach other people at exchange, who probably feel the same!

What was your best memory abroad?

Too many, frozen waterfalls, the most beautiful autumn I have ever seen, frozen fjord, a lot of snow, porpoises, hikes with my new friends, knitting in class, but my favourite memory must be a road trip with my cousin, we slept in a car, ate crackers for dinner, were often soaked and cold, but the country was so beautiful and it was so 'gezellig'!

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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