



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Health and Society
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	15/08/2022 until 05/01/2023
Country (exchange)	Sweden
City (exchange)	Linköping
University (exchange)	Linköping University
Faculty (exchange)	Arts and Sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

After the COVID pandemic that has restricted student life I wanted to do something new and exciting. Going abroad was already in the back of my mind in my minor, which I decided against back then, also because of the pandemic. However, I then decided doing an exchange could be the exciting thing to do, considering to possibly meet many new people and explore another country.

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

I wanted to go to one of the Nordic countries, because generally education is said to be better in the northern countries. Also, the level of English speaking is said to be better in these countries, and it was important for me to be able to communicate well in most scenarios while already living in a foreign country for the first time. Out of the Nordic countries Sweden spoke to me the most, because it seemed to have a nice combination of nature and "normal" life. Also, out of the Nordic countries Linköping University spoke to me the most because they seemed to be very communicative towards international students, very well informant and student life and culture sounded like a lot of fun.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Linköping has its own airport (LPI), which flies directly between Linköping and Amsterdam only. The airport has a good bus connection to the central station, so this is a very good option to get to the city. If you arrive on one of the arrival days, a LiU shuttle bus will pick you up from the central station and bring you to campus (where you can pick up your keys and get some information on the university and associations) and then to your room.

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	Foodscapes in Urban and Regional Strategic Planning (709A15)	7.5	The course introduces the concept of foodscape, the challenges of designing food systems, as well as the role of urban and regional planners in the transformation of practice relating to food and food systems.	4	
2	Critical Perspectives on Planning for Health (709A09)	7.5	The course provides several perspectives on how health is distributed in society and how health can be affected, keeping in mind different definitions of health and well-being and the role of planning for health in terms of social justice.	4	
3	Nordic Culture (754G52)	15	The course explores the Nordic Culture and gives insights into Nordic cultural life, including both indoor and outdoor activities.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effortless but fun - Nice way to learn more about the country you are living in and exploring - Includes trips and other fun activities

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

I did not experience a workload that was too high and had a quite some free time next to my courses. I would say the level of the courses was comparable to the level of courses in Wageningen, however the amount of people in these courses were very low with only five other students in each of them. My course on Nordic culture was very low level and really meant to just teach internationals a bit more on the culture, thus quite easy to pass. I did not have any exams and just had to write assignments, attend tutorials and participate and do presentations. I also did not have any literature I had to purchase and just had to use articles and provided course materials.

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?)

I would say that the lecturers are as approachable as they are in Wageningen, often lecturers are also being addressed on a first name level. My master classes were very small, allowing the classes to really become a small group for a few weeks, and as they included some local students that also allowed me to engage with them for the time being. My other course was focussed on international students, so that course did not have engagement with local students.

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

The university has a sports complex similar to the Bongerd in Wageningen, except that it does not have a swimming pool. The facility is called Campushallen and you are also able to buy sports rights there for various amounts of time. The university also has a few cafeteria options for bigger meals, two popular coffee places to go for a quick fika in your study break and a small kiosk (Pressbyrå). The main housing options (Studentbostäder and Heimstaden) offer many facilities renters can use for free. I lived at Studentbostäder where we had an application in which you can book slots for the washing machines (some including detergent), sauna, table tennis and billiard rooms, study rooms and more for free!

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?)

In many cases, the university will offer you housing through the housing cooperation Studentbostäder if you apply for that in your application, in which case you live in a complex of Studentbostäder, while being in contract with the university. These rooms are located in neighbourhoods with many students living there (mostly in Ryd, but also in Flamman and Valla). I lived in Ryd in a shared corridor with seven others, where everyone had their own bathroom, and we shared a large kitchen. This was very fine, and it was very nice to live close to many other students and friends, who mostly lived in similar corridors.

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

Linköping is also known in Sweden for a very fun student culture. Students are very active, and from the start of the semester on many activities are organised to engage (international) students in this culture. I do believe it is a bit harder to get in though with the Swedish students, as they seem to be little more to them self (in line with the stereotypes of Swedes being a little introverted), yet very nice and very good in English. I did also not try too hard to look for the Swedes, as you are very easily able to meet and become acquainted with other internationals, but I did have some friends that are

international programme students that experienced some trouble when trying to become friends with Swedes.

I would say that the student culture in Linköping is more active than in Wageningen. There are some very fun traditions, such as overalls based on your study programme, which you get to inaugurate and personalise with patches, long cueing for parties, fika breaks and several weekly student parties. There is no need to be part of a student association to be part of this student culture with all the other (Swedish) students.

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

I paid about 380 euros for my room, which was pretty big and came with its own bathroom. In my case the rent was lower than my rent in Wageningen, which I think would mostly be the case for this size of a room. However, in general Sweden is more expensive than the Netherlands, which was for example very visible when buying groceries and alcohol.

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

Linköping has a biking culture, so most students have a second-hand bike (which can be purchased in garages that sell these recommended by the university, Telegram, Facebook, etc.) with which you can pretty much get anywhere within the city. Next to that, busses and kickscooters are used a lot within the city. When doing travels further away, trains and busses are easiest to use, but especially the trains can be quite expensive (but they do offer student discount through Mecenat or ESNcards). Be cautious though, it can save you a lot of money to book trains and busses some time in advance or very last minute, as the price changes and increases mostly over time.

6. Free time

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

Norrköping is a favourite to visit with the free campus bus. I also enjoyed some daytrips to Jonköping (Flixbus) and Söderköping.

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

Lake Roxen and nature reservation Tinnerö.

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

Generally, I would highly recommend joining the (introduction) activities organised by the international student associations (mainly ESN, ISA and UPF). They organise many activities in the introduction weeks that allow you to meet many new students very easily and are also fun and often show you more of the city and/or culture in Linköping. Furtherly, I would recommend the popular student cafe to go to for a fika. My favourite places to go out were the parties in Kårallen, KK, Platens, Pitchers, Flamman pub and the Crypt.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

For me I did not really struggle with homesickness or culture shock during my stay there, as I already got fully invested in my life there right from the start and was able to meet many of my friends in the first few days, so it was very easy to feel at home soon. However, when the end was nearing, I was very worried and sad about leaving, and leaving was one of the hardest things I ever did. The first few days back in the Netherlands I experienced to be very hard and with a noticeable reversed culture shock, but time helped healing that as well, and it's nice to think of the reunions planned ahead as well.

What was your best memory abroad?

It is hard to pick just one, as I have been able to do so many cool and exciting things and meet amazing people. Besides all the impressive trips I did (some of the coolest being the ISA Lapland trip, ESN Sea Battle to Tallinn and an ESN trip to the Norwegian fjords), I just loved being in Linköping and Ryd with my friends, having fun and going to parties and enjoying time with them.

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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