



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Landscape Architecture & Planning
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	06-09-2023 until 07-02-2024
Exchange destination: University	Politecnico di Milano
Faculty	Architecture
Country	Italy
City	Milan

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

Actually, until the November or December before the deadline for signing up for Erasmus in January, I wasn't thinking about going on exchange at all. It was when everyone else was talking about it and signing up that I started thinking about it and realised it could actually be a nice opportunity for me to broaden my horizon and get out of my comfort zone, even though I thought it was the most scary thing ever. So for me it was mostly for my personal development rather than educational purposes in the first place, to explore what it is like to live in a different country and having to build a new life all by myself.

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

I wanted to go to the south of Europe for the weather. The university I chose on where they had some architectural courses I could attend, because I wanted to explore my options and try something new, as I always have had interests in architecture and maybe want to pursue my masters degree in that direction.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

By train it is quite easy to reach, only a few transfers. The plane is also easy and cheap, but keep in mind that most of the (cheap) flights go to Bergamo (BGY), which is an hour bus ride away from Milano Centrale. There are shuttle busses that cost around 10 euros.

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	Conservation and Management of Historic Gardens and Landscapes	8	Combination of a project with a historical garden and theory lectures divided in two sections (Managements and conservation)	4	I liked the course and the diversity of it, but the lecture days can be quite long, one day a week from 09:00 till 16:00.
2	Urban History	4	History of urban planning in the last century	2	Just not my interests
3	Sociology of the city	8		4	Honestly, quite easy way to get 8 credits. The course is, among others, about the changes in urban landscapes in the last century, gentrification and segregation dynamics.
4	History of Contemporary Architecture	6	Theoretical course on the Post War history of architecture	3	Very interesting, but long lectures! Once a week, but 5 hours straight of the teacher just talking, not very interactive. Teacher knows a lot.
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

In my opinion the study load was less than in Wageningen, I didn't have to do as much to keep up with the courses in Milan as I would have to do in Wageningen. They have an online platform where they offer the educational materials similar to Brightspace. They do a lot of oral exams!

What is the culture of the university?

Depending on the teacher, the one was more open to conversation than the other. Emailing and contact through online portals or something else online was quite annoying most of the time, they didn't reply (quick). There is more of an unequal relationship between teacher and student than in the Netherlands, it is not bad or something, but I got the feeling that they are a bit more conservative in their way of teaching, with mostly just sharing information and no interactive elements.

What does the university offer students additionally?

There is a big sports facility where you can follow classes or go to the gym. There are a few cafeterias which offer various meals for lunch, but there are also a lot of stands on the street during lunchtime with noodles, dumplings, piadina's etc.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

For a room on campus you have to be on time, so quite early in the year you could try, but I haven't met anyone that actually lived in a campus room so can't tell experiences. There are many websites for rooms, spotahome, housinganywhere etc, I got my room from Neytos through spotahome and I have heard people about Habyt and Dovevivo. Housing is expensive, I spent way too much time on finding a affordable place but I also caved eventually. Watch out with rooms rented out in facebook or telegram groups, there are a lot of scams. Fix2 your codice fiscale on time!!

What is the culture of the country like?

People eat late and everyone is always late, also teachers, also during exams.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

If you are under 26 you can get the ATM card, its 22 euros per month and with that you can use all the public transport within zone M1-M3, which is the biggest part of Milan. Metro is always on time, with tram and bus you have to take into account some extra time. So when looking for a place, apart from having something within walking distance from university, it is nice to have a place close to a metro station rather than a tram or bus one. In my time there, there were a lot of strikes in public transport, every month or so, so most of the public transport was shut down.

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: /

Visa if applicable: /

Vaccinations if applicable: /

Insurances (extra, if applicable): /

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: higher than Wageningen and also a bit more expensive than Amsterdam

Groceries: higher than in NL

Public transport: 22 euros for card, train to other cities bit cheaper than in NL

Restaurant/going out for dinner: really depends on where you are going, on average more expensive I'd say

Daytrips/sight-seeing: train ticket of an hour to lake come was 5,20 euros

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

In restaurants you pay "coperto" often, kind of a service fee which is between 1,50 to 2,50 per person

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

A lot of nice cities, Bergamo, Turin, Verona, Genua, but also daytrips for hiking are doable. And most importantly, visit the lakes, they are beautiful! The train system is quite good so I used that mostly, Flixbus or Itabus also operates a lot.

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

Not specifically one hike, but go hiking at least once around one of the lakes!

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

Porta Venezia has a lot of bars, and Isola is also quite upcoming regarding cool bars and (second hand) shops. China town is also quite nice in the evenings, a lot of delicious streetfood and again nice bars.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

As mentioned before this was mostly a social challenge for me so I was mostly scared in the months before leaving, but as soon as I started my journey I really enjoyed it.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

The friends I made during the whole journey and all the nice people I've met from different cultures actually really made my Erasmus+ experience, rather than the places I have been.

9. Contact details (optional)

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