WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	Bsc Environmental Sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	until 06/07/2024
Exchange destination: University	University of Porto
Faculty	FEUP - Faculty of Engineering
Country	Portugal
City	Porto

2. Motivation for exchange

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

I went on exchange to experience living in another country and meet people from all over the world. Additionally, I went on exchange to study subjects that I could not follow back in Wageningen.

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

I chose Portugal because of the good weather, affordability, and close proximity to a beach.

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

 I chose this university because of the courses I could follow based on the availability of partnerships the WUR had in Porto.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?
Flying is basically the only option from the Netherlands. You could take the train but this would take 40 hours and I only had a weekend to get there so this was not possible.

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	Environmental Law and Economics	3	Basic concepts in the field about environmental issues.	4	The level was not really high but the way of learning was interesting and especially learning about the Portuguese perspective was interesting.
2	Startup Strategy	6	Strategy revolving the frist stages of a company. It was very interactive which was meaningful	3	
3	Coastal and maritime hydraulics	6	A mix of mathematical and qualitative ways of describing coastal processes.	4	
4	Cartography, GIS	6	Mapping out areas in ecosystems.	1	The level was extremely low and the material studied was not interesting
5					
6					

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were <u>taught in English</u> (Yes, No - Explain): No, the availability of English courses was low and this limited the options severely.

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my <u>field of interest</u> (Yes, No - Explain): No, I had to chose 60% in my bachelor field. All these courses had overlap with WUR and it did not suit to my interests anymore. I was not able to study what I originally wanted to when deciding to go on exchange.

d. I am satisfied with the <u>level of the courses</u> that I followed (Yes, No - Explain): No, the level was generally very low. Sometimes it felt like I was back in high school. Masters courses were sometimes better but still often it was under my level and it did not challenge me. This is also why I decided to quit two courses.

e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the <u>selection of courses</u> I followed (Yes, No - Explain): No, I was not able to study what I wanted because 60% had to be in my Bsc field. Additionally, the amount of English taught courses was low.

f. What is it like to study there?
The city of Porto is amazing, it is vibrant with many exciting things to do and experience. The Erasmus people are all really nice and approachable. The beaches are beautiful and there are plenty opportunities for surfing. Also the city is affordable compared to other European cities.

g. What is the culture of the university?
The university however is not of good enough standards. The academic level was low and the students were also not motivated to study. Even the teachers were not very motivated and were often late to class.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?
 There are canteens but I rarely used those. There are also sports facilities and places to study.

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?
It was quite easy to find a private room online. I signed up for university housing but never heard anything back from them.

b. What is the culture like?
Portuguese culture is very social and focussed around being together. Everything is slow and nobody is I a rush. Everyone is always late and everything is flexible.

c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?
 Public transport in the city is free if you are under 23. The metro is quiet fast and convenient but it does not cover the entire city. There are also busses but these are very unreliable and slow so I rarely took them. Ubers and Bolts are very cheap and widely used to get around the city.

6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	300
Visa - if applicable	
Vaccinations - if applicable	
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	
Daytrips/sight-seeing	1000 in total with trips abroad included
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	380 for big private room
Grocery costs per month	100
Public transport costs per month	0
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	50

b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:
The prices are generally lower than the Netherlands. Especially bars and restaurants are very cheap. Supermarkets are quite comparable in price to the Netherlands.
c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?
Douro valley, sunsets at the parks, matosinhos beach, Adega and Aduela bar, Ponte Luis bridge, port wines bars in Gaia

b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?
Rancho bar, the best cheap bar with amazing views and table tennis

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?
The biggest challenge is dealing with the university. Many people had to study in Portuguese without knowing the language. As said, the level is also low.

b. Best memory?
The trip we made to Morocco

9. Contact details

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?		No

Name & email address (if yes)	