



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student information

<b>Study programme WU</b>	BAS
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	19/02/2024 until 11/07/2014
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	BOKU
<b>Faculty</b>	Biotechnology
<b>Country</b>	Austria
<b>City</b>	Vienna

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I wanted to experience life in a different country and live in a big city for a while. I also went to meet people with different cultural backgrounds and learn from the experience. On top of that, I wanted to experience what it is like to study outside of the Netherlands.

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

The university, Vienna

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

It is a university that has courses that I wanted to follow

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I went by train, nightjet to be specific. This was very doable, environment friendly, and not that expensive. Especially, when accounting for the cost of luggage when flying. However, if you want to get some sleep get a bed or a couchette in the train. I liked the nightjet because there were no transfers and, as is well known, the train schedules in Germany are not exactly reliable.

## 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
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<b>1</b>	Biology of aging	3	How aging occurs, what mechanisms play a role.	4	Just lectures/seminars and no exam
<b>2</b>	Career paths for a sustainable future: Transformative research at universities using the example of BOKU	3	You conduct a research project with your fellow classmates	3	One time course, so not relevant
<b>3</b>	Conservation genetic lab	2	3 days of labwork and writing a protocol	4	Do not expect a schedule anytime soon, but it is very flexible
<b>4</b>	Conservation genetic analysis methods	1	How to analyse your genetic data	3	Not really in dept
<b>5</b>	Developmental genetics	3	Development and the genetic background of the mechanisms in plants and animals	3	The plant part was really chaotic, but the animal part was good (different teachers)
<b>6</b>	Human nutrition and food	3	Basic information on human nutrition and food, writing a report and presenting as group work	3	Felt uncomfortable because of the professor
	Intercultural competence - Acting effectively in an international environment	3	A bit alternative	3	
	Microbiology and disease	2	Mainly about pathogenic bacteria	4	Good teachers
	Non-viral gene therapy	2	Non-viral gene therapy, the important aspects, considerations complemented with practical examples	4	Everything is mandatory, yet the course is good and very well structured
	Programming with Python (basic)	3	Working with python	1	General lack of explanations, help, and any guidance of the students
	The molecular mechanisms of cancer immunotherapies	2	Immunology and immunology in the context of cancer and how it can be used for cancer therapy	5	Good teacher, good slides

**b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):** Yes, the website is okay, but the schedule is late

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

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

**e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):** Yes, but I did not like that the ECTS changed during some courses.

**f. What is it like to study there?**

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

Everything is more chaotic, the schedule is late, the teachers expect you to be very formal when sending an email, academic level is lower, examination is fine, workload is fine, but the schedule is horrible since it is unknown for a long time and you have to balance at least 10 courses with overlap if you want around 30 ECTS (many courses are around 2-3 ECTS).

**g. What is the culture of the university?**

*E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with WU?*

Very flexible as long as you ask, teachers expect you to be very formal in emails and call them by their titles, the country and the university are very bureaucratic.

**h. What does the university offer students additionally?**

*E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?*

There is a mensa and a pub at the main campus.

## 5. Housing-traveling-living

**a. What are the possibilities for housing?**

*E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?*

No housing available via the university, but if you register for some of the dormitories in time you will find an okay priced room (rent is a little higher than in Wageningen, but it is a big city). Also, take into account the time to travel to university, since it is a big city and it can be up to an hour or more if you are not careful.

**b. What is the culture like?**

*E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?*

People stare at you in public (there is nothing wrong with your hair, or in between your teeth, it's just normal for them), waiters are rude and expect a handsome tip, small talk is non existing, the public transport is very good, take cash everywhere and don't expect to be able to pay with card (in supermarkets you can always pay with card), the local cuisine is underwhelming (sorry, not sorry, potatoes do not count as a salad.. and apricot jam is not revolutionary) but they have some good international options (also many options for vegans and vegetarians).

**c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?**  
*E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?*  
 €75,- for a semester ticket in the Vienna zone, so be careful when you travel further as they will check for a ticket as soon as you leave the zone. You can get an OBB vorteilscard jugend to get 50% discount in the OBB trains for around €20, which is definitely worth it if you are travelling to different places in Austria.

## 6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	100
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	-
Daytrips/sight-seeing	400
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	550
Grocery costs per month	160-200
Public transport costs per month	24
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	40

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

**c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?**

Spar and billa are expensive grocery stores, lidl and hofer (=aldis) are okay.

## 7. Free time

**a. What are must-sees in the area?**

*E.g. Nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?*

Graz is really nice! Go when it is warm, since it is not too touristic anyway. You can get a day ticket for Bratislava at the central station (includes train ride there and back, and public transport in Bratislava). Lednice is also beautiful. I did everything by train, which I liked very much. Also, Budapest, Prague, the mountains in Tirol are all reachable by train.

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

The old movie "The third man" in Burgkino is such a fun experience and it is set in Vienna.

## 8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

Bureaucracy, you can ask others what their experience was. Unfortunately, you have just got to do it.

**b. Best memory?**

Going to the free philharmonic concert at Schönbrunn with my roommate and some other friends.

**9. Contact details**

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name &amp; email address (if yes)</b>	Marloes - Marloes.kingma@wur.nl	