



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	Bsc soil,water,atmosphere
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	19-02-2024 until 10-07-2024
Exchange destination: University	BOKU
Faculty	Environmental sciences
Country	Austria
City	Vienna

2. Motivation for exchange

a. Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to go on exchange to experience living in a big city, experiencing the magic and activities that are present in a big city. Besides that also the combination with studying in a big city and the social was something I was looking forward to. Wageningen is small and a student city but I missed the adrenaline of a big city. Also meeting new friends from all over Europe definitely encouraged me to go on exchange.

b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

I chose for Austria because Austria has way more to offer than the Alps and skiing holidays. The east of Austria was very unknown for me and it offered the splendid city of Vienna.

c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

BOKU was the only university available in the city of Vienna.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

I heard a lot of students going by train so that is definitely doable. My dad brought my so by car is also possible. Plane is also a good option for sure.

4. University and studying

a. 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	Soil problems in aridic and semi-aridic regions	3	Teaches about qualitative aspects of soil problems in dry regions where often water and nutrient limitations occur.	4	
2	Soil protection	3	Teaches on the six main drivers of soil degradation around the world including for example soil erosion and soil compaction	2	
3	Introduction to molecular biology	2	Teaches the main aspects of molecular biology with topics on transcription, translation, and gene cloning using plasmids	3	It says introduction but some knowledge on cell biology is advised to follow the lectures.
4	Soil pollution and remediation	3	Teaches on metal behaviour in soils, so related to soil chemistry. But also remediation option such as Phyto stabilization and pH manipulations.	3	
5	Atmospheric pollution	3	Teaches on the main aspects of atmospheric pollution in the stratosphere (ozone chemistry) and tropospheric chemistry. Also lots of info on climate change.	3	Difficult exam with a lot of material. Bachelor course
6	Biogeochemistry of soil	3	Teaches the main aspects of elemental cycling in ecosystems. From rock weathering to organisms, the flows of elements in ecosystems are discussed from the soil to the whole cycle.	4	

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain): Yes, BOKU has a lot of courses like a lot. The courses are often only 2 or 3 ETC meaning that BOKU offers a lot of courses in general. English courses are a big part of that. I do want to mention that some of the English courses were supposed to be in English but that slides still contained quite some German and figures in German.

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain): Yes a lot of option regarding soil science and I was very happy with that. Hydrology was also possible, to a lesser extent meteorology.

d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain): No, the courses were very often not detailed and too qualitative for me. So if you like that then that's great, for me it was all a bit too superficial.

e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

No, I chose courses with exams that were all scheduled in June which was very stressful. I also really regret two courses that were taught very bad.

f. What is it like to study there?

I experienced BOKU as a very chaotic university. It offers a lot of courses which gives you the opportunity to really follow specific courses that you like and also a lot of them. However, you will experience a lot of course overlap because you will have to follow a lot of courses due to the small courses (2 or 3 ETC). Though, it is manageable and teachers are willing to reschedule exams or help you if you explain the problem. I followed mainly courses with exams, that are easier and less material than in Wageningen, but there are a lot of variety of courses such as excursions which I would recommend and I do regret not taking such courses. The workload is less than in Wageningen.

g. What is the culture of the university?

Teachers are less approachable than in Wageningen. For me the teachers in Wageningen are super approachable and you have sort of a connection with them. Here that was not really the case for me, but they are open to any questions! So you can still ask questions. Mailing depends per teachers, some were rude and some were very nice. There is less pressure and stress at BOKU compared to Wageningen so that gives a nice atmosphere.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

There is catering, sports (I did not follow any), lots of activities for Erasmus students! BOKU did that very well with a great introduction week and lots of activities throughout the semester.

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?

Housing was very good and easy for me. They provide a lot of providers for student housing. I had OEAD and that was super nice. You can rent yourself and I also heard some students with private renting.

b. What is the culture like?

The same as in the Netherlands, but depends on what you are used to in Wageningen of course.

c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

It is amazing in Vienna and super cheap. You pay around 80 euros for a semester ticket and you can travel with that card by metro, bus and tram throughout the semester.

6. Expenses

a. Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	0 (brought by car)
Visa - if applicable	/
Vaccinations - if applicable	/
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	/
Daytrips/sight-seeing	Depends on the trips that you do
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	560 euros per month
Grocery costs per month	500 euros (depends per person)
Public transport costs per month	80 euros fixed amount
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	Depends per person but like 18 euros for a meal in a restaurant.

b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:

I would say a bit higher but also because you spent more on Erasmus exchange.

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

In the area I would definitely advice to go to Innsbruck! I went there with friends to go hiking and visit the Alps. It is definitely a must see. Also Budapest is really cool and near Vienna.

b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?

The Hermes villa in the hütteldorf area in west Vienna.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?

The biggest challenge was to combine your social life and study life. Especially at the end it became hard to merge the activities that you want to do with friends and the necessary time you have to put into getting enough ETC's. I honestly just went to the activities and

maybe left a little bit earlier. But spending time with your friends on Erasmus is a once in a life time experience and in that moment maybe a little bit more important than studying and getting good grades.

b. Best memory?

The magic within when doing an evening walk with friends with ice cream and surrounded by the most beautiful building in the evening light.

9. Contact details

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