



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Landscape architecture
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	28/08/2023 until 04/02/2024
Exchange destination: University	Estonian University of Life Sciences
Faculty	Landscape Architecture
Country	Estonia
City	Tartu

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

For my minor I wanted to go explore another place, this could be another university in the Netherlands or somewhere else in the world. Eventually I decided that I did not want a safety net (that I would definitely have back home), so I wanted to go abroad. Other advantages about going abroad (that tipped the scale for me personally) was the exploring of a new culture, meeting various people for all over the world, learning how other ethnicities perform landscape architectural assignments, etc.

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

There are a few things that I took into consideration:

- How safe is the country
- Does the university provide housing
- How well regarded is the university
- What is my personal feeling about the country (positive/neutral/negative)

Eventually I needed to make a decision between Estonia and Czechia. I preferred Estonia, my only doubt was the amount of sunlight available in the winter. My decision was that I would be able to handle it, but this is very personal

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

Look far before you need to leave at the options to reach your destination. Is it double by train, do you want to go by car, plane, bus, etc. Look at the options and choose what fits you best. Then keep an eye on the prices and when you think you found an agreeable price book it. But be aware, when you reach the country, you did not necessarily reach your city/building. Figure out how to get there and plan ahead, because you are dragging a lot of baggage around which can make it more difficult to walk around.

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	Basic course in CAD	3	This course starts teacher AutoCAD from the beginning. This makes it easy to follow and very understandable.	4	This course only teaches to use the program in 2D. The 3D course is given in the second semester.
2	The healing of landscape design theory	3	Here an overview of various diseases will be given and how they can be helped with various gardens. Eventually you will write a report about your own chosen subject.	4	
3	Advanced presentation graphics	4	You will develop new skills and improve your already existing ones. You start at your personal level, not the general level of the group.	4	It is important to have different adobe applications to you available.
4	Outdoor recreation planning and design	11	This is a "studio" course at master level. You are working on it for 16 weeks and therefore really can get into it.	5	
5	Planting design	3	They teach you different ways to create a visually pleasing planting scheme and then you get a project to apply the given theories.	4	It starts a little confusing, but ends really great.
6	Sustainable environmental engineering I	3	This is a course with only lectures. They teach about various systems that can be implemented in a landscape to make it (and its surroundings) more sustainable).	3	
7	Technogenic landscapes I	3	This is a "studio" course at bachelor level, but at a very big scale with a very particular landscape (a quarry). This is very interesting because it is so very different from the Netherlands.	5	This course also provides a highly recommended weekend away with the group, very fun!

What is it like to study there?

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

The teaching method is very different from Wageningen, in some ways better, in some ways "worse". I however found that it was, generally, more relaxing. There was more free time, even though I followed a maximum of five courses per week. The teacher were also great. The groups they teach are very small and therefore the contact is very personal.

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?

All the lecturers are very approachable and engage with the students on a personal level. This is possible because the groups they teach are very small in comparison with the ones at the WUR.

What does the university offer students additionally?

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

There is a cafeteria, a library and a sport building where you can practice different sports.

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?

The university has a contract with a flat right next to campus where you can apply for housing. You can rent a bed in a room, or two beds (and therefor the room completely (no roommates). You will have to share the toilets, showers and kitchen with others. I paid for two bed for approximately € 290,00.

What is the culture of the country like?

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

Estonian people are not very talkative, but because you will live with all the other Erasmus students. But when you are at a restaurant, café, museum, etc. they are very kind and helpful. The food is somewhat similar to the Netherlands, but of course not completely the same.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

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

If you live in the building meant for students, you have to walk for a few minutes and you are there. If you want to go the centre, you can walk for 30 minutes, or take a quick bus. When you do not have a bus card, you can pay by card, which is € 1,50 per bus ride. Also, the Bolt service is very popular if you went out at night. This is a relatively cheap taxi.

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: € 230,- to travel from Amsterdam airport to Tartu by plain and bus

Visa if applicable: -

Vaccinations if applicable: -

Insurances (extra, if applicable): -

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: €290,- per month

Groceries: € 30,- per week

Public transport: € 1,50 per bus ride
Restaurant/going out for dinner: € 12,- for a main course
Daytrips/sight-seeing: varies to what you want to do

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

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

- Different natural areas (some have free busses that go there, others you can reach by rented car)
- Cities: Tallinn, Helsinki, Riga
- The Island Saaremaa
- Some museums in Tartu or Tallinn (to reach Tallinn you can take the train)
- Botanical garden
- Bars (Moku, Spacebar, Trep, etc.)

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

Follow ESN Tartu on Instagram. They organise a lot of different fun activities such as movie nights, karaoke nights, cultural nights, pool parties, various trips, etc.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

For me the karaoke nights are a real highlight, but also the various trips I made with different people were really fun. My recommendation is just explore the country as if you are on vacation and take people you (just) met with you. This is a once in a lifetime experience and enjoy it as much as you can.

9. Contact details (optional)

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