



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

NAME: Amber Jetten

Field of study in Wageningen	Bsc Food Technology
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	11-02-2023 until 1-07-2023
Country (exchange)	Italy
City (exchange)	Milan
University (exchange)	Politecnico di Milano
Faculty (exchange)	Food Engineering

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I have chosen to go on exchange for several reasons, with the primary goal being personal development. The prospect of moving to a different city to study, where I won't know anyone, excites me. It offers a unique opportunity to grow as an individual and gain a deeper understanding of myself. Additionally, the chance to immerse myself in an entirely new culture and explore a different country is truly thrilling.

One of the main reasons I was drawn to this particular university was the opportunity to apply food technology in a more managerial context. Pursuing this field at the master's level was undoubtedly challenging, but I saw it as a wonderful and rewarding challenge. It allowed me to expand my skills and knowledge while tackling stimulating academic tasks.

Looking back, my exchange experience was incredibly enriching. I had the chance to explore a beautiful country, embrace its culture, and build cherished memories. Moreover, I encountered numerous learning opportunities that not only enhanced my academic background but also broadened my perspectives.

Overall, my time on exchange was an amazing journey filled with new experiences and personal growth. I am grateful for the invaluable lessons learned, the friends I made, and the adventures I embarked on. The exchange program was undoubtedly one of the most memorable and enriching periods of my life.

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

I chose Politecnico di Milano for my exchange for several compelling reasons, with the primary one being the opportunity to apply my Food Engineering knowledge in a more managerial direction. This alignment with my academic and career aspirations was a perfect fit, and it motivated me to pursue this opportunity wholeheartedly.

Moreover, I had always dreamt of experiencing life in a Southern European country, and Italy had consistently been one of my top favorites. The allure of its delectable cuisine, rich cultural heritage, and breathtaking surroundings made it an ideal destination for a memorable half-year adventure. I knew I would not only enjoy my time in Milan but also have the chance to explore other captivating destinations throughout Italy. The well-established public transportation system from Milan to other parts of the country made it incredibly convenient for me to embark on exciting trips during my exchange.

Beyond its tourist appeal, Milan stood out as a prosperous city where safety and comfort were paramount. Its sense of security and the feeling of being at home provided a conducive environment for my academic pursuits and personal growth. The city's vibrant atmosphere and limitless opportunities contributed to making it a perfect setting for an exchange experience.

In summary, I wholeheartedly recommend Milan as an exceptional city for an exchange program. With its perfect fusion of academic relevance, cultural richness, and accessibility to explore the wonders of Italy, my time at Politecnico di Milano was truly unforgettable and transformative.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

One of the great advantages of choosing Milan for my exchange was its excellent accessibility via public transportation. I found it incredibly convenient to travel to Milan using Flixbus for my inbound journey and then took the train for my return trip. The overall travel experience was pleasant, and the total travel time, approximately 10 hours, was reasonable, considering the distance covered.

Furthermore, Milan's accessibility extends to air travel, making it an even more appealing destination. Flying to Milan was a breeze, with flight times as short as 1.5 hours. The added benefit of affordable flight tickets made it an attractive option for future travels.

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	The Social Aspects of Technology	5	Technology is one of the most pervasive features of modern society and the impact of technology on society has been a topic of longstanding concern. This course cultivates a critical approach to technology that highlights how technological objects, both old and new, are shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which they are designed, manufactured, and used.	4	
2	Project Management	5	Large complex projects are the key elements of our time; they are needed to plan and deliver infrastructure, address a global pandemic like COVID-19, or deal with climate change. Large complex projects span across industries and economic sectors, including the development of new major software, aerospace and military systems, but also humanitarian projects. This course aims at transferring to students theoretical and practical knowledge about Project Management, Business, and Ecology.	4	
3	Leadership & Innovation	10	the goal of the course is to enable students understanding innovation and leadership dynamics in order to act as innovative leaders within and across organizations. The course offers the opportunity to develop	3	

			an innovative solution while experiencing team dynamics and interpersonal relationships. Students will face innovation challenges offered by real organizations, to experiment the dynamics of creativity and collaboration while bridging theory and practice.		
4	Product Life Cycle Management	5	he goal of the course is to enable students understanding innovation and leadership dynamics in order to act as innovative leaders within and across organizations. The course offers the opportunity to develop an innovative solution while experiencing team dynamics and interpersonal relationships. Students will face innovation challenges offered by real organizations, to experiment the dynamics of creativity and collaboration while bridging theory and practice.	5	
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How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

