



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Communication Life Sciences
Study period exchange	02-09-2019 untill 22-12-2019
Country (exchange)	France
City (exchange)	Paris
University (exchange)	Université Dauphine Paris
Faculty (exchange)	International Affairs Office

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to study in a different study environment, because I believed that going on exchange would give me the opportunity to develop as a person. During the past years I have been on a few study holidays abroad. I studied in München when I was 17, in Oxford when I was 18 and half a year in Montpellier when I was 20 years old. Therefore it was not uncommon for me to live abroad. However I did not study at a university and wanted to experience a different culture which I thought would be only possible if went to live somewhere else. Allowing yourself to broaden your mind and understand different points of view. In my opinion education is not only studying and getting excellent grades, it is also about becoming a person who understands the world and to push yourself out of your comfort zone. This is definitely something I accomplished in Paris.

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

I wanted to return to France, because I loved to study France in Montpellier when I was 20 years old. When I lived there for 5 months and felt like I became a Française. I felt like an inhabitant in a different country, which sounds odd but felt completely normal for me. I love the French language, although I do not speak it like a native yet I can definitely have basic conversations. Although the subjects that I chose were taught in English, I explored Paris and learned something in another way than I would probably learn at the Wageningen University.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination? (E.g. bus, train, etc.)

Going with the Thalys is definitely easiest. The only thing you have to keep in mind is booking 3 months in advance, or at least as soon as possible. In this way the train tickets only cost 35 euro one-way. I even booked my return ticket in December at the end of September because I already knew by that time when my exams would take place.

Also it is necessary to get a Navigo pass. If you are going for a year you can apply for a year student pass (Definitely apply for it a month or earlier before you are going). I went

to Paris for 4 months so I got a Navigo pass the first week I arrived and paid the normal month card price (around 75 euro and pass is 1 time 5 euros). It was possible to apply for a student pass but then I had to pay for a year and fill in a lot of papers to get my money back for the months I was not here. I needed a paper from dauphine that I was only a student for 4 months and even the university told me it would be easier to get a month card for 3 months and for my last 2 weeks 2 week cards and a few day cards or solo tickets. You have to upload a new month at a machine on the last few days of the last months which is actually quite easy. Also bring a photo of yourself so they can make your pass. This will save you money and time.

If new students are going, they can also always ask me about this and I can help them out a bit because it is quite a hassle in the beginning.

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	Cross cultural communication and management	6	Comparisons between countries on different levels such as time and space, origin of culture. A lot of different aspects in which you could choose your own specialism	4	In the beginning you don't even know what is going on because the teacher is a bit 'crazy', but in the end she taught me a lot of interesting things which I will take with me the rest of my life. This was in the end the most interesting course.
2	International business ethics	6	A lot of examples and case studies and giving your own interpretations	3	Teacher spoke perfect English. He was half French/half American.
3	Opportunities and challenges for Journalism	6	Writing and learning about journalism in France	3	Super interactive course and great teacher.
4	Global Media	6	Learning about the different media flows in the world	3	He talks a lot but provides a different perspective on the media in the world and not only life sciences (this is what I am more used to at the WUR). He does not have an overview while teaching so I had trouble following everything.
5	Human resources	6	Typical human resource course.	2	The English level of the teacher was not sufficient at all and I did not understand more than half of the course I think. I know some teachers in France don't have a high English level but then again I don't

					understand why she gave this international course. She did know a lot about here course but it was hard to transfer that information.
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How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

Every course is 3 hours and takes place in a class. Some courses are more interactive than others and at the end of the semester I had an exam week. Academic level is okay, but I felt it was lower than the level I am used to in Wageningen. Also they grade very differently. They have a system from 0 to 20 but they don't grade higher than a 16 for French students and sometimes they do for international students but there is not one way of grading.

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?)

Some teachers were great and some a bit less. In my opinion I am grateful to go back to the WUR and I actually wanted to do my master in Paris but decided to do my master at the WUR since I love the way of teaching more. At the WUR they tell you what they expect from you at the beginning and at Dauphine they told me the exam material 2 weeks before the examweek which gave quite a bit of stress.

What does the university offer the student additionally? (E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?)

They offer a sports abonnement which my friend told me was quite good, but I did not use that. They also offer Thursday drinks and an international weekend. The DEE (Dauphine Erasmus exchange board) organised a lot of parties and other activities for the international student which I occasionally joined.

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?)

I actually posted on Facebook that I needed a room for 4 months and got a room with a French woman (cousin of friends of my parents). This was great and costs me 700 euro. I lived very close to the university and to the 'city center' (not really there but close to the places where I wanted to go). For this reason I did not even look further and don't know how the housing works.

What is the culture of the country like? (E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?)

Different! It is sometimes hard to arrange anything in this country. They had a strike starting 5th of December of the metro and train and the university told me it was necessary for me to walk to school (5 kilometer one-way). This gave me a lot of stress since I had to learn and had to walk to my exams to make them. In the end I actually walked more than 60 kilometers in that week while also making 5 exams of 3 hours each. I think it affected my exams quite a bit but I still hope I passed my courses but I don't know that now.

Could you give a general price indication of the place of residence compared to living in Wageningen?

Cité Universitaire in the 14th around 450 euro and residence Saint Ouen (outside of Paris) around 700 euro. I definitely recommend the cité universitaire. The other residence is close to Saint Denis and not a nice neighbourhood. I would absolutely not recommend to live in that residence. The 14th arrondissement is a student residence. (Or try what I did and you might find something). The living costs are way more expensive than in Wageningen or even Utrecht (I still live there).

6. Free time

What are must-sees in the area? (E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?)

I used mapstr (an app) to keep track of all the places I went to. I definitely recommend the touristic places to visit but do so in the week and not weekends and make a list of every place you want to go to. (You can follow my mapstr account and can see all the places I recommend/visited)

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Getting something done at the university. I takes a lot of time and everything is still done by using paper, not digital.

What was your best memory abroad?

Not possible to choose something. I very much liked it, but it had its ups and downs. I am happy I am a Dutch student at the university of Wageningen and that this was just an exchange. I am glad that I can say that I studied in Paris for 4 months but I did feel a lot alone in those months and came home twice because I felt so lonely. The city is so big and I did not really think about that before I went but this affected the exchange since meeting friend could take up to 1 hour travelling just for a coffee.

8. Contact details

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