



# WUR Goes Abroad

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## 1. Student Information

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<b>Study programme WUR</b>	Bachelor environmental sciences
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	28.08.2023 until 04.02.2024
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	Estonian University of Life sciences
<b>Faculty</b>	Institute of Agriculture and Environmental science
<b>Country</b>	Estonia
<b>City</b>	Tartu

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

To experience different teaching methods, learn more about the east of Europe (the side of Europe I had little contact and knowledge regarding). Develop personal skills like adaptation, self-sufficiency, self-reflection, and so on, by being in a new environment, especially by experiencing language and cultural barriers. And lastly to experience a different climate and really understand how it affects lifestyle, your body, etc.

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

Because it was a country I knew very little about in an area of Europe I had little knowledge and connection with. And of course I mainly based the decision on the offered courses, teaching quality and underlying narrative of the university.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

### **Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?**

Not particularly I just took a direct bus from Berlin to Parnu, this is a verry good line but a long drive.  
(from Parnu there is another bus to Tartu)

## 4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECT S	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	PK.0758	2	Basics of Environmental Psychology	3	This course was really interesting but it was quite slow.
2	MI.1946	6	Project and business management in forestry	3	The course talked almost exclusively about business not about forests
3	PK.1017	4	General course in field crop husbandry (part 1)	5	Super interesting learned a lot
4	PK.1504	3	Basic Principles of organic agriculture (part 1)	4	Interesting but quite some overlap with biodiversity course
5	PK.0250	4	Biodiversity in ecosystems	4	Lot of overlap with organic agriculture
6	VL.0818	6	Animal Production	5	Super in depth and very interesting + learned about
7	MI.1783	2	Forest disturbance dynamics	5	Super interesting quality was dependent on quest speaker
8	PK.0375	3	Sustainable environmental engineering I	4	Super interesting but long lectures that were less interactive
9	PK.1482	3	The healing of landscape design theory	5	Super interesting I'm a little sad it was so short

### What is it like to study there?

*The workload had quite some fluctuation with calmer and more stressful months. Overall the workload was lower than in Wur and the examinations were less intense as lecturers found class engagement more important than test results. The study materials were less organised and there was less quantity and quality than would be in wur for most courses. The academic level is overall a bit lower but was very personal as it would much depend on how much you engaged with the material yourself because there was less forced performance.*

### What is the culture of the university?

*The classes are small and lecturers are therefore very open to engage and adapt to find a teaching method and schedule that fits everyone. Although most of my classmates did not engage much, I did and this was much appreciated.*

*The main difference with wur is that classes are very small and organised more engaging. We did some debates, presentations, had many papers and examinations were often oral. Some of the classes were organised by learning through teaching which I really liked, every student had to teach one chapter for this class and the lecturer would add on or pose questions were needed to make sure all the content was covered well.*

**What does the university offer students additionally?**

*The university offers catering, sport facilities, some student organisations and rents out place to organise events. The student organisation from the university that is responsible for welcoming new people would regularly organise nice activities, excursions and events.*

## 5. Housing-travelling-living

**What are the possibilities for housing?**

*The university offers housing. There is also different student housing more in the centre but that is mostly meant for students attending the other universities of Tartu. Dorm rooms are shared for very low rates (+-140€/month) and it is possible to. Rent the full room (so that it is private) but at double rate. Dorm corridors are between 4 and 10 people. When you apply to the university, they will send clear mails indicating how to sign up and when the priority deadlines are (for exchange student). I found a shared flat in the city centre through Facebook which was more my style.*

**What is the culture of the country like?**

*It is very down to earth. You feel the seasons much more as due to the climate the differences are much bigger, and this is reflected in the lifestyle. The country is covered in nature and forest, so you feel there is culturally still more connection with this. Which you can find back in things like berry and mushroom picking, hiking, dog sledging and so on. It is interesting cause the past occupation by the USSR is still very visible in the country, culture and feeling. The people are overall more practical and clearer but emotionless in their communication especially to strangers. Local cuisine is to experience and discover, especially some of the quirkiest things like moose or pickled mushrooms.*

**Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?**

The public transport stuff is very straight forward and well explained during the introduction days. You just buy a card that you link to your ID which you can charge up and use. It is quite cheap. Aside from that there are city bikes, bolt taxi and you can rent cars if you have a license. For uni excursions they will provide busses.

## 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: In total with the different tickets about 95€

Visa if applicable: not applicable

Vaccinations if applicable: not applicable

Insurances (extra, if applicable): not applicable

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: much less than Netherlands (for me 310€ but in the dorms often only 140€ for shared room)

Groceries: A little higher than the Netherlands but it depends on what you buy

Public transport: much less than the Netherlands

Restaurant/going out for dinner: similar

Daytrips/sight-seeing: Less, easy availability of rented cars, cheap busses and hostels. However splitting this with many people often also greatly contributed to low prices.

#### **Additional remarks regarding expenses?**

Overall expect to pay more as it is exchange and you will want to visit around the countries and attend unexpected activities and so on.

## **7. Free time**

#### **What are must-sees in the area?**

*ESN plans a trip to Lapland, it is quite expensive but 100% worth it. It was the most beautiful experience of my life. Aside from this it is worth visiting neighbouring countries. From Tallin you can take a ferry to some Scandinavian countries, Latvia and Lithuania are close by and they are all amazing. Within Estonia there are many nice cities to visit like Viljandi, Parnu, Tallin. Also the islands are amazing (Sarema especially), and the many bogs and sea side. National park Lahemaa and lake Pepsi are also really beautiful and so the list goes on.*

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

I think most I have already mentioned. What is probably not on the guide and I really enjoyed were open Estonian Folk dances in the cultural centre in Tartu. These were a lot of fun easy to join into and a nice way to get to know some Estonian people.

#### **Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?**

*As mentioned above the folk dance is definitely a good place to start. There are some nice musea, a lot of nice bars and clubs. Cool sports you can easily try out like cross country skiing. And the country is absolutely amazing for hiking.*

## **8. Challenges & best moment abroad**

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

I found it quite difficult to really get to know people well. This was partly because of my chaotic character and partly because I was not living in the dorms. It just takes a bit longer but happens in the end anyway.

#### **What is your best memory of your time abroad?**

The snow and ESN trip to Lapland were the most beautiful sunsets would colour the entire landscape.

## **9. Contact details (optional)**

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