



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Study programme WUR</b>	Bachelor International Development Studies
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	07-09-2023 until 14-01-2023
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	Palacký University
<b>Faculty</b>	Faculty of Science
<b>Country</b>	Czech Republic
<b>City</b>	Olomouc

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I went on study exchange to explore another university, and to follow other courses than offered at Wageningen University. Also, for the experience to live abroad, to meet new people from other countries and learn to be more independent.

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

Practical reasons are it being a cheaper country/city and not too far from The Netherlands. Educational reasons are that Czech Republic has a very different (colonial) history from The Netherlands, and I wondered if that would make a difference in views on development, and also, there were courses that were more geographical oriented (development of Africa, for example) that I was interested in.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

It is quite easy to reach by train (+/- 13h) if you go from Prague with NS international or Deutsche Bahn and from Prague to Olomouc with a Czech train company that you can find via the app IDOS (and buy tickets from IDOS or if not possible the app of the specific company. Do keep in mind that Deutsche Bahn is delayed very often so make sure you will have enough time to transfer in Berlin/Prague.

Flixbus takes a whole day, but is cheap. You can go all the way to Olomouc with Flixbus, but I would recommend taking a RegioJet bus or a train Prague-Olomouc, as this is faster and without transfer in Brno.

If you want to go by plane, you can fly to Prague and catch a train/Flixbus and tram, but Vienna is more convenient with Flixbus because Flixbus will go to the airport!

## 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	Development Opportunities of Africa	5	About the context of Africa: history, demography, topography, and development	5	I would definitely recommend this course if you are interested in learning more about the context of Africa. There is another course like this about South America.
2	Politico-Geographical Processes in Developing World	4	This course goes into how democracy works, and looks at different countries to learn about this.	5	Teacher has a lot of knowledge about the topic and there were interesting guest lecturers.
3	Global Environmental Geography	5	About the environment: economics, policy, history, ecology. It is partly similar to the course at WUR ENR20306	4	This course exists of two parts given by two different lecturers. One goes more into economics (easy) and the other history. The content is very broad but not too much in dept.
4	Middle East After the Arab Spring	5	About the Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa and Middle East.	3	Bit chaotic lectures. There is some knowledge about it expected, but it is doable to do without.
5	Topics in Contemporary Philosophy (The Problem of Free Will)	5	Philosophy course that goes into the topic of free will in people.	4	If you have no experience in philosophy, the teacher is very eager to help you with understanding. Therefore, no experience needed.
6	-	-	-	-	-

### What is it like to study there?

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

At this university you will have people to go to that can help you as an Exchange student. The academic level is lower than at the WUR, but it differs a bit between the courses. Examination is not too hard, mostly reproduction in exams or essays, presentations. Workload is not too much, you will have one-two lectures for every course every week and you will have enough time to do self study.

### 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?*

The lecturers are very approachable, informal student-teacher relationships. There is not a lot of engagement with local students, because I was mostly in classes with other exchange students. There is a very active and fun ESN association, which also provides the orientation week activities. The university and teachers are quite laid-back, planning of courses and exams are not strict and they are

open to discuss this. E.g.: When I asked about when the exams would take place, the teachers did not know yet or let us (the students) decide on when we wanted to do the exam.

**What does the university offer students additionally?**

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

There are canteens, sport facilities and laundry facilities on campus.

## 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 are two campuses with rooms (for as far as I know): Envelopa and Neredin.

Envelopa: Generala Svobody dorm: Shared rooms for 3 persons, shower with 6, kitchen with the whole floor. Close to faculty of science, faculty of law, faculty of education.

Neredin: Private room or shared rooms for two persons, shower and kitchen with 6 persons. Close to faculty of sports/physical culture.

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

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

The people are very kind, but are a bit more sequestered, like, they smile less when they walk in the streets and are not loud, however if you need anything they will help you. Example: when I was on the train and was struggling to get my luggage, a man stood up to help me in an instant but he did this without saying anything or smiling. I think this paints a good picture of the people. During the orientation week you will get to know things about Czech culture as well.

Czech nature is very nice and the city centre of Olomouc is very cute and feels safe, and has a big park around the city centre where you can be in nature within the city.

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

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

*The tram line in Olomouc is nice, goes regularly and is very clear. However, if you live at the Envelopa campus you will not need it often. If you live at Neredin, it is amazing. There are also busses.*

*You can get a ticket for 1h (80 cents), 24h, monthly and for 3 months. You can get a discount from the university for at least the 3 months card (bus and tram).*

*Taxi's with Bolt are quite cheap. Nice to use at night after a night out.*

*Next Bike city bikes are everywhere around the city, you can get a cheap membership on this with you ISIC card.*

## 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: 70 euro

Visa if applicable: -

Vaccinations if applicable: -

Insurances (extra, if applicable): You can register with your own insurance, for free.

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 130-180 euro/month

Groceries: Slightly cheaper than NL

Public transport: 80cent for an hour bus/tram, subscription with discount via university.

Restaurant/going out for dinner: +/- 20 euro for dinner including drinks.

Daytrips/sight-seeing: Cheap

### **Additional remarks regarding 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 went to Prague, Vienna, Krakow, Budapest, Bratislava, Brno, Ostrava. All by train or bus. There are a lot of small villages, nature places that are also worth going to, but they are harder to reach without a car. For instance, Moravian Krats (caves), Bila Opava (hike trails).

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

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

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

ESN will take you to pubs, restaurants and clubs during the orientation week!

Clubs: 50min cub, Belmondo

Pubs: Nirvana, Zkouska, bar Zahrada (garden pub), Vertigo

Lunch/coffee: BerryBlue café, café 87, green bar (veggies), café la Fée, CoffeeCat

Restaurant: Hi5h Indian restaurant (also cocktails), los capolitos (Mexican, more fastfood-like).

## **8. Challenges & best moment abroad**

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

Understanding how things within the university work and where things are. It cost me a lot of energy in the first weeks to learn about everything. You just have to go through this and work together with other exchange students to help each other out when you learn something new.

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

Day or weekend trips, going to pubs, and some of my classes that were fun.

## **9. Contact details (optional)**

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name/e-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:tamara.bolster@wur.nl">tamara.bolster@wur.nl</a>	

