



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Spatial Planning
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	6-9-2021 until 6-2-2022
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Czech Republic
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Brno
<b>University (exchange)</b>	Mendel University Brno
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I really liked the idea of going abroad for my study. I wanted to go in 2020, but because of the corona pandemic this was not possible. Fortunately, I was able to do it a year after.

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

I saw the Mendel University in Brno and I liked it for several reasons. It was located in Czechia, where I had never been before. I also really liked the Mendel University, since it was similar to the one in Wageningen; pretty small, with much attention for the students. It is also a really green university, with eye for nature and environment.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

It is possible to go there by Flixbus from Amsterdam, as I've done my first time. However, this is a relatively long sit (around 14 hours). I therefore recommend to go by plane. Easiest is to fly to Vienna (available from Eindhoven, which is cheap). From Vienna you can take the train to Brno. This is cheap and faster than flying to Prague and taking the train from there.

## 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
<b>1</b>	Development Economics in English	4	Discusses the economics of developing economies and nations	4	I learned that development has a cost. We always want to develop more and more, but there is also a downside to it.
<b>2</b>	Development Problems in Latin America in English	4	Discusses the different problems Latin America faces (economically, socially, geographically)	5	I was really interested in Latin America and this is one of the courses I really wanted to follow in Brno.
<b>3</b>	Development Problems of China in English	4	Discusses the different problems China faces (economically, socially, geographically)	5	This was a course I really liked more than I expected, I learned a lot in this course.
<b>4</b>	International Relations and Contemporary Security Challenges in EN	6	Discusses the challenges of international relations and their history	4	This course dove more into history, I liked it but it was not my favourite.
<b>5</b>	Introduction to Development Studies in English	4	Is an introduction to development studies. Mainly focuses on the different problems of Africa (economic, social, geographical)	4	This course was really nice, a lot about Africa and with a Ghanaian teacher. So the teacher made the course have an extra personal layer.
<b>6</b>	Political Challenges of Developing World in EN	5	Discusses the geopolitics of different regions of the world	3	This course was about general political challenges and recent conflicts, such as the Israel/Palestine war. Interesting but not my favourite.

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

Most of the courses I followed were examined through participation, presentation/midterm exam, paper and a final exam.

**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?)**

It is a relatively small university, so the teachers are pretty easy to approach. Also emails are responded to rather quickly. The classes vary from literally 6 students to more than 100. One difference from the WUR is that the online system of Mendel University is a bit less user-friendly.

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

You can register for two sports during your stay in Brno for free, but you have to be quick. Most sports are full within the first day. There is a university canteen at the campus and relatively cheap, but the food isn't that good. Laundry facilities were available at the dorms I stayed at.

## **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?)**

It is possible to sign up for a room via the campus, as I have done. I had a room that I shared with one Greek guy. It sounds weird maybe, but you get used to it pretty quickly. It was also really cheap, around €140. I got this room through the university, which is cheap and means you live with other students as well. You can also look for accommodation on your own, but that is more work and probably more expensive.

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

Czech people are pretty friendly, although I did not interact with many of them. Most Czech people I talked to were from ESN Brno, who spoke English really well. Normally, Czech people don't speak English that well, especially the older ones. Some of them do know German, but many only speak Czech. There weren't really any shocking cultural differences or so, but just some small things.

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

It's pretty cheap to live in Czech Republic, around €140,-/month as mentioned. In Wageningen it is more common to pay around €350 / €400. However, you have to take into consideration that I lived in a room together with someone else. So you basically only have half a room. Life in general is a bit cheaper than in the Netherlands, but not that much.

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

Public transport is pretty cheap as well. You can get a 3 month travel card for in Brno for around €30. These are for trams and buses within Brno, which you could use unlimitedly. You use public transport pretty frequently, since no one uses a bike. This is another difference from the Netherlands.

## 6. Free time

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

Brno is a great city to explore, the centre is great. I would really recommend to go to the ice hockey games and rent a scooter if you can 😊 Furthermore there are many cool cities to visit, such as Prague and Olomouc. Outside of Czechia, there are Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava and Cracow relatively nearby. You are definitely going to travel more than you are used to now, so start packing 😊

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

Just roam around, you'll enjoy yourself!

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

There are many great clubs in Brno, such as Fléda, 7 Nebe (7 Heaven), Exit Club, 2 Faces and Sono. One restaurant which is good is called the Wooden Eagle (but in Czech, not sure what it was again). There is also the Wooden Wolf, another good restaurant. There are also many cafés and bars in the area.

## 7.Challenges & best moment abroad

**What was a challenge you have experienced?**

One time I missed my friends and family from the Netherlands, but that was only once. Things like sharing a room with someone might be weird in the beginning, but you get used to it in like one week.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

One time after going out, we went back home on electric scooters. We had a lot of fun and everyone laughed. It was one of the best memories, but there are many to choose from 😊

## 8. Contact details (optional)

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name/e-mail</b>	Daniel.keestra@wur.nl	