



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	Bachelor landscape architecture
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	18/9/2024 until 7/3/2024
Exchange destination: University	Boku Wien
Faculty	Landscape architecture
Country	Austria
City	Vienna

2. Motivation for exchange

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

I felt that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity (which it is) and wanted to take it. I had completely settled in Wageningen and was looking for a new challenge and opportunity to grow, the exchange perfectly fitted this purpose.

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

I was not ready to go outside of Europe and I really wanted to live in a metropole for a while as I had always lived in small villages. I had never been to Vienna before but the courses were really interesting to me as I wanted to learn some basics of the CAD programme (and they offered courses in that). In addition, I had learned German during high school and wanted to develop it further by following some courses in German. But I found out that the biggest plus to Vienna is being in the middle of Europe. You can travel to so many neighbouring countries and this was amazing!

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

Mainly the options for courses, but no other university in Vienna (nor Austria) has a connection to the WUR for landscape architecture.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

At first I went by plane, it was comfortable and has a very easy connection with train into the city. Nevertheless, I would recommend going by train. After Christmas holidays I went back by a night train goes directly to Vienna. It is quite comfortable, and you do not need to buy a bed as the chairs can extend into a sleeping place. It is a lot cheaper than flying (around 35 euros on NS international if bought on time), you arrive in the morning and have all the time to reach your sleeping place and it is a bit of an adventure!

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	854307 <i>Visuelles Denken in der LAP und in der KUNST</i>	3	Learn how to analyse art through different philosophies (f.e. colour analysis)	3	Very interesting but I felt the teacher was not very objective and could have been more in depth.
2	852113 <i>CAD-gestütztes Projekt</i>	5	Make 2d plan with Auto-Cad, starts with the basics.	5	An amazing course. It is easy to follow along (even if your german is not that great), the teacher is very understanding and helpful and the lessons include time to work on the projects with very close guidance.
3	951316 <i>Medicinal and aromatic plants (in Eng.)</i>	3	Agricultural and economic properties of medicinal plants	4	A fun course, nice teacher and the examination is a presentation on a specific plant. This is a nice way to learn a lot more than just through theoretics.
4	874103 <i>Landschaftsbau I</i>	3	Conditions of materials and landscape structures (stairs, ramps, material qualities)	3	Interesting, although the lectures were mainly examples of the teacher and did not add a lot to the learning process. It is a lot of theory without personal application as it is examined with a written test.
5	852317 <i>Entwurf und Gestaltung von Details</i>	6	Participation in an international garden festival competition. Your design process is guided by the teacher and then submitted in the contest.	5	I would really recommend this course. You meet new people through group work, it is challenging, and you are actually participating in a competition. The guidance by the teachers is great and really add a lot to the process.
6	731134 <i>Grundlagen nachhaltiger Entwicklung</i>	3	Basics of different viewpoints of the philosophies behind societal, sustainable processes	3	The material was interesting, but mostly theoretical philosophies and I sometimes missed how to apply it in real life.
7	834103 <i>Vegetationsökologie (AW)</i>	3	Ecology of plant species	3	Very interesting and in depth, although maybe a bit too much for a landscape architect

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, the master courses are easy to follow (even for bachelor students) and are always in English. However, try to mail as early as possible to the exchange office if there is a different possibility to register for the courses because the current students can register earlier than exchange and fill up the courses. There is still a lot of other courses which can be followed but this happened to me and was a bit disappointing.

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, there are a lot of courses for landscape architecture, but I ran into the same problem I explained in b)

d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain):

Yes, I feel that course 2,4 and 5 really added to my knowledge. The rest was interesting but I would not reselect them now.

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

Yes, I am happy with the courses but still feel it could have been better if I had been able to stick a little bit more to the courses that I originally wanted to follow.

f. What is it like to study there?

E.g. Study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material?

g. What is the culture of the university?

The lecturers are very nice and easy to speak with (I mostly spoke on first name basis but this can be dependent). People really voice their opinions in the lectures and lively discussions are held. I did not really become close friends with local students but during group work people were very nice and it was easy to join. In comparison to the wur I would describe the atmosphere at BOKU even a little bit more liberal.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

Cafeteria, study places, model room for architecture students, gardens and a neighbouring park.

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?

There are a lot of student dorms but you need to be in time to have a place. However, it is not dramatic if you don't have a place as there are a lot of houses that also do 'hospiteren'. You can find these houses on the website and app: 'WG-gesucht'.

b. What is the culture like?

Everything is a bit more by the book and a lot is done by paper. People are quite friendly and helpful when you know one another (for example from classes) but otherwise people

can be a bit rude sometimes (especially in the metro). I think it is a bit of the big city/metropole like new York effect. Be careful with Sundays as EVERYthing is closed, even supermarkets, I forgot this all the time and caused me to have to get take out.

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

It is super nice. The metro is extensive and cheap for students. You can buy a semesterticket online at wienerlinien.at .BUT the semesterticket ends at the official end of classes while you often still have an exam after this period. The day that the ticket ends police checks rigorously and even goes so far to go undercover, so be mindful of this as the ticket exceeds 100,-.

6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	300-400 total
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	Went skiing (5,-)
Daytrips/sight-seeing	500,-
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	500,-
Grocery costs per month	200 -300,- p.m.
Public transport costs per month	80,- for whole time (a student semester ticket can be bought at wien ov.)
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	-

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

A little bit higher (but not much).

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

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7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

A lot can be seen in Vienna (hard to tell it all and is more fun to explore yourself) however I also travelled to the neighbouring countries. Definitely visit Budapest, Krakau, Praag. And I went on the ESN ski trip, also really cool as you can also meet people from the other universities in Vienna. Travel by train or flibus. You can go in the weekends.

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

When the weather is nice, you can go swimming in the donau. Go on a wine hike (with ESN or friends).

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

It is definitely a stressful and overwhelming experience but a lot of other people are dealing with similar situations. Try to get into the exchange whatsapp group through facebook and just ask, every one is super open, helpful and ready to socialize.

b. Best memory?

Too many, but the first one that pops up is that after the exams my friends and I went on a last trip to Krakau which was simply so special to me. Krakau is a beautiful city with of course an extensive and emotional past. But it was the best thing we could have done as it was the perfect opportunity to spend the last bit of time we had left together and not just say but also feel the goodbye coming on.

9. Contact details

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