



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>       | Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning |
| <b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b> | 06-09-2022 until 18-02-2023                 |
| <b>Country (exchange)</b>                 | Italy                                       |
| <b>City (exchange)</b>                    | Milan                                       |
| <b>University (exchange)</b>              | Politecnico di Milano                       |
| <b>Faculty (exchange)</b>                 | Architecture                                |

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I chose to go on exchange to experience studying and living abroad. I have always loved languages and try to better my skills in English, French and German. One of the reasons I chose Italy, is that I want to learn to speak and understand Italian. The Politecnico University is one of the best universities in architecture, which made it the perfect combination to study in Milan.

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

The Politecnico University is one of the best universities in architecture, which makes it the perfect combination for to study in Milan. Not only can I extend my knowledge in my study field here, I also could practice the Italian language daily.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

To get to Milan, my friend (who also studied this exchange in Milan) and I went by car. We were very fortunate that we could use his car. My other friends mostly went by plane. Some exchange students also went by train, which was a one day journey, so that's totally fine and better for the environment.

My tips for traveling in Milan:

Since I am Dutch, I immediately walked to the city centre and rented a Swapfiets for six months. I only used public traffic when my friends or family were visiting me in Milan.

## 4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

|   | Course   | ECTS | Short description of the contents  | Appreciation of course:<br>1(low) – 5(high) | Remarks  |
|---|--|------|--|---|--|
| 1 | Built Environment and Landscape Design Studio                  | 12   | WE DESIGNED A TOURIST ROUTE THROUGH A SMALL ITALIAN VILLAGE TOGETHER IN A GROUP OF 6 STUDENTS.   | 3   | THIS COURSE I IMPROVED SOME OF MY SKILLS REGARDING THE DESIGN PROGRAMS WE HAD TO USE. THE GROUPWORK WAS CHALLENGING, BUT IN THE END IT WORKED OUT PRETTY FINE.   |
| 2 | Ecological Landscape Planning                                  | 8    | WE LEARNED HOW TO REDESIGN A PARK IN MILAN CONSIDERING THE VEGETATION, CLIMATE AND VISITORS WITH REGARD TO THE LAMBRATE RIVER THAT GOES THROUGH THE SITE.  | 3   | I ENJOYED THIS COURSE, BECAUSE WE LEARNED MORE ABOUT HOW TO TREAT A RIVER IN A PARK AND MAKE IT MORE NATURAL. THIS IS A SKILL THAT I CAN USE IN FUTURE PROJECTS.   |
| 3 | CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES | 8    | WE LEARNED ABOUT WHERE AND WHEN TO PLANT THE RIGHT SPECIES, HOW TO TREAT THEM AND HOW TO MAINTAIN THEM. THIS COURSE FOCUST A LOT ON PLANTGROWTH AND CHOOSING THE CORRECT SPECIES. WE ALSO LEARNED ABOUT HISTORICAL GARDENS AND HOW TO ANALYSE AND RENOVATE THEM. | 4   | THIS COURSE MADE ME EVEN MORE ENTHAUSIASTIC ABOUT PLANTS AND TREES. I GOT TO KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THE ECOLOGY OF PLANTS. BUT ALSO THE HISTOCRICAL GARDENS ASPECT OF THIS COURSE WAS USEFUL FOR FUTURE PROJECTS, SINCE THE HISTORY OF A SITE MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN. |
| 4 |  |      |  |   |  |
| 5 |  |      |  |   |  |
| 6 |  |      |  |   |  |

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

The workload was doable for most of the time. The academic level was fine, I could follow two of the three courses without any problems. The studio however was more challenging. The examination was fine too, I understood the assignments and studied hard for the exams. It was clear what and where the material was.

**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?)**

In my class we were with 50 students, I think. From which only two till four students were Italian and the rest of the students was Asian (mostly Chinese). This differed from my expectations. It was a bit hard to communicate with the Asian students, because their language and communication abilities were not so high most of the time. Communication with the Italian professors was okay, I got used to their accent quite fast.

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

It has a sports field and swimming pool, but I never used that. The ESN is very active and organized a lot of fun activities where you could meet new people.

## 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 are a lot of websites such as 'housing anywhere'. You should start looking for a room about 3 months in advance I would suggest, to be sure you find a place. The prices are okay and range between 600-900 euros I believe. You can live in all sorts of accommodations. Be aware that a lot of the student housing do not allow guests or sleepovers!

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

The cuisine is very nice, everyone knows that! The Italian culture is very clear throughout Milan. The clothing styles, the fancy coffee restaurants, dogs that wear fancy jackets. Overall the local people are friendly and keen to help you out, but surely not everybody speaks English which made connecting to them hard sometimes.

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

The supermarket 'Esselunga' was fantastic! It's like a big supermarché in France. It had a brand called 'smart' which is like the old 'euroshopper' of AH- basic in the Albert Heijn. The prices were lower than in the Netherlands I found out when I came back.

The restaurants vary between super tasty, cheap Italian kitchen to very expensive, tourist restaurants. Be a bit careful where you eat, you should look it up on google maps.

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

Its possible to get a metrocard for the whole year which costs about 120 euros for 6 months?? I am not sure. However the one-way metro trips are 2 euros per ride and it lasts for 45 min, so you could also use it as a retour ticket.

I actually only used the metro about 6 times, when my family or friends from the Netherlands visited me in Milan. I rented a Swapfiets for 6 months which was 16 euros per month with a discount of 20 euros from a code I got (because I was a student ?). Biking in Milan is a bit hectic at first, but almost everything was wtihin 8-20min biking distance. For me this was perfect, even in the winter it was not slippery on the old, big roman stones haha.

## 6. Free time

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

The duomo the inside and on top of it.

The Como lake which is one hour drive by car or by train.

The museums! Milan has quite a lot. I like the museum with the inventions of Leonardo da Vinci the most!

The galleria next to the duomo

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

I don't know to be honest! Maybe the toilet museum which is close to the Politecnico university? Or the jazzbar 'bachelite clap'with live music!

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

Going out to clubs in Milan is quite expensive 15-20 euros entry-costs. The drinks are also expensive there. Also the music and the visitors can be a bummer..... So in the summer, you should go to Ex Marchello which is a free festival and its outside from 8 pm to 12am.

## 7.Challenges & best moment abroad

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

In the first month I didn't understand Italian or my professors that have a very strong Italian accent in English. Which made me feel like an outsider sometimes.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

Getting to know the Italian language and understanding what was being said to me in Italian! Talking in my native language without people understanding anything of it.

## 8. Contact details (optional) ☐

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