



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	BSc Soil, Water, Atmosphere
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	21/08/2023 until 07/12/2023
Exchange destination: University	UNIS
Faculty	geofysica
Country	Norway
City	Longyearbyen

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To enrich my understanding of different cultures and to study subjects that are not given in my third year in Wageningen.

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

I always found the pool expeditions fascinating and was interested in joining one once, but then I saw it was possible to follow courses abroad in the polar region. This was more realistic and a good option.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

No, it is pretty straightforward.

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	Polar ocean and climate (AGF214)	15	A boat excursion with research and a report and furthermore lessons before and after the trip.	5	The oral exam was easier than the one of the other course (personal opinion) and there were more presentations for this course
2	Polar meteorology climate (AGF213)	15	Two excursions options; I went to Isfjord Radio and did research there for a report. This subject included classroom lessons with different teachers for the main contents.	5	The report is with a larger group which can be more difficult to work with than only one group partner.
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What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

Lessons combined with excursions, the academic level were the first two weeks easier than Wageningen, but it was the same level or sometimes more difficult (depending on the subject within the course; this was partly due to Master students also following the courses). The examination was doable and I liked that it was an oral exam. The workload was not that heavy, except from some deadlines that were closer together. The lesson material were not books but powerpoints and notes.

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 lecturers are down to earth and really try to engage with the students; letting them do the explanation of an exercise with really helped to understand the subject. The smaller classroom also makes it more easy to interact with the teacher, like making a joke.

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

You get student discount in some stores, bars and the sporting centre. There was a good laundry facility in the student housing (which is the only student housing there).

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?

Everyone rents at Samskipnaden and they have enough rooms for all the students that are staying there for the semester.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

They eat diner early and they do not share in depth information or opinions quickly (koetjes en kalfjes), but they will when you become good friends with them. The local cuisine is reindeer (there was reindeer soup every week for the students) and a lot of potatoes. If you want to talk with locals more easily then the church is the place to be. They are open for a new conversation and offer waffles and tea on Tuesday evening.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

There is a bus with student discount but you will almost never use this. You walk to the university and some people have a bike, but that is more for going to Nybyen so you do not have to walk 30 minutes to the edge of the town to hike to the glacier.

6. Expenses

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

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.

Ticket there: 750 (return included)

Visa if applicable: -

Vaccinations if applicable: -

Insurances (extra, if applicable): -

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: around 500 euros and this was for a room with bunkbed (not shared) and with its own toilet and shower. The kitchen was a shared area.

Groceries: 300 euros per month

Public transport: 7 euros to go from the airport to the student accommodation

Restaurant/going out for dinner: I did not do this since it is more on the expensive side

Daytrips/sight-seeing: Hikes were free (mostly done by the students and you can borrow equipment from student equipment)

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

No

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Hiking to the mountains next to Longyearbyen, see the plane crash and go to the museum next to the university for free.

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

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

On Thursday evening is the knitting café Freune open and you can buy wool at a discount and knit with your fellow students or do some school work (from 18:00 to 21:30 open).

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

The darkness is more difficult than I first thought. The best way to overcome this is using an UV lamp in the morning (available at the study area) and having a schedule of waking up and going to bed. Going to the sporting centre in the morning also helps.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

Getting engaged on a mountain and otherwise it would be seeing aurora, the hike to Sarkofagen or the cruise excursion.

9. Contact details (optional)

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