



# WUR Goes Abroad

---

## 1. Student Information

---

<b>Study programme WUR</b>	BAS
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	02/10/2023 until 23/02/2024
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	University of maribor
<b>Faculty</b>	Mathematics and natural sciences
<b>Country</b>	Slovenia
<b>City</b>	Maribor

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

Because I wanted to explore more of Europe and have the chance to live outside of NL for a while.

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

Because I liked the courses they had to offer, I liked the 'vibe' that it gave off to me. I had been on holiday to Slovenia before so I knew that it was absolutely beautiful and underrated, and I wanted to see more of it.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

### Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

I personally don't like travelling such short distances with plane, so I decided to go by flixbus. The flixbus I took left from Düsseldorf in Germany, and took 15 hours. It's a long drive, but I always took it by night so I would advise doing that so you nap through the night. I wouldn't recommend travelling such a long distance by train, as public transport can be quite unpredictable.

## 4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECT S	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	Microbiology and prokaryote genetics	6	Mainly a lot about microbiomes, viruses and bacteria. We had some practicals which were nice.	4	none
2	Speleobiology	6	The cave systems in Slovenia are widely known and very interesting. We even went on an excursion where we went caving, and it was definitely one of the most scariest and amazing experiences of my life.	4.5	Go on the caving trip!!
3	Entomologyn	6	Well- structured course, definitely take it if you're interested in insects. It was mainly about how to identify the different orders of insects, and we combined practical work with theory.	4	
4					
5					
6					

### What is it like to study there?

*E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.*

Compared to WUR, the study load is incredibly low. I mainly had a few lectures a week and some practicals, but most of the time I was free. However, it did seem to differ between different faculties so if you're in a faculty like business or something else I can't speak on that.

Exam periods were a little more high in workload, but still nothing compared to back home.

### 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?*

For the most part, lecturers are really nice and interested, and go out of their way to provide you with lessons and instructions. The differences are definitely in how strict around certain things they are, for example we got to say when we wanted to do our exams. That could never happen in NL.

### What does the university offer students additionally?

*E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?*

We had ice-skating each Monday, and in terms of sport it differs. It depends on if you live in a dorm that is from the university, or if you live in a private dorm.

## 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?*

You can sign up to get a room through university, but it really depends on how long it takes for you to get a contract from the faculty. I was lucky to be one of the first ones to be accepted, which means I could request to have one of the single rooms (so only me sleeping there). If you're late, most of the single rooms will be gone. A lot of people had double rooms, meaning that they had a roommate. Our dorm wasn't super clean or neat, but it only cost me around 150 euros a month, so I would gladly take that for half a year.

But that's only the university dorms, there's also a lot of private dorms that are more located towards the centre. They're nice from what I've heard, and also not that expensive.

### **What is the culture of the country like?**

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

It's a Slavic country, so it's going to be a lot different than the Netherlands are. A lot of things are a lot cheaper (alcohol, food, anything really), but there's also less of a 'neat' culture. People are a lot more relaxed than back home, which could be good or bad depending on the situation haha. In general I found that the Slovenian people were super nice and welcoming, and open to a lot of cultures. For the younger people, their English was amazing and they seemed very nice.

### **Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?**

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

There's an Mbike transport system, which only costs 1 euro once and allows you to pick up a bike from a location (they're everywhere in the city centre and around university) and use an app, and after you got to where you are you could easily set it back at one of their other bike stations. This amazing system didn't make me feel like I needed to use public transportation. The few times that I did, it was okay. Not as expensive, but definitely not as trustworthy as Dutch public transport. I think it's also important to note that as the city is not that big, you could also walk places pretty easily and that's what I ended up doing a lot.

## 6. Expenses

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

*E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.*

Ticket there: I got there by flibus, 50 euros

Visa if applicable: no

Vaccinations if applicable: no

Insurances (extra, if applicable): no

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 150-200 , in a dorm

Groceries: 200 a week

Public transport:

Restaurant/going out for dinner:

Daytrips/sight-seeing:

**Additional remarks regarding expenses?**

We had a system in which you got food coupons, which was incredible for keeping expenses down. You could get lunch and dinner for as little as 2 euros at so many restaurants (everywhere in Slovenia), and you got free water, salad and fruit with that as well. It was a super good system, and it definitely helps you keep track of your expenses.

## 7. Free time

**What are must-sees in the area?**

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

I would definitely recommend people to visit pohorje (both in summer for hiking and winter for skiing), I also took a day trip to seljie which was a super cute town only 45 minutes by train from Maribor. Also, Triglav national park is incredible if you're into nature, I had the most amazing weekend away there. Bled of course is also worth a visit, and Ljubljana is amazing for a weekend (tons of cute shops and amazing thriftshops).

Also, Maribor is located perfectly for a weekend away to a cool city. I took weekend trips to Vienna (2.5 hours away), Graz (20 minutes away), Budapest (3.5 hours away), Venice (3.5 hours away), Ljubljana (1.5 hours away) and and Triest (on the way from Venice,I personally liked it a lot better than Venice haha).

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

There's a ton of small cute towns around Triglav national park (more on the side of Italy), and I would recommend driving around and stopping at them!

**Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?**

*E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?*

I loved loving hut, a vegan restaurant between the city centre and campus. It gives you an incredible amount of food for so little money, and the vegbab is still on my mind frequently. Ancora in the centre is good for Italian food, and there's a ton of great restaurants in Europark just across the bridge from the centre.

For going out for international students, Stuk is the best. Most of the time, the music is really good and the vibe is great.

## 8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

I had a hard time adjusting to the little amount of lectures and classes at first. If I don't have anything to do all day, I get really restless. After a while, we started to get more classes and I had started filling up my days with other stuff, so I learned to deal with it.

**What is your best memory of your time abroad?**

Honestly my best memories of my time abroad was on the trips we went on. I had an incredible group of amazing people around me, and getting to meet them and see so many amazing places together with them was the best time ever.

I also went on a caving excursion with my course speleobiology, which I definitely would recommend if you're interested in geography or biology. One of the most amazing experiences of my life.

### 9. Contact details (optional)

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name/e-mail</b>	Pleun Basten, <a href="mailto:pleunbasten@gmail.com">pleunbasten@gmail.com</a> .	