The study setup at Politecnico di Milano differed from that of Wageningen University and Research (WUR), mainly due to the fact that they operate on a two-semester system in one academic year. Consequently, all exams were scheduled during the last two weeks of my Erasmus period, which presented some challenges. While this arrangement was less than ideal, it did not diminish the overall experience.

In terms of academic rigor, the level of education at Politecnico di Milano was quite similar to that of Wageningen University. However, due to my relatively limited background in management, I faced some additional challenges that required more effort on my part. Nevertheless, these challenges proved to be valuable learning opportunities, allowing me to expand my knowledge and skill set in the management field.

Another noteworthy difference was the length of lectures, which were three hours long. This was longer than what I had been accustomed to, but I adapted to the new format and made the most of each session to absorb as much knowledge as possible.

Regarding the workload, I found it to be comparable to what I was used to in Wageningen. Despite the academic demands, I managed to balance my studies effectively, and the experience did not overwhelm me.

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?)

One of the remarkable aspects of my exchange experience at Politecnico di Milano was the similarity in the cultural setting compared to what I was accustomed to at Wageningen University. The university's diverse student community, comprising both international students and local Italian students, created a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere.

This mix of cultures not only made the experience enjoyable but also offered unique opportunities for collaboration. Working on group projects alongside Italian students allowed me to gain valuable insights into their perspectives and approaches, enriching my academic experience further. It provided a chance to exchange ideas, learn from each other's backgrounds, and develop cross-cultural communication skills.

The international environment fostered a sense of inclusivity and unity among students, fostering a strong sense of camaraderie. Engaging with individuals from various cultural backgrounds broadened my understanding of the world and deepened my appreciation for diversity.

Overall, the blend of international and local students at Politecnico di Milano added an extra layer of excitement and enriched my exchange journey. Embracing this multicultural atmosphere was a key highlight of my experience, and it reinforced the importance of global collaboration and cooperation in our increasingly interconnected world.

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

The university offers a lot of things, think of ESN with a lot of activities to get to know people. Also a lot of things were organised at my university, but I didn't go to that sort of activities.

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?)

I found my house at spot-at-home with two other Dutch's students, that was really nice.

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

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

700-900 compared to 300

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

The Italian culture is indeed quite different from Dutch culture, and my experience in Italy exposed me to a plethora of unique and delightful aspects.

One of the prominent differences lies in the cuisine. Italy is renowned for its delicious and diverse food, including an abundance of mouthwatering pizzas and pasta dishes. Exploring the local culinary scene was an absolute treat, and I enjoyed indulging in the authentic flavors and rich gastronomic traditions of the country. The emphasis on fresh ingredients and simple yet exquisite recipes made every meal a delightful experience.

Moreover, Italy's coffee culture is a true delight for coffee enthusiasts like myself. The abundance of small cafes offering high-quality and affordable coffee was a pleasant surprise. I relished the opportunity to experience the Italian way of enjoying coffee, savoring the rich espresso and cappuccinos.

6. Free time

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

The city itself has a lot of nice things, think of the Duomo. Also Como is very close, (30 min with the train). The best time to go is around march/April/may.

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

I only visited thing in the travel guide.

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

I looked mostly at recommendation on the internet.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

To life for a long time far away from your friends and family was the hardest part of exchange.

What was your best memory abroad?

Traveling to the south of Italy with a really nice group of people for 7 days, was my best experience.

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Name/e-mail		