



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Forest and Nature Conservation
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	15-01-2023 until 02-06-2023
Country (exchange)	Sweden
City (exchange)	Umeå
University (exchange)	SLU
Faculty (exchange)	Forest science, Biology

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to learn about the forestry sector in Sweden and experience how it is to leave so far north with the real winters, from dark to light.

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

Because I first thought of doing my whole masters' degree in this country (and this university). Now I decided that I wanted to experience part of it, to see how I like it and if it would be a place where I could see myself living in a later phase of my life.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I took the train there and on the way back also a bus. I would definitely recommend to not take the airplane. However, you do need to take some extra time to go by bus, car or train. From Wageningen it will cost you around 30 hours. However, if you take the night train from Hamburg to Stockholm and then the (night) train from Stockholm to Umeå then you don't need to transfer and you can even sleep.

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	Human dimensions of fish and wildlife conservation	15	In this course we talked about human nature conflicts. What are the human aspects in a conservation management plan. How does the governance work, what is the role of economy etc.	5	I really enjoyed this course, it entailed more of a discussion style than a lecture style, so you could ask a lot of questions. Most of the time we were discussing each others case studies and try to be critical about the things we read and learn about. Think out of the box.
2	Sustainable management of Boreal forests	15	In this course we focussed, almost every week, on a different aspect of sustainable management. In the end we concluded with a fieldtrip of five days to look at the different management types in practice.	4	I really enjoyed some of the topics, however it is a very intense course and not all topics were very interesting for me. This might be because I'm more of a biologist than a forester. However, the biodiversity and water topics I really liked!
3					
4					
5					
6					

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

The first course was very free, you had a lot of reading material, but not so many deadlines and mostly just following lectures and actively participating. In the second we had at least one assignment per week, which made it very intense. Lecture material was provided on canvas.

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 Swedish (and SLU) culture is very informal. You name lecturers by their first name and you can always approach them with questions. The local students are a bit hesitant at first. But in the end they also open up to you. However, as an international you will be warmly welcomed by the international community of SLU, so there is no lack of opportunities to make friends! At the WUR I think most lecturers are also very approachable. However, the courses are mostly larger and that reduces the informality. At SLU the course was followed by around 20 students.

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

Catering buffet (never bought it though), free coffee, a gym, a sauna, library, plenty of outdoor seats, language café, knitting café, small events like a clothing swap, a chill room with a ping pong table.

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 signed up for housing via the university and I got assigned a room. For the room I paid 290 euros per month. That entails around 19 m², an own bathroom and a shared kitchen. The room was 5 minutes cycling or 20 minutes walking from campus. So very close.

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

The people in Sweden are a bit more closed off than people in the Netherlands. In the north that is even more, however, they also open up after a while and are then very welcoming. The cuisine includes a lot of sweets. Swedes are mostly quite informal, not really people of small talk and can be very quiet if they don't know you.

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

I would say it is around the same price if you get a room via the university. Groceries are not that much more expensive than in Wageningen.

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

Trains and busses are very good! The taxi is expensive like in the Netherlands.

Train prices are a bit more expensive. But the distances are also longer. A bus ticket for an hour is 2 euros. I would recommend to buy a second hand bike. Also in winter, they clean the bike roads quite good!

6. Free time

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

The lakes! Skiing, enjoy the forests, and take trips to free cabins! You can find the routes and cabins on naturkartan.se

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

I don't know what is in the travel guide. Just ask around 😊

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

Bars and restaurants are not really something I went to often, because it is not in the student culture. Except for the pub on Thursday at Skogis, for the rest 'rent' stuff for free at fritidsbanken, skis, snowboards, skates etc. and explore the outdoors of Sweden!

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

To be alone some evenings in my room, and to not have anything planned ahead. However, this was also a really nice experience!

What was your best memory abroad?

The outdoor activities with my friends 😊

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Name/e-mail	h.delange@live.com	