



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Environmental Sciences
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	05/07/2021 until 25/10/2021
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Austria
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Vienna
<b>University (exchange)</b>	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU, A WIEN03)
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Life Sciences

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I was attracted by a thesis topic offered at the Institute of Forest Ecology at BOKU and chose for a co-supervision of my MSc thesis with BOKU Vienna.

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

Austria is sort of my home country and I studied at BOKU before. I wanted to use this opportunity to come back to Vienna for study purposes as I really enjoy being there. The city is rich in culture and nature, furthermore I have family living there.

Also, my thesis topic is kind of country-specific and as I plan to go back to Austria for a job after study, this was a one-time opportunity to work in a research group within my field.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Taking the train to Vienna improved much in recent years and is also affordable. I chose to take the train already a few times for this route and wouldn't want to take the plane anymore.

## 4. University and studying

### Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

I worked with staff of the Institute of Forest Ecology for my MSc thesis, cannot tell about specific courses in 2021/2022.

However, I followed some MSc courses in the summer term of academic year 2018/2019 and can tell a bit (**note: information may not be up to date**):

No rights can be derived from the given information!

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents (Looked up in study handbook of BOKU)	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	911338 <a href="#">Boden und Terroir in Weinbau und Önologie</a>	1	Interpretation von Boden- und Terroirinformationen (Case study); Erfahrungsaustausch mit Praktikern (WinzerInnen und VertreterInnen von Winzerverbänden) zum Thema Terroir.	4.5	In German; English title: <a href="#">Soil and terroir in viticulture and oenology Institute of Soil Research (IBF)</a> 1-day excursion to Wachau, really informative and valuable experience.
2	911331 <a href="#">Ökosystemdynamik und ihre Auswirkung auf Treibhausgase (in Eng.)</a>	3	Understanding of formation and decomposition processes of the gases carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, nitric oxide, ammonia, and hydrocarbons in forests, arable fields, grasslands and wetlands. Insights into the dynamics of these ecosystems and their effect on the greenhouse gas balance.	4	In English; English title: Ecosystem dynamics and their effect on greenhouse gases <a href="#">Institute of Soil Research (IBF)</a> I remember course was intense; Monday to Friday full-time, at the end of the last lecture exam.
3	816342 <a href="#">Possible impacts of climate change on water resources (in Eng.)</a>	3	After participation the students will have gained a deep understanding of the coupled atmospheric hydrological system, the impact of climate factors (precipitation, temperature) on evapotranspiration and runoff behaviour. They will be able to distinguish between hard and soft facts in climate change discussion and will gain knowledge about the reliability of expected boundary conditions of different climate change scenarios. Based on presented research results they will improve their understanding of the quantitative impact of	4	In English; <a href="#">Institute for Hydrology and Water Management (HyWa)</a>

			climate change on runoff, forestry, alpine risks and its related aspects (hydropower capacity, snow cover and tourism, wood production etc.)		
4	871314 <a href="#">Protection and mitigation measures against natural hazards (in Eng.)</a>	3	Natural disasters as floods, debris flows, avalanches and rockfall threaten settlements and infrastructures in many mountainous countries. To protect these objects various mitigation measures can be chosen. The aim of the lecture is to optimize the design and the combination of mitigation measures.	5	In English; The course takes place in the form of a three-day excursion. <a href="#">Institute of Mountain Risk Engineering (IAN)</a> Excursion to Styria, sites with different protection measures against floods, avalanches, rockfall etc. were visited.
5					
6					

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

In Master cycle, still a lot of lectures in the form that the teacher stands in front of class and there is not so much interaction with or between students. However, study form always mentioned in study handbook. In general, a lot of possibilities to go on excursions in and around Vienna, 1-day to several days.

Examination: after excursions usually you have to write a report (individual or in groups), written exams, written individual or group assignments, depending on courses

Work load is officially a bit lower per ECTS point than at WUR.

There are some crucial platforms to use.

BOKU online for administrative purposes, course and exam registration, transcript of records, etc.

BOKU learn for course material

BOKU drive for storing and sharing files

**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?)**

Usually strong community feeling, important to participate in offered social activities (useful insiders); there are a lot of options to participate in study, sports organisations, etc.; working your way through study life alone is possible, however Austria is a country where life is so much easier and more enjoyable when you participate, open up to other people. Then you get so much new insights, knowledge and skills, because relations are so important to have in Austria.

