



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Tourism
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	01.08.2021 until 31.12.2021
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Finland
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Rovaniemi
<b>University (exchange)</b>	University of Lapland
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Social Sciences

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

Being an international student already, I am naturally drawn to exploring new places and fields. Therefore, after being offered the opportunity to combine those two and go to such a distant country, like Finland, of course, I was more than willing to do so.

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

I was initially determined to go on an exchange somewhere in Northern Europe. What made me decide to choose Finland was the programme "Arctic Studies" they offer at the University of Lapland.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

It is easily accessible by plane and train, but, of course, planes are much faster. However, travelling to Northern Finland isn't exactly the cheapest journey.

## 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>	Introduction to the Arctic	5	Introduction to the circumpolar Arctic and its complexities in the fields of natural sciences, law and politics, people, cultures and identities, as well as society and economy	4	The course was particularly engaging and very informing. The additional "field trip" made it a lot more motivating and interesting. Moreover, the means of examination was appropriate.
<b>2</b>	Arctic Ecosystems and Adaptation of Species to Arctic Environment	5	The course contains themes related to the evolution and distribution of flora, fauna and marine ecosystems in the Arctic.	4	This was the course I was looking forward to the most. However, some of the topics and lecturers did not live up to my expectations. Other than that, out of all courses, I learned the most out of this one.
<b>3</b>	Arctic Governance and Law	5	The course covers content related to the significance of Environmental and international law for the Arctic, with big emphasis on climate change.	3	I feel neutral about this course because governance isn't really my favourite topic. However, I loved the lecturing team and their motivation.
<b>4</b>	People and Cultures of the Arctic	5	The focus of the course is to outline the history, culture and social life of people in the Arctic by bringing in approaches developed in social anthropology, sociology, art, history and education.	4	This course was mostly enjoyable. The lectures were engaging and easy to follow. I also really liked the means of examination which elevated the seriousness of the topics.
<b>5</b>	Human Rights and Security in the Arctic	5	This course includes international human rights law and different dimensions of human security in the Arctic, the role of digitalization in the Arctic and selected problems of cybersecurity, the concepts of cultural heritage, and food resilience in the Arctic	1	This course I enjoyed the least. It was taught entirely online with minimal interaction or fun elements. I learned virtually nothing from completing this course.
<b>6</b>	Indigenous (Sámi) Spirituality and Religious Beliefs	5	The focus for the course is to provide participants with a broad and comprehensive understanding and series of insights into Sámi religion and spiritual traditions, both past and present.	2	I am particularly conflicted about this course. I enjoyed the topics to a large extent, but the way they were conveyed and presented to the students was extremely dull. Fitting as much text in one slide and proceeding to read it word for word in front of a room full of students seems unprofessional in my opinion. However, the two fieldtrips we had were great and mark the highlight of this course.

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

The Finnish educational system is quite different from the one in the Netherlands. I am not entirely sure about other programmes in the University of Lapland, but my programme was very doable. The workload was small, the examination was fairly easy and the demand was low. It honestly did not really feel like university level of education.

**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?)**

Just like in the Netherlands, teachers in the University of Lapland are very approachable and always willing to help if you have any questions. My classmates were primarily international so I did not get a lot of interaction with local students.

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

The best thing in the whole of the university is the cafeteria(s). Every day you can go and get really good warm food for a fairly cheap price. There are also opportunities for people who are interested in sports, but I never explored that part of the university.

## **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?)**

Housing is very easy in Rovaniemi. You just contact the student housing agency and you get an offer, which is usually a bargain for the amount of space you get. The price ranges from 300 to 400 and everything is very well organized.

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

The Finnish culture and environment is definitely one to get used to. It is much different from the one in the Netherlands. In Finland locals are much more reserved and quiet. They are extremely nice and always ready to help, but would rather be left alone. Another big difference is that people in Finland do not speak English with such ease compared to the Netherlands. The local food is primarily based on protein (meat, fish, and beans) since that is the main way to deal with the cold weather.

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

The living costs in Finland for students are not any different from the ones in the Netherlands. It might actually be a little bit cheaper. However, it is a lot easier to find accommodation in Rovaniemi than in Breda/Wageningen.

**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 is expensive, although I did not use a lot of it.

## 6. Free time

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

The best place to visit in the vicinity of the University is the Santa Claus Village. It is easily accessible and quite close.

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

I don't know.

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

Night life experiences in the centre of Rovaniemi are a must. When it comes to restaurants, I don't have much experience.

## 7. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

The short hours of sunlight is something that is extremely hard to get used to and it impacts the mental state of students. A lot of fellow international students had a really tough time.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

Petting and feeding the reindeer in the Santa Claus village was probably the happiest memory I have from Rovaniemi, Finland.

## 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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