



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	BSW
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	09/01/2023 until 16/06/2023
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Norway
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Oslo
<b>University (exchange)</b>	Universitetet I Oslo
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	MN (Mathematics and Natural sciences)

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I wanted to learn more about some topics that were not taught here in Wageningen and thought it would be a great experience and opportunity.

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

I chose for Norway because I think it is a beautiful country and they have a lot of snow and ice, which I wanted to learn more about. I also wanted to see and learn more about topics I studied in Wageningen, but then in a more natural and less managed environment. Norway still has a lot of nature so this was a good fit.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

The fastest and cheapest option is to fly from Schiphol to Gardermoen and take the train or bus from there to your student housing. There are however a few other options. A very comfortable one is to take a ferry from Eemshaven (or Emden, I haven't found a permanent location at the time of writing) to Kristiansand and then take a bus or train from there to Oslo. If you don't mind sleeping on a bus, you can also use Flixbus, but this will take you around 22 hours. You can also take the train but it requires a lot of changes and is usually not possible without an overnight stay somewhere along the way. Your last option would be to take a ferry from Kiel or Copenhagen straight to Oslo. I personally took the ferry from Eemshaven on my way to Oslo and although it was a bit expensive, it was a nice trip. On the way back, I used the Flixbus and this was nice as well, it is way cheaper if you book on time, but less comfortable since you have to sleep on a bus.

## 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	GEO4171	10	Course consists of three parts in part 1 Floods you learn a lot about flood mapping and extreme value distributions. In part 2 Avalanches you learn how to read a snow profile, its stability, how to model an avalanche and recognize different types. In the third part Landslides, you learn how to model rockfall recognize different types and make and use inventories. In all three parts the differences between threat, hazard and Risk are important, just like there maps.	4	I really liked the avalanche part because it was all new for me. There are also a few excursions in this course. Especially the trip to Finse is very special. In the floods part there is however a lot of statistics and this is something I don't find very interesting, it is however very valuable to learn more about.
2	GEO4340	10	This course Fluvial hydrology is very physics based, it starts from the basic, but the difficulty ramps up fast.	4,5	I really liked the clear structure of this course. It is very theoretical in the beginning, but the teachers really try to give you practical real live tasks and examples, which I really liked.
3	GEO4432	10	Surface energy balance in cold climates is a nice course if you want to learn more about writing your own simple SEB model. You first repeat the basics about the SEB and then learn about the changes for cold climates, like polar night and snowmelt. A large part of the course is modelling in MATLAB, which you don't need any	4	Was a nice course with a lot of practical work in which you could figure concepts out yourself. From the start you have to write your own model, but in the beginning you can get a lot of help and solutions will be shared, later in the course you have to be more independent, but this forces you to learn a lot and is very doable in my opinion.

			previous experience in. (Other programming languages where aloud, but you have to do more your self in this case.) In the end you have to write a report about your own model and research.		
4					
5					
6					

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

The workload is a bit lower in the start of the semester compared to the WUR, later in the semester however you have quite a lot of papers and presentations. If you start with them on time your work load won't become too high (similar to the WUR), but if you start to late you will have a very high work load towards the end of the semester. I had to hand in three reports of over 15 pages each in 4 days for example. All lesson material was provided through canvas (similar to Brightspace) for me.

The examination is very often partially a grade for assignments during the semester combined with a grade for the final exam. This final exam can be oral (if your class is small) or written (is your class is a bit larger) oral examination is of course a bit different, but the teachers asked me if I had ever done them before and will explain everything and be patient when you tell them its your first time.

**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?)**

Lectures are very approachable, just like at the WUR you call them by first name and can always contact them by mail or by stopping by there office. The Norwegian students will probably seem a bit distanced at first, but if you ask them anything the are usually very willing to help you. When you are in a small class the will often talk more to you after a couple weeks.

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

Trough SIO you can arrange housing, sports and laundry. There are quite a lot of locations for SIO gyms, but not all of them have everything (only one has a pool for example). There is catering, but I didn't use it, so can not tell you more about it.

## 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?)**

SIO has a signup sheet online in which you can list your preferences and they will then select a room for you. Depending on what you want you will pay a bit more or less. The rents are usually a bit higher in Oslo than in Wageningen, but not a lot. You can also rent privately, but it's usually more expensive. Important to know is that you can only pay your rent in kroner, so if you use a standard dutch bank account your rent will change a bit every month.

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

Not a very different, they still eat more meat (but I think that is almost everywhere compared to Wageningen), if you ask however there usually is a vegetarian option. People also don't invite you very quickly to come to their house. And in general keep their distance a bit more if they don't know you well.

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

In general a bit more expensive, I paid about 520 for a flat of about 12m<sup>2</sup> in which bathroom, toilet, sink, kitchen, etc. was shared with 5 other people.

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

You will stay within zone 1 of Oslo city for most of the time. You can buy a month pass for this region with student discount through the Ruter app for a little over 50 euro's.

## 6. Free time

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

Definitely explore the city centre, the islands in the fjord and the hills/forest around the city. You don't need to plan for this but it is nice to see. If you have the opportunity it is also cool to travel a bit in Norway, for example to the western fjords and mountains around Stavanger and Bergen, or to the north, like Tromsø or the Lofoten.

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

Nature is very beautiful in Norway and this already starts close to the city. Vettakollen has a great view on a clear day. And at Sognsvann you can swim in summer, or ice skate on natural ice in winter. A tip is also to go to Holmenkollen and rent a sleigh. You can actually take the T-banen (metro) back up and sleigh down as many times as you like.

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

Restaurants are expensive in Norway so I didn't go out for dinner a lot, burgers or pizza are usually somewhat affordable, but cooking with friends is usually also a lot of fun. If you're there during winter it might also be worth to download a northern light warning app. Usually you can see it a few nights per winter at Songsvann, but it will be more beautiful if you travel more north.

## 7.Challenges & best moment abroad

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

A challenge can sometimes be the language, almost everyone you meet will speak English, but when together Norwegians of course prefer to speak Norwegian. I did my best to learn a bit of Norwegian to help me at least understand the topic. When you remind them they will of course switch to English.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

There is so many to choose from, but I really liked my trip to Finse, seeing the northern lights multiple times and walking at night to see the sunrise around the time of the summer solstice.

## 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>	Rick Haanschoten/ rick.haanschoten@wur.nl	