



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	BGM
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	01/09/2021 until 14/12/2021
Country (exchange)	Finland
City (exchange)	Kuopio
University (exchange)	University of Eastern Finland
Faculty (exchange)	Health sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I always loved the idea of going for a certain time away from The Netherlands. So, when I heard that in my third year of my bachelor I could go abroad to study, I was immediately enthusiastic. I thought it would be a way to develop myself more and more. Besides that it is a nice getaway from your normal live. In this way you can also find out what you like about your life in The Netherlands and what you don't like.

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

My favourite season is winter, so I was already convinced that it had to be a country where there is snow in the winter. Scandinavia was on my top of the lists of countries. Most because of the nature and I thought it was sort off original to go there. So, I was searching for courses which I found interesting in Scandinavia. I found out that the University of Eastern Finland had the best option for me. That is why I chose Finland. I am really glad I did.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I was studying in Kuopio, which is in the middle of Finland. You have two options to get there. The first option is to fly to Helsinki and then take the train to Kuopio. This is about 4 hours, and the trains are really nice and cheap. You only have to take two trains from the airport to get to Kuopio. This is what I have done. I would recommend this. Another option is to fly also to Helsinki and then catch an international flight to Kuopio. For me this was more expensive, so that is why I didn't take that option.

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	Community based health promotion	5	International, national and regional perspectives to community-based health promotion. Impacts of interventions and quality assessment in evidence-based health promotion. Ethics and cultural issues in community-based health promotion.	4	You need to write different essays to pass the course. The essays are both individual and in groups.
2	Public health in humanitarian crises	5	You learn about different parties who are involved in a humanitarian crises and what is important to do in this situation.	3	You have to write one big essay to pass the course.
3	Public health nutrition	5	Concepts and definitions in the field of public health nutrition. Diet and risk of chronic diseases (obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, bone health, cognitive decline). Undernutrition. Determinants of dietary habits, food choice models.	4	You have to write a learning diary and do a presentation.
4	Globalization, international migration, and Cultural Security	5	Cultural security, international migration, and negotiations of identity, Civilizations in the global age, Globalization,	2	You have to read a book and answer questions about this during an exam.

			mobility and conflicts, Sources of cultural diversity and change.		
5	Principles of nutrition	5	Basic concepts in human nutrition. Function of the nutrients in the body and their requirements. Major food sources of nutrients.	4	You have one exam about the lessons.
6	Health promotion and management	5	You learn all the aspects of health promotion and what elements are important to manage this health promotion correctly.	3	You have to read a book and two articles and answer questions about this during an exam.

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

Most courses I followed did not have an exam. They use essays or groupwork to examine your knowledge. This means that you have a lot of writing and reading during your learning period. Besides that you can really write about you think is interesting. Most of the time there are really general points which are compulsory. Besides these points you can write how you like it.

The lessons most of the time are the same as in Holland. Just the teacher giving information and you have to prepare this lesson. Sometimes you have to do somethings afterwards. They think it is really important that you give your own sights about something. In this way you can really learn more things around the same topic. Discussion in the class are also an important aspect to learn more things.

The academic level is a bit lower than in the Netherlands. I think this is most of the time with studying abroad.

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?)

You are really close to the teachers and the classes are small. It is also normal to have different courses from the same teacher. In this way the teacher really get to know you and it is easier to combine the courses. This is different than at the WUR. Also, the teachers are much more easy going. When you are stressing out about a deadline, you can speak to the teacher. Most of the time they get it and you can get extra time if you need that. This is also because they do not know periods. All the courses can be given at any moment.

At UEF you do not have integration with Finnish students, because they have special courses for international students. This has some advantages but also disadvantages. It is nice to have courses

with people who are experiencing the same thing as you, but on the other side you are not integrating that well with the Finnish culture.

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

The cafeteria at the UEF is really good. They offer a real meal with salad and bread. Everyday there are three options: vegetarian, meat and soup. The meals are healthy and fresh. It is really cheap and easy to get. You can also take a meal home if you want.

Also UEF offers sporting classes for only 35 eu per semester. You can do different classes and sign in everyday. It is almost the same system as in Wageningen.

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 is one organization where you can sign in: Kuopas. You have different options at this organization. You have furnished and unfurnished rooms. The furnished apartments are in two different buildings. You have the option to live with 2 or 3 in an apartment. Both are really nice buildings. They are clean and you have good option for washing and throwing away your waste. You can live with every internationality.

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

The Finnish people are a bit shy and don't want to talk a lot. When you want a conversation they are getting more open and open. They also have a different taste in clothes and hair. Let's say it is more alternative. The weather is in winter time really cold and there is snow. This is something we don't know in The Netherlands. Even though it is cold, the people are active and enjoy the nature a lot. Their local cuisine is reindeer.

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

It is cheaper than in Wageningen and you live with only 2 or 3 people. I paid for my room 285 eu, in Wageningen I pay for a little bit more space 370 eu.

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

The public transport is cheaper in Finland than in The Netherlands. For students, we only paid 15 eu for a train which was 4 hours. Also, the busses have a good price. You can get a buscard for 37 eu for the whole month. You can travel in one zone, which is enough to travel through the whole city and a bit around the city.

6. Free time

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

We planned a lot of trips. Most of the time in the weekends and we took Monday or Friday also free. We travelled a lot to cities and national parks. As said before the train is cheap, so that is a good option, but also renting a car is really easy. We rented a car many times to get out of Kuopio and experience more of Finland.

A must do is the north of Finland. It is a world we don't know. There is so much snow and ice. There are a lot of things to do in Lapland. Besides that the national parks around Kuopio are nice to do. Of course. a visit to Helsinki cannot miss.

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

Just your new back yard. We walked a lot in the forest which was near our house. Every season was different, but all were beautiful. We used the forest for sleighrides in winter times and in the summer just for a relaxing and refreshing walk. We had a lake at 3 minutes of walking. In summer times you could swim there and in winter times we swam in the lake after sauna. You should enjoy your own area where you live in the coming months.

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

The restaurants in Finland are really expensive. They have luxury fast food restaurants. This is the best option to go out for eating. Also, the pizza place Rosso is nice to go to. In Finland karaoke is really popular. In every club you will find a separate karaoke place where you can go. This is a recommendation to do. The Finnish people take it very serious, but the exchange students are just singing as bad as they can. This makes it fun to do.

Also, the sporting card from the university is a good option for your leisure time. I just it a lot. They have good sporting classes and you can also use the gym.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Missing the people from home. Sometimes it was hard to stay in contact if you are not home for such a long time, for me but also for the people at home. Also in the beginning we had to find our way in this new life. This is always scary and sometimes hard, but I think it worked out pretty well.

What was your best memory abroad?

Having done this experience with two of my best friends. We travelled a lot together, cried with each other and most of the time laughed with each other. It was a really nice feeling that there were people with I could really share this experience. It is something I will never forget anymore.

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Name/e-mail	Lotte Mathlener – lotte.mathlener@wur.nl	