



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	BES
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	04-10-2021 until 25-02-2022
Country (exchange)	Greece
City (exchange)	Athens
University (exchange)	Agricultural University of Athens
Faculty (exchange)	Agricultural Sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I had heard lots of positive comments and stories from other students that decided to do their Minor abroad. Moreover, I wanted to experience the culture and studying in another country with other international students from all around the world.

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

The main reason I chose for Greece and specifically Athens is my interest in ancient cultures and societies, and I thus wanted to see and experience what was left of the ancient Greek civilisation and culture. Additionally, the weather is great even during the winter and I wanted to spend my Minor somewhere warm.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

From Athens International Airport you have multiple options of going to the centre of Athens. You can take the blue line metro or the bus X95 which will both take you to the centre and they're only 5 min walking from the airport.

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	Aquaculture	6	Basic knowledge of important fish species including bivalves and plankton, with a focus on rearing, necessary conditions and future prospects.	4	Interesting course but there is a lot of slightly varying information on different species of fish, bivalves and plankton which made it hard to remember everything.
2	Hydrobiology	6	Introduction to the composition of the ocean and the many different processes that occur in the ocean and the effect they have on the rest of the planet.	3	Many lectures in this course but the total workload wasn't too high as we did 3 presentations and the final grade was the average.
3	Animal Biotechnology	5	Overview of the advances in biotechnology used to understand the animals around us, and potentially improve their positive characteristics.	5	Very interesting course which provided a lot of adequate information, but it has a high workload.
4	Enzyme Biotechnology	5	Overview of natural and engineered enzymes, the processes they are involved in and methods for the engineering/enhancement of enzymes.	4	The course was interesting but very specifically focussed on biological enzymes so don't take this without a small background in biology.
5	Nanobiotechnology and Biosensors	5	An introduction to the advancements in nanobiotechnology for the use of biosensors.	1	I don't recommend this course, we had 1 introduction meeting where the teacher gave us a topic and told us to write a 5 page essay before the end of the semester and that was it.
6	Molecular Ecology and Adaptation	5	Starts with a small introduction on ecology and how species adapt. Then more in depth on the workings of circadian and biological clocks, diapause and shock regulators in insects and animals.	4	Minimal workload for this course with 1 meeting every 2 weeks but the information provided was interesting.

How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

There are not multiple periods like at the WUR, instead you have a lecture/tutorial/practical once or twice a week and they will give you small homework assignments. Examination was either a multiple-choice exam or based on essays that were written during the course as homework assignments. The academic level was quite low compared to the courses at the WUR and same goes for the workload which was appreciated during my stay.

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?)

Lecturers and TA's were all nice and very approachable, both in person and via email. Engagement with local students was limited since they mostly speak Greek and even if we did have courses with them, they would converse in Greek with the teacher and each other.

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

On the campus is a cafeteria which offers lunch and dinner for free, there is a gym you can use (you need permission from the doctor on campus first) and there is a library.

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?)

There is no housing on campus but there are lots of possibilities for student housing all throughout the city. You can use facebook groups which offer rooms or use StayInAthens which is a reliable and helpful organisation that rents many rooms specifically for international students. Average rent is around €300.

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

People are much more relaxed and easy-going, there are no strict timetables and people don't tend to rush for things. Also, they like to spend time in (front of) café's, bars and restaurants where they will sit for long periods of time with friends and family to enjoy, listen to live music and drink.

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

I rented a small private studio via StayInAthens and I paid €350 per month, which is cheaper than renting a private studio in Wageningen. For shared rooms the price is lower.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure? (E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

They offer public transport cards at most metro stations that cost €13 per month for students (you need a student card from the host university or proof of admission). This card allows you to travel with bus, metro and tram throughout Athens. Taxi is also pretty cheap but only when using an app like Uber or Beat.

6. Free time

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

Inside the city classic places like the Acropolis and Lycabettus hill are a must see, just as the national garden. Outside the city you can do day trips to Meteora, Delphi and Corinth which are all very beautiful. Also very nice are the islands which you can visit by ferry, especially nice on the warmer days.

What does not appear in the travel guide, but is worth a visit?

Hymettus hill is nice, its just outside the city and you can look over the skyline of Athens.

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time (E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?)

Definitely try to make some Greek friends/acquaintances that can show you around the city as they know all the nice spots. For international Erasmus parties Gazi is the place to be.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

The lack of organization and clarity was frustrating at first, as you're unsure of what exactly you have to do and when. However, once you get used to this it is quite nice and relaxing.

What was your best memory abroad?

My trip to Delphi in November, it was off-season so it was almost empty yet the weather was still great.

8. Contact details (optional)

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