



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Nutrition and Health
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	January 2022 until May 2022
Country (exchange)	Finland
City (exchange)	Kuopio
University (exchange)	University of Eastern Finland
Faculty (exchange)	Public Health

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to broaden my knowledge with an abroad experience. I heard so much great stories of people who went on an exchange before, that I became enthusiastic myself to go too. At first I was a bit scared too, going all by my self abroad for 5 months, but it brought me so many great things in life.

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

I was inspired by a presentation of one of the other nutrition & health students on the minor market, which took place in my second year of studies. She went to UEF and her stories, and snowy pictures ;) made me so curious to go there myself. Besides I heard it was a very popular university among BVG students, so I looked up the courses of UEF and this fitted my field of interest, so I applied.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I went first to Helsinki by plane, this is a really nice connection and not that long (+/- 2h). After that I took the train (train company is called VR) to Kuopio of 4 hours and very a great connection too. From Kuopio railway station you can take busses anywhere you want but take the first time cash money! Another option is taking the plane from Helsinki Airport to Kuopio Airport, this only takes you 1 hour. However, from the airport no busses are going to the city center so you need an taxi.

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	Food and culture	2	Writing an essay about a food & culture related topic (I had food as comfort and food as treat) and giving a presentation about a food culture of a specific country, both in groups.	5	Its sounds maybe a bit easy, but at the same time it was so interesting because we had a international class which made the discussions so nice from everyone with a different background
2	Health, Culture and Society I	2	Online course in which you have to watch lectures yourself and hand in assignments (mostly essays with a self chosen topic). The course is mainly about alternative medicine.	5	Very interesting to get a view on how the non-western world looks at medicine.
3	Health Economics and Public Health	3	Course related to the finances in health care and the health care systems.	4	Interesting course, also the only course in which I had to do an exam.
4	Public Health and Vulnerable Groups	3	Online course again, in which we had to made our own discussion forum about the given topics and end every topic with a question for the next one to answer	1	I didn't like this way of teaching because the topics were sometimes a bit vague for me and it took my a lot of discipline to react every time.
5	Food and Nutrition Programs and Policies	5	Lectures, group work and class discussions about the programs and policies of different countries around food and nutrition	5	Again because I was in a international class this was very nice for the class discussions.
6	Nutrition in the life cycle	5	Every week there were videos you had to watch and make a quiz about, the day after we had a class discussion about some cases. The topic differed every week from	4	Had a bit overlap with what I already had at Wageningen but places everything nice in perspective.

			pregnancy, childhood, adults, etc		
	Health Policy and Systems Research	5	Lectures and some statistical group work digging into how the health care policies and systems work	3	This course was ok, but not as interesting as what I thought it to be.

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

I experienced a different way of education than in Wageningen. It was a different way of scheduling and therefore less high work pressure most moments. So, the academic level is perfectly fine to handle if compared to Wageningen. Also, there were less in-person hours, but it was a lot online also because of Covid. With my courses I only had one exam from one course. The other courses had different (group) assignments during the course which in the end determined your grade.

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 biggest difference is the school lunches! In Finland they offer you healthy and tasty school lunches for 1.60 per meal, you can put as much as you want on your plate. This is really nice to get together with your fellow students and to have a talk and enjoy lunch between the study time.

Furthermore, the university has self-study rooms, a nice library and enough IT services. The Finnish students are not as approachable as the Dutch population I would say. They are really nice and willing to help you once you ask them, but they are in the first impression not as open for contact as the Dutch students are.

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

As mentioned above, the school lunches offered are very nice. Also, the university has a sports building on the campus, called Studentia, in which you can go to the gym and follow sports classes. This is around the 35 euros per semester for unlimited use. Besides, Studentia has free sauna turns during the week, also very very nice.

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?)

They have a housing service called Kuopas. These offer housing for especially exchange students and other people who need housing for a shorter time. You have the option to give preference for a rooms that fits you best. The rooms are really nice (about 14m2 I believe) and you pay around the 300 euros/month.

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

There is not so much 'big' difference, except for the people who are really introvert. It is not usual that they say hi to you when passing each other on the street, or that you say hi to Finns you don't know. However, this does not mean that contact with them is impossible. As soon as you get to know them, they are really nice and they can be really good friends.

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

Mentioned earlier, around 300 euros.

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

From most Kuopas places you can go by bus to university. You can buy yourself a buscard and charge it each month of your stay, the amount is around 40 euros.

6. Free time

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

National parks, Lapland, Tallinn, Stockholm, Tampere, Turku. I would say join ESN Kisa, they organize a lot of cool activities and trips for international students. This is a good way to explore the Finnish life and to get to know new people.

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

No idea so far...

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

As a mentioned before, join ESN Kisa, and you get to know very soon a lot of people with whom you can do a lot of fun stuff! One thing to be sure of is that Kuopio has a lot to offer so you don't have to be bored.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

At some point in Lapland it was minus 20 on the reindeer farm and our travel guide had to give us instructions on how to stay warm by body movements. This was at that point in the cold outside a bit challenging, in the end it was a very nice story to tell.

What was your best memory abroad?

The cruise ship trip to Stockholm; we went partying during the night on the boat from Helsinki with ENS organisations from Finland, Estonia, Latvia etc.. And next day we arrived in Stockholm

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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