



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Landscape architecture
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	29.08.2022 until 29.01.2023
Country (exchange)	Estonia
City (exchange)	Tartu
University (exchange)	Estonian University of life science
Faculty (exchange)	Agriculture and environmental sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I have always wanted to be abroad for a longer period (either a high school year or studying abroad) and Erasmus was the perfect opportunity.

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

I didn't know much about Estonia, so it was an adventure mostly. Also the courses I could follow at the university were interesting!

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I did it the easy way, by plane. And you can either fly to Tallinn airport or Riga airport and then take a bus to Tartu (2.5h from Tallinn, 3.5h from Riga). If you don't want to take the plane, be prepared to take a lot of long distance busses, since there is no train connection in/out of Estonia (or all the Baltic countries)

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	Advanced presentation graphics	4	You learn to use the adobe programs with several tasks. You present your created works (poster and some other small assignmenmts)	5	Master course
2	Landscape pattern and process	2	You get a few lectures about the patterns and processes of nature in different landscapes all around the world and write an essay at the end on a chosen area and how this is formed etc.	3	Master course
3	Outdoor recreation planning and design	11	You learn to plan and design an outdoor recreational site. There is also a small studio in this course and some groupwork during the analysis part.	4	Master course
4	Landscape architecture as a contemporary and cultural practice	5	You learn to look at landscapes and sites in a different way than you are used (contemporary and cultural) and write an essay about what you learned and make a poster.	4	Master course
5	Planting design	3	You learn about planting styles and combinations.	3	Bachelor course
6	Garden design	6	You make up a plan for a new garden that you design yourself.	2	Bachelor course

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

The academic level is lower than at the WUR. But nevertheless I still gathered new knowledge and had a good time. The LA students are really close and fun. The teachers know a lot and are helpful. For LA studies its more projects than exams, which I really like.

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 teachers are open and helpful. The students in the LA studies are very nice. It is a small group with people with different nationalities, also some local. The Estonian people were friendly and helped you if you struggled with something. The main difference is that it is way smaller than the WUR. EMU has about 2000 students and thus smaller groups. Because of this you do feel like you matter and are not just a number.

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

There is a gym you can subscribe at. Until 3pm it is even free to use the sports hall for ball games for EMU students. The catering was closed when I was there, but there is a small grocery store nearby. The library is nice, though I always studied/worked in cafes or the other university its buildings (UT is bigger and has nicer buildings).

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?)

You can sign up for a room in the dormitory of the university, Torn. It is very cheap. The rooms are shared, but you can rent the whole room for yourself if you pay double the price (still quiet cheap). The houses/hallways itself are fine, do not expect too much. It is really nice that all the Erasmus people are located in this building, and thus there is always someone to meet up with.

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

Estonia is quiet different than NL. You can start with the differences with the weather. In Estonia you can really live in 4 different seasons, Vibrant summer, beautiful autumn, snowy and cold winter etc. Tartu is a student city with its two universities. It has a nice atmosphere and there is a lot to do. If you go to Estonia, do immerse yourself in the sauna culture, it is amazing. The people in Estonia may seem not so welcoming and introvert, but once you get to know them, they are a lot of fun!

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

Rent is way cheaper. Food in stores is a bit cheaper than in NL, but not much, I think I paid like 200-250ish per month. Activities on the other hand are not as expensive in NL. If you are used to pay 'student' prices for beer (like 1.10 because of your association), be prepared to pay more in the bars there, but not crazy expensive or something.

In general I think living there is a bit cheaper, but if you want to see the country or other countries, then yes your expenses are a bit higher because of the traveling.

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

The bus network in Tartu is very good. The price for 1 month is 13 euros, and for 3 months I think it was 50. In the autumn months I also biked a lot. They have a really good bikesharing system, which is not super expensive. I think bus+bike for 3 months is 65 euros. When it started snowing I did not use the bike anymore since they did not have specific bike lanes and it was slippery. Bolt is also a big thing in Estonia and pretty cheap. A 4 seat car to the centre was 4/5 euros, so if you share it was just 1 euro pp.

To travel outside of Tartu you have 3 choices. Train, to some bigger Estonian cities. It was fine. Regional busses. To smaller Estonian cities. The regional busses are free! And to bigger Estonian cities, or to Latvia/Lithuania you have the long distance busses by Luxexpress. They are not super expensive (9 euros to Tallinn), and very comfortable.

6. Free time

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

Kidjarve nature park during autumn! Regional (free) bus.

Tallinn!

Riga and Vilnius by luxexpress.

Parnu is summer (summer capital of Estonia) (Luxexpress) and Otepaa in winter (winter capital of Estonia) (regional bus)

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

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

The bars in Tartu are really nice. For example Barlova, Moku, Kivi, Illegaard. Try them all and find your favourite 😊

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

The darkness. In winter its just 6.5 hours of light a day, and you think you can be prepared, but it is still hard.

What was your best memory abroad?

Meeting a lot of new people from different countries. Everyone is super openminded and down to do anything. Just ask in the group if someone wants to join you to do something or go somewhere, and they definitely will.

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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