



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Health and Society
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	06-09-2021 until 21-01-2022
Country (exchange)	Spain
City (exchange)	Valencia
University (exchange)	Catholic University of Valencia
Faculty (exchange)	Business

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to experience living abroad, meeting people from all over the world, exploring a different culture and language and just have a good time.

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

I have always wanted to learn Spanish, that is why I was looking for a destination in Spain. Besides that, I loved the idea of living close to the sea and be able to go to the beach after classes. I liked the idea of living in a place where the sun shines a lot and I thought the country would be pretty as well.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I just took a plane.

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	Strategic management	6	Course on management theories. On strategic choices, strategic positions of companies, etc.	3	Interesting course but also pretty advanced. The teacher was just talking for two hours straight, no midterms on assignment and a very difficult final exam
2	Marketing II	6	Quite basic but interesting marketing course.	4	Liked this course, well structured
3	Human Resource Management	6	Basics of Human Resource Management.	3	The teacher was really sweet, but the course was very chaotic and unstructured
4	Customer relationship management	6	Interesting course on marketing and how to retain customers.	4	Liked this course, really nice teacher and way of teaching
5	Spanish A2	6		5	My favourite course, loved learning Spanish and very nice teacher.

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

Studying in Spain is very different from studying at the WUR in my opinion. I love how organized the WUR is and how you always know what to expect. Here in Spain, you just go to a class and you see whether they are going to give a lecture or if you have to do a (graded) assignment or anything. Also tests and deadlines are not announced in the course guide beforehand, they just inform you about a week before. I disliked that about studying in Spain. But I liked the contents of the courses, I never studied anything in this direction so it was all new to me. The teachers were also really kind and because you spend 5 months on one course and classes are really small, the teachers will know your name and that makes it very personal and I think that is very nice. Most courses have assignments or midterms throughout the semester and a big final exam in January. I think the level is a bit easier than in the Netherlands, but since I had no background in business, it was still challenging sometimes.

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?)

The teachers are very approachable, groups are small so you really get to know your teachers and fellow students very well and I like that. Because my courses were in English, there were mostly international students in my courses, so I met people from all over Europe and the world. Unfortunately, I didn't meet that many Spanish students as they mostly followed courses in Spanish.

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

The university doesn't offer that many activities. There is no canteen and there aren't many activities being organised. But since the university is in the city centre, you can easily get coffee or lunch near the school. Also, there are plenty of sports opportunities and Erasmus activities organised by other organisations so I didn't really miss it not being organised by the university.

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?)

The university doesn't offer housing. But it is not that hard to find in Valencia. I found my room through the website housinganywhere.com and the agency was called Help Housing. They were really reliable and came to fix things soon so I would recommend them. I lived in the area Albors, which is quite far from UCV, but closer to the other two universities in the city. I liked living there as it was relatively close to both the beach and the city centre. On beforehand I thought all students would be living around this area since the other two universities are located here, but it turned out there are also many students living in the city centre so that is also an option.

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

There is not that big of a culture difference because it is still an European country. People in general are nice and helpful, eating out is cheaper than in the Netherlands and because the weather is better, people are living outside more on terraces and on the streets. Restaurants often open at eight o'clock, so be prepared to eat later. And Spanish teacher are not so organised, so don't expect to know things beforehand and to be able to make a planning.

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

I think compared to Wageningen, groceries and rent are similar. But I spent more money here on going out to party, to eat, going on trips and doing activities.

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

For only 30 euros a year you can get a ValenBisi subscription. All around the city are bike stations where you can get a bike from or park your bike in. I really like this system as normal bikes often get damaged or stolen and this is a cheap and Dutch way to getting around the city. I biked to the university every day with the ValenBisi. Furthermore I walked a lot and I used the metro, bus and sometimes a taxi through the app FreeNow.

6. Free time

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

I would recommend to keep an eye on all the trips that are being organized by Happy Erasmus and Erasmus Life. I went on a really nice trip to Andalusia, I would really recommend that one if you want to see Andalusia in a short period of time. Furthermore I went on a lot of day trips and would recommend Cala Moraig, Montanejos, Isla de Tabarca, hiking in Chulilla and more. Also, in winter months, close to Valencia you can actually find snow. It is very funny to experience snow in Spain. Furthermore, Madrid is within two hours by train, just book your train tickets in advance because they get more and more expensive the longer you wait.

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

I would recommend PortsaPlaya. It is a small village just above Valencia with really pretty coloured houses. It is called Venice of Valencia and you can just go there by foot or by bus. Also Albufera it a lake just outside Valencia. It is the biggest lake of Spain and it is where Paella was found. The lake is not that special but I had the best paella there and it is a really pretty place to watch the sunset.

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

Going out to clubs can be pretty expensive here, but they offer lots of deals for Erasmus students so keep an eye on that. There are many clubs to go out to. You should definitely go to Umbracle as it is at a very pretty location and a really cool club. Also, for restaurants you have to go to Voltereta, Saona and Dulce de Leche. For paella I would recommend Canela.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Sometimes it was a challenge to be all alone in a foreign country. When I didn't feel well I could not easily see my friends or family and that can be tough. Also, because building generally don't have central heating, the winter months were pretty cold in our apartment so that was a challenge as well.

What was your best memory abroad?

What I liked most about my time abroad was meeting different people from different countries and experiencing that no matter what country you come from, you always find similarities and similar interests. Furthermore I loved to live in a place where the weather was so good that you could always be outside, I loved to go to the beach, and I loved to travel through Spain during the weekends and discover this beautiful country. One of my best memories was going to Cala Moraig, a beautiful beach, swimming there on a Sunday and realising that this is my life now and that I was now able to do things like this on the weekend. Also, being on a rooftop bar in Madrid with my roommates and watching the sunset from there, that was a beautiful moment. Another highlight was surfing as the sun set.

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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