



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	MSc Management, Economics and Consumer Studies
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	02/2022 until 08/2022
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Belgium
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Ghent
<b>University (exchange)</b>	UGent
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Faculty of Political and Social Sciences

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

Gent offered a selection of courses that were not available in Wageningen. Also, I felt that I had seen most of Wageningen by then, I wanted to explore another city and step out of my comfort zone.

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

Honestly, I was a bit late with deciding whether I wanted to go on an exchange or not, so not too many options were left. Both Bologna and Gent had some spots left and taught courses I deemed interesting. However, with some events planned for which I had to be home, Gent seemed the better option.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Yes! Obviously you can go by public transport or with a Flixbus, but I recommend to join the FB group "Ik ga naar Nederland en ik neem mee..". It is a group full of Dutch students that carpool back and forth to the Netherlands every weekend. It is relatively cheap and you get to know new people along the way.

## 4. University and studying

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
<b>1</b>	Interactive Media and Entertainment	5	Fun and interesting course about the current digital age we live in and how it affects our lives.	4	-
<b>2</b>	Digital Methods	4	Course about how to do research with the help of digital methods (e.g. R.)	2	Not really my thing.
<b>3</b>	Corporate communicatie	5	Entry level introduction to communication in the corporate world.	2	Although it was quite basic, still felt as if I lacked knowledge. Not because the content was hard, just because I don't have a background in communication. Also, please be aware that Flemish is different than Dutch and that there are many words you won't understand.
<b>4</b>	Digitale communicatie	3	During this course we learned how to effectively communicate making use of digital ways. Also, we made our own website (which was a lot of fun).	5	Very fun and hands on, definitely recommend it.
<b>5</b>	Business development en strategische verkoop	3	Write your own business plan and learn about strategic selling.	4	Again, pretty fun and very hands on. Would recommend it.
<b>6</b>	Digitale marketing	6	Pretty tough course on digital marketing. Fun, but pretty dense on information.	4	-

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

UGent is a very good and structured university with courses of a high level. However, classes are long and often without brakes. So come prepared with a thermos flask filled with coffee.

**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?)**

Unlike at the WUR (or Dutch universities in general according to one of my Belgian lecturers), classes are way less interactive. The lecturers are very approachable though. The Belgian students I met are less social. They are approachable but, in my experience, I have only gotten past the little small talk less than a handful of times. Maybe they didn't like my Dutch accent or were simply too hooked on the lecture. Also, I must add that I don't do a lot of small talk at the WUR as well, as I have my friends here, so I understand why they weren't as keen to talk as I was.

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

The cafeteria is pretty cheap.

## 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?)**

There are dorms for the international students, which I highly recommend. I personally lived in a student house with 22 Belgium roommates. Prices are similar/a bit higher to/than Wageningen.

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

Belgiums culture differs quite a lot from Dutch culture. Before leaving for Erasmus I didn't even know our cultures differed at all, I mean, we speak the same language, right? Not really, we don't even share the same language as they speak Flamish and we speak Dutch. Although there are a lot of differences, the biggest one is that the Belgians are more reserved than the Dutchies. You will notice this in many small things, like taking less initiative to get to know someone, no random coffee breaks, kind of shy when first meeting, different sense of humour. They refer to Dutch people as loud and clumsy, and I can confirm, we are in comparison to them. E.g. When I am having dinner with friends we always kind of mock each other, and simply laugh it off. Well, I was mocking a field of study and people were shyly laughing until it gradually got very quiet. I caught on a bit too late that maybe, just maybe, someone was enrolled for such a study. Turns out three of my roommates were and they didn't like me one bit. For me, it was just jokes and banter, for them it felt as an insult. Never would I have thought that such a small distance could mean such a big difference in people. I think that because of my naiveness the difference got stressed a lot more.

Also, Belgians are real Burgundians. They love craft beer and food. Their terraces are always full and beers always cold. If you didn't gain some weight whilst staying in Gent, you did something wrong.

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

Same.

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

Bring your bike and you are good to go.

## 6. Free time

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

Go to Blaarmeersen, a sport park with a beach and forest.

Go to the Dulle Griet and order a Maxi blond (1.3L of beer). You should then visit Ventura, after which you should go to the Trollekelder. Now that you are a few beers deep, finish the night at Charlatan. This is fun during the weekends, during the week you should go to the Overpoort for partying. (If your finances are low, go to the Omgekeerde Wereld.)

Make sure to visit the brewery of Delirium Tremens.

Climb the Belfort Tower (I didn't because of my fear of heights but I heard the view is amazing).

Enjoy some fries in the sun at Graslei.

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

The points above.

Oh, and the Gentse Feesten for sure!

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

Gent is a beautiful city and has many good bars and restaurants, too many to name. Just make sure to try most of them and enjoy your time.

## 7. Challenges & best moment abroad

**What was a challenge you have experienced?**

I did not expect such a big cultural shock. I have never had trouble making friends and always have people around me. So, when I first came to Gent and I had no-one, I felt

pretty lonely. On top of that I had some private struggles and no friends with whom to talk. Luckily, after a long month, I finally made some new friends and my Erasmus could really start! Having no friends to entertain me did make me more independent and less reliable on others, hanging out on my own can be fun too.

### **What was your best memory abroad?**

The most memorable thing that immediately came to mind was a festival in the city centre. The weather was getting better and the music was just perfect. I don't know why, but everything was just so perfect those days.

Another good memory is of running and completing the half marathon of Gent. This was one of my highlights for sure. Especially since it was at the end of a challenging first month.

### **8. Contact details (optional)**

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