



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	BBC
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	01-09-2023 until 29-02-2024
Exchange destination: University	UNIBO
Faculty	Bologna
Country	Italy
City	Bologna

2. Motivation for exchange

a. Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I choose to go on exchange because I wanted to experience how it is to live for a short period in a different country, make international friends, enjoy good weather and to see beyond the small (but cosy) city of Wageningen.

b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

I was quite confident that I would go to Spain, because I had two Spanish universities at the top of my exchange-list. However, I ended up getting my third choice which was in Italy. I really wanted to go to a southern- European city because I wanted to improve my grey autumn with raincoat to a sunny autumn with shorts. Furthermore, one of my goals during exchange was to learn a new language. Because southern European countries are one of my favourite travel destinations it made sense to learn such a language as I would be likely to come back.

c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

I putted Bologna on the list because the university itself is not only one the best universities in Italy but also one of the oldest in the world. There are a lot of different faculties and were specialised in my fields of interest. I knew that if I would go to Bologna that I would have a totally different experience of studying than in Wageningen. Furthermore, I heard a lot of great stories about the vibrant atmosphere of the city as a result of the huge amount of (international) students, different bars, rich culture and amazing food.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

I would always support the use of trains in Europe to reach your destination. However, if you book in advance and outside the touristic season you pay a third of the total of all your train tickets for a flight from Eindhoven. In addition, when you take the train, you have a ride of roughly twenty hours with 2/3 transfers. It took three hours to reach the centre of Bologna from my accommodation in Wageningen. In comparison, it takes two and a half hours to reach my parents from my accommodation in Wageningen.

But I heard it's a pretty train ride and you get a contribution from Erasmus.

4. University and studying

a. 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	Political Behaviour and Institutions	10	Interesting course about different forms of political institutions and how they influence the behaviour of individuals and communities.	5	Very good professor.
2	Innovative Retailing	9	BBC as one course, but more. Aimed how to constantly innovate how to sell & promote products.	5	Intense and challenging but very interesting and instantly applicable in your daily life.
3	Applied Political Sociology	8	Course about how ethical dilemmas affect us as a society and how we deal with them.	4	No tests, only two papers. Therefore it's not necessary to participate in every lecture.
4	Public Management	8	How to optimize management in the public sector.	1	Worst course I've ever experienced. Professor speaks bad English and the course content is obvious but very vague.
5					
6					

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, there were plenty of English courses. However, do not expect that the courses you would like to do are available. None of my friends and myself ended up with the course we thought we would be doing when we enrolled.

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, there are sufficient possibilities to find suitable courses. If you are not allowed to do your selected courses, there are always alternatives.

d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, I am satisfied with the level of the courses because they were quite challenging, and the lectures were interesting (except for public management). One remark compared to Wageningen; you have a lot more responsibilities. On Brightspace there are a lot of things automated, in Bologna this is less.

e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, the courses were different than my bachelor but (almost) all in my field of interest.

f. What is it like to study there?

E.g. Study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material?

A usual day at the university was quite comfortable. Nine out of ten times my classes did not start before 12.00 am thus I could take my time getting ready, enjoying breakfast, and writing emails to either UNIBO or WUR (as it took almost two months before my Learning Agreement was finalized). I would go to my first lecture, have a panini for lunch, and have a second lecture in the afternoon. I would be done around 19.00. The campus is spread over the whole city and sometimes you would have a lecture in a 400+ years old building. On average the lectures take three hours, but the professor shows up 15 minutes late and takes another 15 minutes before he starts. It does not matter when you show up late and you could often hear students protesting outside for the housing problem, climate change or political issues. The lectures would not be recorded so it was important to visit the lecture and take notes. Outside the lectures you would have once a week group work and there were some papers you could read.

g. What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with WU?

There are a lot of international students, and especially a lot of Dutch students. Every lecture is a mix of internationals and Italians, but you can see that they do not interfere that much with each other, comparable to Dutch students and internationals in Wageningen. The professors are very approachable, but some take very long to reply to their emails. It's very easy to make friends at the university and students are often happy to help each other.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

There are a some libraries divided over the city but there were not that many other facilities the university offers (that I'm aware of).

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

Almost nothing. Fix a accommodation early as the best places are gone first. There is a big housing problem in Bologna.

b. What is the culture like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

Your breakfast is a cappuccino which does not cost more than 1.50 euro, between lectures you get a panini, pizza or other type of lunch in one of the hundred little restaurants or shops you have. After the lecture you go with your friends to a terrace for an Aperol or Birra Moretti. By night you make a pasta as that is by far the cheapest dish you can make, international products or quite expensive in the supermarket.

c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?

There are a lot of electric bikes in the city which are quite affordable. You can also buy a second-hand bike which probably will be stolen at some point. Public transport within the city is really cheap and there are a lot of busses. The busses, however, do not show up on time.

6. Expenses

a. Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	70
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	-
Daytrips/sight-seeing	A lot (but affordable)
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	550 – shared apartment in city centre.
Grocery costs per month	200
Public transport costs per month	50
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	400

b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:

Lower

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

Cancel your public-transport subscription in the Netherlands as you get a compensation.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. Nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Bologna itself has a lot of nice restaurants and bars which you will figure out yourself but go to a football & basketball match.

Some of my favourite destinations nearby:

- Dolomites
- Florence
- Rome

b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?

Café Belmeloro

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?

Do not invite too many people over.

b. Best memory?

Eating pizza and playing werewolf with my housemates.

9. Contact details

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