Lecturers are a bit more difficult to reach out to than in Wageningen, conversations are more formal. Keep a healthy distance and show respect to your teachers, i.e. hierarchies are still more in place.

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

Student sport facilities and courses (Universitätssportinstitut Wien): <https://www.usi.at/>

Warm meals for lunch at canteens on campus (Mensa); at the student union (ÖH) you can get the "Mensa-Pickerl" which gets you some discount on each meal.

## **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?)**

Students in Vienna usually do not stay on campus. There are student houses all around the city and public transport works very well. You can sign up with OEAD, national agency for ERASMUS+ in Austria (<https://oead.at/de/nach-oesterreich/unterkunft>). In addition, you can probably also sign up for usual student houses from various providers. I stayed with friends in a flat, i.e. looking for rooms in shared flats is also a viable option.

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

In general, the culture is similar to that in the Netherlands. Viennese cuisine is very popular, traditionally it includes meat and sometimes it's fried food. But there are all kinds of cuisine you can find throughout the city, and I think quality's usually high and there's a good price-quality ratio. Going out for food is definitely more affordable than in the Netherlands. Vienna is high in culture and art, not only Austrian culture, different cultures meet and can be explored. However, you should use the opportunity and go out with Austrians and find out about beer gardens and have a traditional Wiener Schnitzel.

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

My guess is that costs for residence are comparable to those in Wageningen. Living costs apart from residence, so for food and public transport, are probably a little less.

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

Public transport easily affordable, like up to 150 euros for the whole semester (when aged below 26y; when registering with municipality as main residence you pay as little as 75 euros). See <https://www.wienerlinien.at/web/wl-en/tickets-for-students#tabs-0-0-validity>. Public transport infrastructure one of the best world-wide as I was told, and it works really great!

Cycling routes get continuously better throughout the city. To BOKU you have to cycle uphill most of the times, but doable and great work-out.

## 6. Free time

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

- Donauinsel: go to U6 station Neue Donau and take a dive in the Neue Donau, free access and great with a group of people, listen to some music and have a cold beer from the "iglo man" passing by;
- Wiener Staatsoper: Vienna has a very popular opera house and is famous for the great orchestra. If you're open for it, take someone like-minded with you for a spontaneous opera visit and check out available U27 tickets for little money (see <https://www.wiener-staatsoper.at/en/young/u27/>).
- Stadtwanderwege: network of hiking tours around the city of Vienna (see <https://www.wien.gv.at/english/leisure/hiking/paths.html>)
- Donaukanal – Schwedenplatz: great for a beer along the canal, lots of graffiti, do not swim in there!

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

Türkenschanzpark next to BOKU – Türkenschanze is just a real oasis to chill and free your mind after or in between studying.

Outside of Vienna: region Wachau (<https://www.austria.info/en/culture/magical-places/wachau-valley>), Neusiedlersee (<https://www.neusiedlersee.com/>)

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

Papas at Naschmarkt; Mediterranean and Middle-Eastern cuisine (<https://www.papasamnaschmarktwien.at/contact>)

Reinthalers Beisl; traditional Viennese cuisine (<https://en.reinthalersbeisl.com/>)

Ausg'steckt is; an overview where to head to when you want to have a glass of wine with friends (<http://www.wienerwein.at/ausgsteckt-is>)

Schweizerhaus in Prater; Beer garden, very popular and crowded, but worthy experience if you like beer (<https://schweizerhaus.at/>)

## 7. Challenges & best moment abroad

### What was a challenge you have experienced?

I have been studying at this university before, so I already knew the ins and outs. The challenge this time (winter term 2021) was keeping up with all the corona rules at campus, but also anywhere else in the city and country of Austria.

### What was your best memory abroad?

The social contact and meeting new people through my housemates.

I appreciate the richness and variety in activities and Vienna has such a great living quality. I like the near nature in and around the city and the culture you can consume. Vienna is also a city with a lot of innovation, tries to be a forerunner in sustainability and is already considered green in various aspects.

## 8. Contact details (optional)

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name/e-mail</b>	laura.wildschut@wur.nl	

### Personal tip:

Just try to say yes to (almost) whatever comes up and you build up a whole network and meet new people in no time with whom you get to explore countless unforgettable places and gain experiences for life.