

Before coming to Wageningen, I googled things up: accommodation, courses, weather, transport system. I contacted research groups at the University to find options for my master thesis. I had plans to focus in social science research. The first thing is that I came to the introduction week, this really helped me to know new students who were landing in a whole new culture just like me (see picture on the left). It was awesome, the whole city was partying just to welcome us! Then, I started my modules, I included recommended classes but ended up in laboratories. In the first experiment I was comparing organic and conventional soils. I was impressed, this university opened the doors to a psychologist to compare soil microbial activity! After that, my expectations changed. I decided to take a soil course, to explore farm modeling. Finally, I ended up in the Farming Systems Ecology group, carrying out my MSc. Thesis with an international research center in India (see picture below). I explored perception of smallholder farmers in Climate Smart Agriculture technologies. Just like that, within 12 months this studying experience opened up my horizons, my expectations and my career possibilities!

Fortunately, the university offered me an individual room which I rented. It was quite expensive but worth it because the routine is quite demanding and it is important to have a nice place to rest. Then, when I came back to write my thesis I moved into another student house ran by students but that is still part of the university's accommodation. A shared house with six members, we have our own garden, the food costs and we cook together in the evenings. I really loved it!

Wageningen has a strict schedule as it offers modules that change every two months. Classes usually are from 8:30 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 17:30. Its very intense, you have two modules and exams at the end in each period. It nevertheless, has an amazing student life. There are excursions, parties, dinners and research activities you can join. There are three cinemas in town and all kind of student associations. Besides that, so many international students teach you how different the world is. This happens while you are taking a coffee, doing group work or when you are invited over for dinner. In addition, there is an sport center, you pay a small amount fee but in exchange you get sports from 7:00 to 22:00 every

day. And there are students sport associations that you can also join. The bike is the most important way to get around. You can easily bike to the Rhein and have great afternoons there (see picture above).

I did not meet too many dutch people at the beginning. But just at the end of my experience I discovered really sweet ones that shared some of their life's with me. Now I have acquaintances all over the world. Some I will visit, others will come to my country. I recommend this exchange experience as it not only will enrich your mind but also your heart! Be ready to face language and cultural barriers, to feel sometimes lonely and lost. To make a big effort at the beginning to adjust to a new academic system. Be ready to open up your heart to strangers, to ask and receive help. You will study a lot but also travel, share and learn!