



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Environmental Sciences
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	20-01-2023 until 10.05.2023
Country (exchange)	Spain
City (exchange)	Pamplona
University (exchange)	Universidad Publica de Navarra
Faculty (exchange)	Environmental and agricultural sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to explore another country and its culture, as well as some new natural landscapes. Also, I was interested in some different academic insights. Namely, in which ways does a university in a different country present the educational content.

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

Mainly because I wanted to learn Spanish, but also because I was interested in experience the "Southern" culture. Also, I wanted to be somewhere close to the mountains.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Pamplona can easily be reached by Bus from the Netherlands. I took the Flixbus in Utrecht to Paris, from Paris to San Sebastian and from San Sebastian to Pamplona. It is very cheap and doable.

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	Gestion medioambiental	6	Environmental management, it was in Spanish. It was a project for making an olive oil company more sustainable, how to do this, and how to ask approval for it on the EU level.	4	I think it was a poorly managed course. There were 4 parts, each organised by a different teacher, and it wasn't very coherent.
2	Effects of agrarian activities on the environment: case studies (Online)	3	This was one of the most engaging courses that I had, despite being online. Every week we learned about a case study of an environmental disaster related to agriculture.	5	The teacher is very nice. This course takes a lot of time though
3	Green logistics for smart cities (Online)	6	Interesting course because I never realized the importance and complexities related to logistics. We learned about the concept of smart cities (connected in order to maximize efficiency of transport while staying a liveable place),	4	The tasks are not clearly defined.
4	Science and technology of environment	6	This course has many components, but it is mainly related to ecology. We did some field work to collect data, then used some models to analyse the data, and wrote reports. There was a big group work project in the end	4	A little bit chaotically organized
5	FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES	3	Very cool course. We had a new lecturer each week introducing us to different kinds of renewable energies.	5	Only half the semester

			This is a course from the engineering chair group.		
6	Food and environmental processes modelling MATLAB (online)	3	We watched videos explaining some MATLAB functions, and solved exercises every week. It is interesting if you like programming but can be tedious if not. The videos are often not most helpful, but long. Also, It took me long time to do the assignments	4	The teacher is very nice and helpful if you arrange a meeting with him

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

The workload is fine, I would say a little bit similar to Wageningen. But it is easier to pass the exams in my opinion. I took many online courses, because they were interesting, and that way I could get more flexible schedule. I always liked the content a lot. My general opinion is that the education did not promote critical thinking, as is does in my field of study in WUR, which I miss. The exams were often about memorizing the content for the exam. Though there were also some project based learning aspects

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?)

It depends. Some lecturers are very approachable and happy to help, whilst other can be very condescending. I felt like in Wageningen the lecturers are very open to talk to students as fellow academics, but in Pamplona, I felt there was a bit more of a hierarchal relation. But this was not to a very high degree, I mostly felt completely fine with my professors.

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

Lot of catering options. The food is quite affordable. There is a great sport centre for a very cheap membership fee.

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?)

There is a student housing complex, but I would not recommend it. Too expensive and less charming than many cool houses in the Center. There are many rooms that can be found via the platform "Idealista.es", usually for sharing among 3-5 students. But watch out for scams on this website!!!

There is "hospiteering" system in Pamplona.

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

It's lovely! People are more outgoing. The nights are lively. The main thing to consider is that the "siesta" time is a real thing. All stores close for this time (not supermarkets of course).

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

I think you can find a room for 300 – 400 € range, all inclusive. So cheaper than Wageningen, but not by a lot.

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

The public transport in Pamplona is exceptional. It's on time, regular, cheap. Best bus infrastructure I have ever seen. It is still more practical to bike around though. The biking path infrastructure is also phenomenally well established.

6. Free time

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

San Sebastian! Beautiful and very close by! There are very regular busses going there.

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

All of the coastal Basque region is extremely beautiful combination of ocean and rocky-mountainous landscapes. It makes sense to search for smaller non-touristic towns, as there is much to see, for example nearby Hondarribia.

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

There is many thing to do in Pamplona, the locals are very lively and nice people. I personally like a rather alternative vibe, so I went to a bar called "La Rue", and went for drinks in a plaza called "Plaza Navarrería". Mostly though, I went to climb and hike in nature. There is a lot of beautiful things to see in Navarra and surroundings! There is also an Erasmus group which is very active and many people join their activities. But I am in general not interested in such group activities and I rarely joined.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

I really think that everything went smoothly. However, I do notice that it can be sometimes difficult to have contact with professors. They may take a long time to reply, or often plan assignments with very short notice. Moreover, the communication platform is very confusing, and needs a long time to get use to. It is difficult to get an overview of the tasks using this platform.

What was your best memory abroad?

I regularly went outdoor climbing in an area which was extremely beautiful. I think discovering this natural place and the small towns around it my best memory.

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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