



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	International Land and Water Management
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	10-08-2023 until 20-12-2023
Exchange destination: University	Universitet i Bergen
Faculty	Faculty of mathematics and natural sciences
Country	Norway
City	Bergen

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I felt like going on an exchange was an opportunity I should not miss out on. I love to travel, meet new people, and to be outdoor.

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

I wanted to go to a place where there were mountains and the weather was colder, or warmer than in the Netherlands. Scandinavian levelheadedness and proficiency in English played a role in my choice as well.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

Yes, GO BY CAR! I saved up for a small car to take with me to Norway and it was the best decision I ever made. I love to camp, hike, ski or go on spontaneous adventures and the car made this whole Erasmus time like 10 times better by providing an easy (and reliable) mode of transport to all crazy adventures. I personally also prefer to see the landscape change during the trip and slowly arrive at the place of destination instead of arriving by plane.

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	Bio201	10	Ecology	3	All lectures are mandatory leaving less room for exploring the country. The course was quick pace and a student asked me why I picked such a hard course for my Erasmus... Very informative though and the guy who led the course was very enthusiastic!
2	Bio250	10	Paleo Ecology	6	Fantastic course if you like to play in the mud and look into microscopes. Very fun field work, slow pace and Anne is a very sweet person. Good Erasmus course!
3	Geov210	10	Plate tectonics	4	Super informative when the lecturer talks but most of the time you just read on your own and do some modules. Also a good course to do on an Erasmus as lectures are not mandatory and you don't miss much if you are not there (still a lot of work though but you can plan it in your own time)
4	NOR-INTRO	7.5	Introduction Norwegian Language	5	Normally I like to learn my languages in the wild and not in school but this was a very slow pace with lots of helpful tips. It helped me with my Norwegian and was very fun at the same time.
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

I liked the university, it gave lots of options to book a study place. People were nice and their English was mostly very good. I did get a new appreciation for the WUR as I prefer the shorter semesters.

What is the culture of the university?

It is just a university, people study and exchange information. I thought it was all very relaxed and well-managed.

What does the university offer students additionally?

You can get a sports membership at the university. I was a member of a climbing gym so that was enough for me. The people I knew who did have the membership mostly praised the swimming pool, conveniently located in the middle of all faculty buildings.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

You can either get a room arranged by the university (that's what I did) or arrange something yourself. Because of the housing demand, the university puts 2 people in what's clearly meant to be a room for one person. I had a studio of 17 square meters with a bunk bed. Luckily I had a very nice roommate and for me, it was a good experience rather than bad but I heard a lot of horror stories about people living vampire lives, being extremely loud, or just never leaving the room. I would recommend putting in rules directly at the beginning so you both know what to expect from each other. The rent was cheaper (300 euros) than I paid in Wageningen but again, 2 people, one room.

What is the culture of the country like?

Norwegians love to do sports. Rain, snow, wind it does not matter, you will always find people running through the city. Don't be discouraged when you walk up one of the surrounding mountains for the first time and you are overtaken by a group of elderly ladies walking at a pace twice as fast as you. Once a week in one of the parks there is a meet-up for people to do cardio outside. People from all walks of life join and I really like this mentality.

Drinking culture:

I did not go out much as I went there for the outdoor activities but the few times I went were not that great. Norwegians are lovely people who like to make conversation (once started) and they drink like crazy. Taking the tram (bybanen) on a Saturday evening was always very eventful. If you go out with some Norwegians make sure you have two things, a bottle of hard liquor and a bottle of soda. There is no sharing culture and everybody will be there with their own drinks, get hammered, and go out.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

Public transport is very good within the city, total costs were about 40 euros a month for unlimited bus and tram use within the city bounds. I tried to go on hiking trips a few times with public transport but would not recommend it, it does not go on the weekend and sometimes only two to four times a day (a bit unfortunate if you just miss the last one after a hike). Lots of people rented cars for trips but I don't know how much that cost as I had my own.

6. Expenses

Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

For housing, I paid less than in Wageningen 450 → 300

Food was expensive but you get used to it quickly 150 → 250

Transportation costs me around 200 euros every month as I went on a lot of trips every weekend (and during the week)

Trips: I was a member of DNT and therefore booking a hut was often between 5 and 15 euros a night, then the transportation cost like I said around 200 euros (incl public transport). I brought a lot of my equipment but it is also possible to rent this for free at the BUA in the center. This makes you less flexible in plans though so I would still take stuff with you like a backpack, sleeping bag, mat, and tent stuff if you have it.

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

Everything is beautiful, go hiking and sleep in huts! It does not matter where you go but if you go to Trolltunga here are some tips:

1. Take camping gear and camp at the end!
2. This way you can leave in the morning from Bergen, hike to the rock, take a picture, camp and hike/drive back the next day
3. You avoid the crowd as much as possible cause they will all stay the night before in a hotel, hike the entire route (morning to, afternoon back) and stay in a hotel the night after. This is way more expensive and way less fun

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

Go and have spontaneous adventures in the middle of the night looking for northern lights, or try a new routine. It is very hard to change your life in the place you live cause everything you know rotates around that routine. This will be a new place, reinvent yourself!

8. Challenges & best moments abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

I don't know of a lot of challenges, I like it when things go wrong and thinking on my feet. The only thing I can remember is that a Dutch car drove into my Dutch car (how big is the change?!?) and fixing that took some time but everybody speaks English and is happy to help so even that I would not write off as a negative experience.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

Too much to write down, but to choose I would say my trip to Trolltunga, not because it was the most beautiful but because it was one of the first hikes with the friends I made there and solidified that we would like to be friends for much longer than this Erasmus.

Just a last tip

Take the initiative, organize a trip (tip: do it very last minute so the people who join are spontaneous, have their own gear, and are relaxed when plans change), talk to people, try out new sports, and give yourself a purpose for this semester! Last, do as much as you can but it's okay to do nothing for a few days to recharge!

Oh and take a car :)

9. Contact details (optional)

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