



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Landscape Architecture
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	19/09/2022 until 31/01/2023
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Belgium
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Ghent
<b>University (exchange)</b>	KU Leuven
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Architecture

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

Mainly to explore a different field of architecture, (I studied interior architecture during my exchange). Also, to have an incredible experience in another country with people from all over the world.

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

I ended up in Belgium because of the course I chose. This was my main reason. I read a lot of positive things about KU Leuven as well, so I was excited to go there.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Ghent is very easy to reach by train, around 3.5 hours. You can save a lot of money if you book the tickets in advance. Flixbus is an option too, which is very cheap.

## 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
1	biag55 Design Studio: Implement	9	We had to redesign the interior of a monumental building in a park, so its function would support the park and attract more visitors.	4	I learned a lot from this course, but it was a lot of work. I didn't have any experience in interior architecture, which made it hard for me. However the teachers were very nice and helpful.
2	Interiors: This is Belgium (elective)	5	We visited several projects in and around Ghent to get familiar with Belgian architecture and afterwards we had to make an artwork to capture the essence of the projects.	3	It was nice to go on many excursions, and all the projects looked really nice. However I did not learn as much from the assignment.
3	Maig 11 Architecture & Sustainability	5	This subject dealt with the history of architecture and how it came to where it is now in the form of lectures.	2	The lectures were very long and messy. I did not get the point of this course. The exam was really easy though.
4	Biag 54 LAB (o): Positioning I	6	For this course we were expected to make a model of a certain typology and make a video to tell the story of this typology.	2	At first the assignment seemed fun, but it was so much work. The teacher expected a lot outside of the main assignment as well. Materials were expensive too.
5	ELG1 Universal Design	5	The purpose of this course was to make us aware of the challenges disabled people have to deal with and challenge us to make our future designs more inclusive.	3	I think the overall purpose of the course was good, as it definitely made me more aware. The assignment was fun too, we had to go to project and test it on its inclusivity. Most of the classes were boring however.

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

Compared to Wageningen it was very different. It was much more practical I would say, which was nice. However it was also more work and the guidance was different too. The teachers leave you free to do your projects how you want to, but have very strong opinions. I feel like in Wageningen research and argumentation for decisions are important as well as the design process, whereas at KU Leuven the end result was very important. Nothing could be conceptual, but everything had to be carried out. The workload during the semester was high, but in the end when most students have exams we had time off.

**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?)**

The Belgian students were not very used to international students, they were not the most approachable. The level of English was lower too, which makes it more difficult if you don't speak Dutch. However, all the other international students were very nice and I had a great time. The teachers were nice too, they were quite direct in what you had to improve which I liked.

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

The university did not offer that much to us internationals, as it is a small facility. But you could get discounts on a lot of activities. The campus has nice facilities such as a 3D printer, laser cutter and good printers and plotters. The university organized housing for some students too which was very helpful.

## **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?)**

The housing is different than in Wageningen. There aren't really big student houses where you live with a lot of people together. When you apply for a room you don't really see who else lives in the house. It is more private in a way. I got a room via the university and I stayed within a very big student accommodation called Upkot. Here we had all shared facilities, but it was well organised by the company.

Finding a room on your own in Ghent as a foreigner can be very difficult as there is a big shortage in rooms.

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

Very similar to the Netherlands, but I found the people more reserved. If you talk to them they are nice though. They work very hard however.

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

It is more expensive than Wageningen, but overall not that expensive. I paid 500 a month for my room. The location is much better compared to Wageningen (in my opinion) so it is worth it.

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

By tram you can reach most of the city. Trams go every 5/10 minutes and very easy to use. A ride is 2.50 euro, but they don't really check for tickets. For destinations further away trains and buses are easy too. Public transportation is much cheaper than in the

Netherlands, especially the train. I would recommend the bike though, since everything is close by.

## 6. Free time

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

Ghent itself is very nice to just walk around and see the old buildings. The outside neighbourhoods are nice as well, but very different from the city centre. From Ghent it is very easy to go to Antwerp or Brussels by train. I also visited Paris with a Flixbus. If you plan on travelling I would recommend to go early in the semester, because it is the least busy.

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

Don't know about the travel guide, but I recommend going to the museum night, which is one night per year where all museums are free of entry.

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

The ESN parties were fun, I would recommend to go there. Especially in the beginning you can meet a lot of new people. During the week most students party in Overpoort which is a party street. Thursday is the main party night. During the weekend most students go home (boring), but then you should go to places around the city centre.

The best party I went to was one organized by the university itself. The students at the campus are very artistic so ask them for where to look for cool parties.

Food was mediocre overall. There are nice places but you have to really look for it. Lunch is easier than dinner.

## 7. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

I found it difficult that I didn't have experience in the field of interior architecture. I felt like a beginner all the time and the other students had better developed skills.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

Meeting all my new friends. I honestly had the best time ever, it exceeded all my expectations.

## 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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