



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student information

<b>Study programme WUR</b>	Bachelor Environmental Sciences
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	01/01/2024 until 10/06/2024
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	University of Oslo (UiO)
<b>Faculty</b>	Mathematics and Natural Sciences
<b>Country</b>	Norway
<b>City</b>	Oslo

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

*I saw this exchange as an opportunity to explore a new country and cultures and meeting new people, and thereby develop my personal skills.*

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

*Do I have to clarify this even?! Norway is a stunning country when it comes to nature, due to its fjords, mountains and potential to see northern lights. Furthermore, there are opportunities for among others hiking and skiing. Moreover, Norway is home to several high-ranking universities and very accessible to international students as many courses are taught in English. I chose Norway mainly because of its stunning nature.*

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

*UiO is one of the high-ranking universities and specifically provided courses that I was interested in to follow. Moreover, the website page with courses and student housing application is very well organised.*

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

*There are several ways to go to Norway, go by plane, go by Flixbus, go by car, go by boat, or go by train. Several of my friends chose different methods of travel to go to Norway. I went by plane. All options are possible depending on your situation.*

## 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
<b>1</b>	Hydrology	10 BSc	<a href="https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE02330/index-eng.html">https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE02330/index-eng.html</a>	4	Very interesting course, developed new skills in doing water measurements and deepened my knowledge of hydrology. This course was very well setup and featured a great teacher, who gave most of the lectures alongside one somewhat less great teacher. Additionally there are assignments in Jupyter and excursions to Finse and Ringerike.
<b>2</b>	Floods, Avalanches, and Landslides	10 MSc	<a href="https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE04171/">https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE04171/</a>	4	Course about three different geohazards, given by three different teachers, which you can see from the study material. Personally I felt like the organizational quality from high to low was landslides, floods, avalanches. All in all very interesting, just a lot to learn for the exam. This course has an excursion to the research centre in Finse. That was amazing! We skied and had to even dig out the entrance to get into the research station! Very cool experience to ski there. Also went to Romerike for the landslides part.
<b>3</b>	Chemical Processes in Soil and Ground Water	10 MSc	<a href="https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE05900/">https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/matnat/geofag/GE05900/</a>	3	Interesting course, teacher however did not show up all the time. So sometimes had to rewatch

					recordings. Recordings were great though. There were assignments in PHREEQC, which is a cool program, but requires some attention.
--	--	--	--	--	--

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

*Yes, many courses are taught in English. To verify this you can look at the course page of UiO, where it shows whether it is given in Norwegian or English. Also it may state that it will be given in English on request, which was the case for Hydrology for me.*

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

*Yes and no, there were many options to choose from. However, if you want to select courses from different faculties or departments, schedules may collide. This makes you limited to selecting courses from one department. In the case of selecting courses from one department, course schedules often do not collide.*

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

*Yes. I followed one bachelors course and two master courses. The level of education would be a bit similar to the education at WUR. However, I would say that generally, there is slightly more workload for the master courses I followed as compared to the WUR courses. However, the bachelors course was slightly below the education level at WUR.*

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

*Yes. At first, I had a selection of other courses I wanted to follow, however due to colliding schedules I could not follow this program. However, in hindsight, I really enjoyed all courses I followed, mainly due to their excursions and assignments.*

**f. What is it like to study there?**

*I think for many courses at UiO the grade consists of both a written exam part and an assignment part. Often a combination of lectures and tutorials were given. Workload differs, depending on whether it is a bachelors or a master course. Personally I found the lesson material was large as it covers 10 ECTS. However, very doable if you put some effort in.*

**g. What is the culture of the university?**

*The lecturers are very approachable. You can ask a question anytime, both during and outside lecture hours. Sometimes, you have to sent another email though. In all the courses I followed, both international and Norwegian students were present. Everybody was very open for interactions and questions. However, one thing I noted was that Norwegian was spoken during some courses and excursions, whereafter sometimes there*

was a need to request a translation to English. All in all, everybody at UiO is very kind and willing to help when necessary.

