



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	Bachelor Biology
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	06-01-2024 until 07-06-2024
Exchange destination: University	Nord University
Faculty	Faculty for Biology and Aquaculture
Country	Norway
City	Bodø

2. Motivation for exchange

a. Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To go out and experience nature for half a year, more than just a holiday, its an experience. Also to get out of comfort zone, live in a different culture. Of course its very cool to say you have lived in the arctic circle an see lots of snow and Moose running through your backyard.

b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

The vast amount of nature in Norway is amazing, suitable for the best hikes, diving, surfing, sailing skiing. The air there is so fresh, its truly nice to breathe there. You will see and compare the Veluwe or other Dutch "nature reserve" areas and see they are so small, busy and still very populated and regulated by government or Natuurmonumenten. Norway is Nature on another level, in a very pure form.

c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

It actually was my second choice, after Trondheim because there you have a vibrant student life & community. The city of Bodø is quite small, boring and really ugly (bombed in WWII) so it doesn't have the nice buildings like Trondheim, Tromsø or Bergen and there are not a lot of activities in the city, but compared to previously named is has a small international community where everyone knows eachother and if you are lucky enough you get to know a lot of Norwegians too because ALL students live in the same buildings in Mørkvedlia student park ("the blocks"). And the mountains, fjords and just general nature are so incredible.

Not forget to say that the famous Lofoten islands and peninsula (google Reine, Vaerøy as well) are only a 4h boat trip away, I've been 6 times in total, you can just go for a day trip and sleep on the ferry (free with student public transport ticket, via Reis app).

In norway at BUA / Skattkamerett you can rent outdoor stuff for free like sleeping bag, ski's fishing rod, guitars or speakers, a tent ad backpack, ice skates etc etc very cool!

3. Accessibility to reach destination

a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

Plane is very fast with a stop in either Oslo or Bergen and the airport next to the Sentrum (5 min to pick up keys, 30 min bus to the blocks (Mørkved student housing)) Bodø is also the last stop of the train so you can interrail all the way up via Oslo and Trondheim, you have a beautiful view of nature and can make stops in nice cities but it does take a few more days to reach your destination. Book via interrail or Entur or Vy, for Norwegian trains. By car is a very long trip fastest via Sweden 3000km so it takes multiple days to drive, you do drive via nice cities like Kopenhagen and Stockholm but the rest of the route is quite boring, having a car in Norway though has a lot of advantages. It will probably make you a lot of international friends right away since with a car in Norway little trips are a lot easier.

4. University and studying

a. 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	Marine Biology	10	Covers a lot about sharks, whales, snails. And a lot of working of marine systems, deep sea, corals, mangroves, the whole marine system with some cool excursions in the arctic waters of Bodø with local species	4	Course was with a lot of people because its such a cool course. Therefore there was very short amount of time to do all experiments since both groups had only ½ amount of the normal time
2	Ecology 2	10	Populations, growth, competition, ecological theories and experiments	3	Cool course which might seem to have same topics as ecology 2 here, but thought in a very different way
3	Molecular Ecology	10	Different molecular techniques and markers, how to approach experiments and which methods to use in research	2	You learn a lot about the past, markers that are not used anymore and I feel that they could've done more to teach you than just the types of techniques

a. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):

Not a lot of courses to choose from but it's a small university.

I wanted to do MSc courses because there are more options but in Norway that's not allowed if you didn't graduate yet. So I would only recommend it in your 2nd or 3rd year otherwise it's a bit too easy. Or wait until you're allowed to do master courses because they seem way cooler!

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain):

Personally no- I would have liked to do MSc courses in my field.

c. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

As explained above, for 2nd3rd yes, for me a bit too easy.

d. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes I don't think the other courses suited me more.

f. What is it like to study there?

E.g. Study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material?

Type of examination is quite similar with BYOD and assignments. There are a lot less practical there is like a week of practical for each course. Workload is pretty OK, in winter the few hours that there is sunlight you're at uni which is a shame but in summer you have all the time of the day.

g. What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with WU?

Similar to WU, lot smaller but same style

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

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

Lots of catering with 2 canteens but every week there are stands that offer free drinks and food so that is super nice, sometimes you get free lunch or pastries. They have very good sporting facilities with a (expensive) gym and sport halls around and laundry is in the student homes.

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

Housing is accounted for very well by "studentinord" where you can choose your preferred housing. I would recommend a common kitchen in Mørkvedlia-otherwise a doublet or bdsit in Mørkvedlia or small kitche in Nedre Hammarlia.

b. What is the culture like?

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

It's still European culture but some Norwegians are very quiet when it comes to meeting new people. When drunk they are very open but normally they don't make contact on the streets.

c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

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

Student monthly ticket is like €30 a month but then you can use every bus and ferry in the whole province of Nordland so to Lofoten is free and all trips to Sentrum or the shopping centre. Busses that go further which you want to take to hike are not that often but with good planning its possible or try to hitchhike back or know someone with a car.

6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	€300
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	€0 for tick encefalitis
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	€0 covered by uni
Daytrips/sight-seeing	€0 because hiking is free and there is free rental stuff! (BUA) (or rent a house somewhere)
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	€550
Grocery costs per month	Twice as expensive
Public transport costs per month	€30
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	Let your parents take you

b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:

Higher like double the amount on some things and other things are similar but ye its expensive.

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

You can make it very cheap by enjoying the nature, even dumpster diving which a lot of people did or very expensive by buying lots of alcohol at the bar, taking flights to bigger cities and renting airbnb's.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

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

Sauna in sentrum, swimming in 4 degree arctic waters.

Drinking with Norwegians (buy your own alcohol).

Attend samfunnet torsdag quiz (pubquiz).

The mountains and fjords in the area.

Train to Trondheim.
LOFOTEN- must have e.g.
Vaeroy, Reine.
Download alltrails and UT apps for hiking.
Nice ones are Finnkonakken, Per karlsatind.
Keiservarden, or hunstadtoppen are easy starters.

b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?

Sailing, FaceBook group Bodøseil and we wrote a message and in the summer you can sail with them sometimes on a Tuesday.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?

The beginning days were very dark and a bit lonely, you couldn't do much stuff outside so try o go sporting in the climbing or volley/football hall and meet new people.

b. Best memory?

Organising a big Kingsday party for all internationals and Norwegian roommates+ friends, everybody was dressed in orange (or red white blue).

9. Contact details

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