



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Bsc Food Technology
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	01-09-2023 until 31-01-2024
Exchange destination: University	MATE University
Faculty	Food Science
Country	Hungary
City	Budapest

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to take some extra time for my Bachelor and experience studying outside of Wageningen. I took an extra Minor to explore some more interesting courses in my field that are not offered at the WUR. I also wanted to gain some more independence and experience living in another country. I figured Erasmus Exchange is the easiest and most fun way to live abroad for a while.

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

I wanted to go to a big city, since I grew up near Wageningen as well. I found it quite difficult to find good study programmes in full English, which I did find at MATE. I wanted to go to a country in Europe with a different culture, and Budapest is well-known as a vibrant Erasmus city.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

I took the Flixbus, which I only recommend if you are very patient. It takes about 22-24 hours, but it is cheaper than by train. The trains are unreliable since you have to take the Deutsche Bahn, which are known for being late or other issues. Taking the plane would be the fastest (2-3 hours) and the cheapest. However, as a true WUR student, I did not want to do that 😊

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	Advanced Consumer Sensory Methods	4	Lectures and practicals	5	Easy course and fun sensory tests
2	Food Packaging and Safety	4	Lectures and student presentations	4	No exam, but you have to present a lot
3	Physical Properties of Food	4	Lectures and practicals	3	Interesting, but poorly organized
4	Dairy Technology	4	Only lectures	4	High speed, good quality
5	Food Safety and Regulation	6	Only lectures	2	Msc course, boring and stressful oral exam

What is it like to study there?

I could only take 2 of the courses I initially signed up for, because the rest was not taught. It's quite hard to figure out a schedule of 30 credits without overlap in schedule or contents, since the schedule is not available the first couple of weeks. The academic level is a bit lower than the WUR. Some courses could be completed by a couple of reports or presentations throughout the semester, which is nice. The first 2 months are very chill, but after that I did study quite a lot. You are required to know a lot of information by heart instead of learning how to apply knowledge.

What is the culture of the university?

Most professors are nice and they teach Erasmus groups as an extra job, because they enjoy it. Some will know poor English and it can be hard to communicate outside of the contents of the course. The Erasmus students are taught in separate classes of 8-20 people, which is nice. I got to know my good friends because we took classes together.

What does the university offer students additionally?

The MATE University is based in Gödöllő, a city outside of Budapest. So, the facilities such as a buffet or the international student events are based there. In Budapest you are more left to figure it out on your own. It is very unfortunate that MATE does not have an ESN, which the other big universities in Budapest do have. This is where most Erasmus students find their friends or community.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

There is a dorm on the Buda campus and on the Gödöllő campus, however these are not meant for Erasmus students. Most Erasmus students find a shared flat in Budapest, the university will send you a list of useful websites where you find flats. The average rent is about 300-400 euros in the city centre of Budapest.

What is the culture of the country like?

The city is different than Wageningen, you can do everything you would like to do in one city. There are quite some homeless people in Budapest, which is quite sad but they don't bother you. I felt quite safe at night when travelling home. They have some good foods, I recommend chimney cakes, lecsó and the cherry beer. The cuisine is generally meat based and very fatty, vegetarian dishes are often fried cheese of some sort. Hungarian people are often described as a bit rude or cold, but I did not experience this. In university or in restaurants the people are nice, the only problem can be lack of good English.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

The public transport is excellent. As an Erasmus student you can buy a Semester public transport ticket for 40 euros and it's unlimited bus/tram/metro. The train tickets are very cheap (1-5 euros) if you want to visit other Hungarian cities and you can take a cheap Flixbus to a lot of other nice Central/Eastern European cities. In summer, I rented a BuBi bike for 2.50 euros per month to bike to university in 15 minutes, otherwise it would be 20 minutes by tram and bus. They also have electric scooters everywhere and a well-functioning Bolt taxi system.

6. Expenses

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

Hungary is said to be a bit cheaper than the Netherlands and some things are, but I would say not all. It is a touristy capital city, so prices can still be like the Dutch prices. I would say services like theatres, cinemas or local bars are cheaper. But for quality groceries or parties you still pay the same.

Ticket there: 60-80 euros for a Flixbus

Visa if applicable:

Vaccinations if applicable:

Insurances (extra, if applicable):

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: shared flat with 9 people, central location – 350 euros

Groceries: 200-300 euros per month

Public transport: 40 euros per semester

Restaurant/going out for dinner: 15 euros

Daytrips/sight-seeing:

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

They use forint in Hungary, so getting a credit card and/or Revolut card is recommended. Revolut or Bunq will give you better conversion rates than your normal bank card and they often require you to pay rent with a credit card.

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

In summer, I highly recommend going to the Balaton lake. We rented a cheap Airbnb with a group there for 2 weekends and it was very relaxed. I recommend cute Hungarian

cities nearby, such as Miskolc/Szentendre/Visegrad. Next to that, you can take cheap Flixbusses to Austria/Poland/Croatia etc. We went to Krakau and visited Auschwitz, which was very impressive. A flatmate also booked a very cheap flight to Istanbul, since Budapest is so well connected by aviation.

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

I recommend to just walk around the city and keep your eyes open, I came across a lot of cute cafés or shops when going somewhere else. Save them!

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

On Thursdays you can go to Morrisons's before 9PM and enjoy a generous open bar for 7 euros. Crashing some ESN events of other universities from flatmates is also nice to meet some new people in the beginning. For vegetarian cheap dinner places, I recommend: Pizza Manufaktura, Asian Streetfood Budapest and Kozmosz. In the Budapest Jazz Club you can enjoy free jazz jamsessions every Friday until Sunday after 22:30. Lastly, if you are into experimental theatre/dance I recommend Trafó.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

After a few months, I started missing my family and friends a lot. Since I took an extra Minor, I started to feel a little bit useless here, as my courses were not super challenging either. Since all exams were unexpectedly before the Christmas break, I decided to return home end of December and continue studying in Wageningen again a little earlier than expected.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

My best memories are the weekends spent at the Balaton lake. I met a lot of nice people that turned out to be my friends and I enjoyed the summer a lot.

9. Contact details (optional)

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