#### **h. What does the university offer students additionally?**

UiO offers many services through SiO, including services for housing, health, sports, food, and associations. Athletica is the sporting facility, and all through Oslo you can find their facilities. At campus you can go to the cafeteria to get your food and a supermarket is present on campus. Laundry could be done in every student village, as far as I am aware. There are several locations to do laundry in each student village.

## **5. Housing-traveling-living**

#### **a. What are the possibilities for housing?**

UiO provides a system, through SiO, via which you can apply for a room in one of the student villages. I think you could sign up for six type of apartments out of many available, varying from the number of people in the apartment, with how many you share a bathroom, etc. I did not get my first preference, however, the rooms were very clean and well organized. My rent was 4960 NOK. You can get an apartment for your own.

#### **b. What is the culture like?**

In terms of habits or manners, Norwegians are often considered to be polite and punctual and are respecting each others personal space. This was true, however being distant, which was said in one of the introduction lectures for the international students, I definitely disagreed with. The Norwegians I talked to were very open and approachable. Talking about culture, you should definitely try the brunost (brown cheese) with jam on waffles or pancakes. Oh and Smash is also very good, but addictive food. Often working days are till four, and national holidays include the 17<sup>th</sup> of May (great day!), but Easter is also a big thing, as people often go skiing with their families and eat Kvikk Lunsj. Kanelbollen from Baker Hansen are also a good option.

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

The public transport in Oslo is great, you can either go by bus, tram or metro. Buses are often late, but metros and trams are often on time. It is handy to download the Ruter app for more information. Cost for a monthly student ticket is 537 NOK, which is about the same amount of money that DUO provides you when you stop your public transport pass in the Netherlands. Taxis are expensive. I chose to go to university by public transport. However, technically you could go by bike and so some people did. However, Oslo is quite hilly.

## **6. Expenses**

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	2200 NOK
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	-

Daytrips/sight-seeing	530 NOK
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	4960 NOK, living in total with four: shared kitchen with four, shared bathroom with two
Grocery costs per month	2200 NOK
Public transport costs per month	537 NOK
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	did not do that much, too expensive

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

*The price levels were generally higher in comparison to the Netherlands.*

**c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?**

*Although price levels were generally higher in comparison to the Netherlands, you can minimize your expenses by going to Grønland, where markets offer cheap prices for veggies and fruits. Moreover, when needing clothes you can go to second hand shops such as Fretex, where revenue goes to Salvation Army. Vegetarian food options are little and more expensive. If you want to save some money, just do not go out for dinner. You can rent skis and other outdoor gear at BUA for free, requires a Norwegian number though. At the library of things, in Georg Sverdrups Hus you can rent things such as a mat, or a hiking bag and more, for free for a week upon showing your student card.*

## 7. Free time

**a. What are must-sees in the area?**

*Holmenkollen (during Holmenkollen ski festival!!!), Opera house, the islands (Hovedoya, Lindoya, etc), sauna areas close to opera house (SALT), sleighing at Korketrekkeren, skiing at Sognsvann, Vigelandsparken, Akershus Fortress, the Royal Palace, Norsk Folkemuseum (stave church), Munch museum, Ekebergparken, Grünerløkka, Blå, Freia, to name a few.*

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

*Go to Sognsvann to see the Northern Lights or go for a run in the forest. Take an ice bath in Sognsvann, please make a fire though. Ski at Sognsvann. Barbecue at Sognsvann. Go to Café Amsterdam on Kingsday.*

## 8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

*It was relatively cold the first: -20 C. So not typical Dutch weather. Bought some merino shirts and underwear, skiing socks.*

**b. Best memory?**

*One of the best memories would probably be the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, going to the parade, picnicking in the park, talking, drinking. However, there were so many more moments,*

*such as eating food together from different countries, ice bathing, taking a sauna in Finse and afterwards jumping in the snow. For me there was not such thing as the best memory, there are several best memories. However if I were to say what the best memory was, is meeting all those lovely people.*

## 9. Contact details

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name &amp; email address (if yes)</b>	annika.hakkers@wur.nl	