



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Environmental Sciences
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	01/02/2023 until 01/07/2023
Country (exchange)	Turkey
City (exchange)	Istanbul
University (exchange)	Istanbul Teknik Universitesi
Faculty (exchange)	Landscape Architecture

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To experience living in a different country, and in a different culture. And to understand how my field of interest is taught in different countries, to discover multiple perspectives on the topics.

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

This is the only country that was doable without an airplane and which was affordable for me, that is the most different from Western Europe.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Train is certainly doable with an interrail pass, recommended to take around a week to prevent exhaustion. Hitchhiking is also certainly doable, just leave in time.

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	Urban Politics	7,5	Theoretical overview of academic literature around politics, urban- and environmental governance. Applied to the city level.	5	Great teacher, learned a lot about urban and environmental politics.

2	Sustainable Urban Design	7,5	Basic introduction about sustainability in the city	2	A lot of potential, this was just not realized by poor teaching
3	Social Ecology and the Built Environment	7,5	Discussing the role of man in the ecological world	1	Watching youtube videos about climate change, and a teacher who is only interested in convincing like-minded people of the urgency of the climate crisis. Pointless.
4					
5					
6					

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

Some courses were hard, some were easy. Every course took me a few hours per week, and we had three contact hours per week for each course. Mainly writing papers and giving presentations.

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?)

Teachers are very approachable. Like to engage with students, open to reflection and discussions.

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

Sports facilities are plentiful, and all students are always invited to interesting conferences about topics the university is involved with. For example, I attended a conference that aimed to search for ways to make Istanbul water-proof in the light of the changing climate.

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?)

Private rooms, easy to find via facebook groups. Rent rates is impossible to tell. The city knows more than twenty million people, and every district is a new city in itself. I can tell something about Besiktas where I lived. It is a relatively expensive neighbourhood, mainly because there is many public services such as free libraries. I paid 350 euros each month for a shared flat with four other students.

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

The culture is very open, people like to talk, very different that the general individual NL. The cuisine is the best, forget about Turkish kebab but get to know all their creative mezze dishes. Furthermore, Turkey knows one of the lowest crime rates. People return stuff you lose to you, in general very helpful.

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

It is hard to tell as the lira started at a conversion rate of 18 to 1 euro and when I left it was 30 to 1 euro. Istanbul is by far the most expensive place in Turkey, but it is cheaper than living in NL. Maybe around 1.5 more expensive to live in NL.

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

Traveling takes time in Istanbul, even though public transportation is very well arranged. It may take some time to get it, but then there are plenty of options. For 7 euros per month a student can make 200 rides each month, which basically means unlimited transportation.

6. Free time

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

I do not like the term must-sees. In general I can say there is a lot to discover.

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

Just ride the ferries and you will see for yourself.

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

Leave on time, and go to Besiktas, Cihangir, Kadikoy. And learn some restaurant Turkish.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

To connect with local students. It has been a heavy year for Turkish citizens and in general a heavy 16 years. Since I was receiving euros, I felt different than others which I did not want too.

What was your best memory abroad?

Dolphins from the city ferries, and raki with mezzes with my Turkish friends.

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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