



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	International Land and Watermanagement (Environmental Sciences)
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	29/08/2022 until 15/01/2023
Country (exchange)	Sweden
City (exchange)	Alnarp
University (exchange)	Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet SLU
Faculty (exchange)	Department of Plant Protection Biology & Department of Southern Swedish Forest Research Centre

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

After COVID and with my international study program, I did not go anywhere international (except for holidays before). I felt that this was necessary as experience before committing to a MSc Thesis or internship international. On top of that, I wanted to experience a different way of studying. Lastly, I felt I was not ready yet to do my thesis and a semester abroad felt the perfect way to prep and get some of my last free courses required at the same time.

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

I had a general interest in Sweden/Scandinavia. Furthermore, I wanted to work on balancing private and work more. Lastly, SLU is of course a good university with similar interests as WUR.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Campus Alnarp is located 10 km from Malmö. There are several busses needed to take you there if you do not have housing on campus, but I really liked biking to class (40 minutes approximately). I would recommend to focus on Copenhagen (whether it is bus train or plane). The Oresundstag will take you from Copenhagen to Malmö or Lund in 40-50 minutes, from which you can go to campus by bus.

DO NOT!!!! Take a bustransfer on Hamburg at night, this is a very sketchy unsafe busstation. There are some direct busses or during the day transfers.

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	Agroecology Basics	15	Learning to analyse different farming systems all over the world from an agroecological perspective and focus on an holistic approach to farming and food networks.	4	Introductory course for a masters Agroecology
2	Forestry modelling for sustainable forest management	7.5	Introduction into modelling of forest processes in R with a field excursion. As well as elaborate information and assignments on critically understanding different models.	3	First time that this course is given in this way
3	Global forests and land-use decisions	7.5	Many different guest lectures on different facets of forestry and land uses (mainly on the southern hemisphere). As well as information on different strategies for communicating information and stakeholders.	4	First time that this course is given in this way
4					
5					
6					

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

During my period abroad, I noticed that most way of studying has been more from intrinsic motivation instead of outside pushes. There has been more room for own exploration of interests. The teachers have been very approachable. The pace itself has been relaxed compared to what I'm used to from WUR. This leaves more room to work on self-development and interests. The examination was mainly based on assignments and presentations. Different type of lessons were given including a video assignment.

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 lecturers are very approachable and willing to help out. They have a lot of enthusiasm for the students ideas and their own niche. The classes have been smaller with a maximum of 30 students. The engagement with local students is really dependent on the courses you are taking and requires time. The international student body is very lively. There have been many differences with WUR, including a healthy critical perspective on practices that are less sustainable, which I sometimes missed from the WUR. Furthermore, this university is not primarily focused on the students but mainly on their research body, therefore there are less students.

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

There are many microwaves on campus, as well as a nice park to walk around on campus. There are 2 restaurants and some showers as well. The library has sufficient space for studying and there is an active pub on campus from the student union. There is housing on campus as well but this might not be sufficient anymore to be sure of housing.

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 opportunities are much more favourable compared to the Netherlands, however housing is not guaranteed anymore. You can sign up during your application, as well as for housing in the nearby town Lomma. There are private rooms available and blocket bostad offers different rooms as well. Both Lund and Malmö are doable for housing. The university has 2 houses in Malmö where I lived. (This was very new and in the greenhouse complex). The rents are good I paid around 4400 SEK a month. Sometimes in summer there is no rent for student during the holidays.

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

The people are very willing to help, however, Swedish people are quite reserved. They can only buy alcohol on specific times in the governmental regulated store: System bolaget. When they are drunk, they are approachable. They are much more relaxed and take walks outside, remaining connected with nature. Coffee culture is strong as well. Local cuisine, loads of fish and no spice. Very polite people, but also non-hierarchical.

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

The rents are good I paid around 4400 SEK a month. Rule of thumb is 10 SEK is 1 euro. However, most housing on campus was cheaper and around 3500 SEK (I think).

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

Students with a mecenat card get discounts. I would say that in general it is cheaper than in the Netherlands depending on the location. The taxis are expensive but Uber is a good alternative. I travelled to uni by bike or several busses. A train station at alnarp is planned for 2025 which would make it much more accessible. Busses are doable, I cycled to the bus station of the main line reducing in transfers and travel time of 20 minutes.

6. Free time

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

Ribersborg Kallbadhus is my favourite! A classic sauna in Malmö. Copenhagen is very closeby as well. Lund is nice too. Taking a city tour of malmö. I preferred to take busses or trains to go to cities further away. A car is nice to have if you want to see more inland places and forests. Lomma is a nice coast town.

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

Just camping in the nature and going around to different nature parks. Store Mosse was my favourite peat area.

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

I liked to go swimming or thrifting. Alcoholic drinks and restaurants are expensive, pre-drinking at home is much more affordable.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Learning the language is quite difficult since (in my opinion) spoken Swedish is different from written Swedish. The pronunciation from letter combinations can throw you off quite a bit. Also there are many "fake" similar words which would mean something completely different. E.g. for dutch people: bil means car

What was your best memory abroad?

There are so many, but I would say experiencing how private-work balance can be different from what I am used to is a top one. As well as all the different people I have met. Waking up in the middle of a forest and having a coffee in the morning in peace has been something I will remember as well.

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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