



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Field of study in Wageningen | Communication and Life Sciences |
| Study period exchange | (09/01/2023) until 19/05/2023 |
| Country (exchange) | France |
| City (exchange) | Toulouse |
| University (exchange) | École d'Ingénieurs de Purpan |
| Faculty (exchange) | Global Semester |

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I chose to go on exchange because I wanted to experience living in a city in another country and get to know another culture than the Netherlands. I also wanted to get out of my usual surroundings in Wageningen.

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

I have always loved France, and I knew the language a little already. I also liked that I did not have to use the plane to get there, and that friends and family could visit me quite easily.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I came by car, but you can go there by train easily if you book in advance. Also Flixbus is possible and cheap, and the flibus station in Toulouse is in the city centre.

4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

| | Course | E C T S | Short description of the contents | Appre ciation of course : 1(low) - 5(high) | Remarks |
|---|----------------------------|------------------|---|---|--|
| 1 | CLIMATE CHANGE | 3 | Module focusing on the science of climate change, causes and consequences as well as the multiple impacts on the planet and people. It Identifies the challenges of climate action on a local and global level. | 3 | Here a remark on the overall courses. This program was very new, which unfortunately caused a lot of problems. I think they wanted to make the program very fun and not too hard and very interactive. But instead it felt like high school instead of university. No hard feelings, I know they tried their best, and I really think they will improve. Because they really valued our feedback. But really, it was not at all university level, which was very frustrating. This applies to all courses, except the gender course. |
| 2 | FOOD RESOURCES & NUTRITION | | Focuses on the current state of food security around the world, analyze different food systems and how they can be improved. Understand ambitions and limits of international actions to fight hunger. | 1 | |

| | | | | | |
|----------|--|--|---|---|--|
| 3 | BIODIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENT | | Module exploring the different concepts of nature and how we personally relate to it. You will get a deeper understanding of the dynamics of ecosystems, identify threats on biodiversity and raise awareness on future scenarios. | 1 | |
| 4 | GLOBAL GENDER ISSUES | | This module focuses on raising awareness to gender issues in our social systems, analyzing gender inequalities in agriculture around the world. Understand how to leverage social change in the perspective of sustainability. | 4 | This course was better, the teacher was good, knew her field and gave good assignments at an university level. |
| 5 | BETTER BUSINESS | | Understand sustainability in business models. Analyze sustainability issues in different companies, agri-food systems. Discover sustainable business initiatives around the world (circular economy, social enterprise, inclusive companies). | 2 | |
| 6 | FRENCH LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL ISSUES OF STUDY ABROAD | | French course beginner level (very helpful). And getting to know each other, which is very fun. | 3 | |

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

The hours are a lot, compared to Wageningen, and everything is mandatory. So the days are long but not intense, as there is no dense education or information provided. The workload apart from contact hours is not much at all. Studying for exams was not necessary and group work could be finished during school hours most of the time.

The academic level was very very low, I know this sounds exaggerated, but really, I learned more in high school (but I think they will really change their courses, so I don't know about next year).

The examinations were most of the time kind of a joke. One time we made the same multiple choice exam three times, and the answers were provided, and this counted as 30% of our grade for this course. This was not an exception. A lot of the times, our examination consisted of making a game or a presentation.

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 culture on the university is very pleasant, I felt really welcomed. The exchange team did everything to help us and everything was taken care of. The lecturers were approachable, and the students were very kind and keen to get to know us. Also fun to know, the program is mixed with international and French students, which is very fun, because you really get to know French people this way.

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

With your student pass, you can get Izly, with which you can eat for 3,30 (lunch and dinner) at Crous restaurants. It is amazing. The university also offers several housing options, which they will email you.

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?)

The university sends you a list of several possible accommodation offers. I lived in Crous Arsenal, comparable to the student flats in Wageningen. The location was amazing, really there is not better location, and the rooms are very cheap. It is small, and you kind of live alone, but I had great time.

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

I did not really experience culture shock. Ofcourse there are differences, but they are rather small, and I or my friends had no hard time with it. I do recommend to try to learn the language.

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

It can be very cheap. I lived for 245 per month, and a friend of mine rented a studio, which costed 500, but with CAF subsidies (which you can get if you rent alone) it was also around 250-300.

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

I would recommend renting a bike. There is a place close to the main station which costs I think 9 euros per month with good bikes. And a metro card is 12 euro per month. Very cheap.

6. Free time

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

Albi, Pyrenees, both of the seas.

Travel by bus or train, or by car if you have one or if French students want to take you.

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

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

The restaurants are amazing, and there are a lot of fun bars and clubs.

Downtown factory is a nice club.

La cri de la mouette, nice techno boat

Restaurants:

viet84

La Faim des Haricots

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

The university. It was mandatory to spend a lot of time there, but I did not feel like I learned anything. I felt like I was waiting the whole day. This was a big challenge.

What was your best memory abroad?

I don't know about a best memory, but I experienced great things. It was a very positive experience. It is an amazing city, the people are very nice, it is easy to make friends on the school with the exchange students and also the French students. There is so much to do and to see. I would really really recommend, also taking into account that Purpan took our feedback into consideration.

8. Contact details (optional)

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Is the reader allowed to contact the writer? | Yes | no <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Name/e-mail | ronjaoosterveld@gmail.com | |