



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	International development
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	11-8-22 until 16-12-22
Country (exchange)	Finland
City (exchange)	Rovaniemi
University (exchange)	University of Lapland
Faculty (exchange)	Social sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To experience what it is like to live abroad and if this is something I would want to do for work in the future

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

The environment was the most important part for me. I wanted to go to a cold country as it is more likely that I will work in a warm country. And then second were the courses.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Before you leave, you get an email from wur with other students going to the same location. Meet up before you leave and then maybe you can travel together.

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	Understanding Finland	3	It's about the Finnish culture and history	5	It's a great way to learn about Finnish culture and reduce the possible culture shock
2	Finnish 1	3	Basics of Finnish	4	You can learn basic sentences and words like foods
3	Introduction to the Arctic	5	This is a broad course about the environment, people, and laws in the Arctic region	4	It is a good way to start the Arctic studies programme
4	Arctic Ecosystems and Adaptation of Species to Arctic Environment	5	Gives and understanding of the physical processes in the Arctic and how the animals react to it	5	I learned a lot that I had not learned in my social study programme
5	Arctic Governance	5	It's about environmental law and international governance in the Arctic region	3	Some lectures gave basic environmental principles and other lectures expected you to already know a lot about international relations
6	People and Cultures of the Arctic	5	It's about the different indigenous groups living in the Arctic including the Sámi and Inuits	3	Each lecture is taught by a different person which makes it a bit chaotic

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

There are generally two weeks of lectures, then you have two weeks of selfstudy and then an exam. This exam for me was often writing essays from your memory about what you learned during the course about a specific topic. There is not a lot of reading that is required, but there is more recommended.

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 culture is that you have to decide and take action upon what you want to learn. There are lectures and attendance is mandatory, but the rest is up to you. Teachers are easily approachable and are willing to help or answer questions. I'm not sure about engagement with local students as I followed a programme with only internationals. The main difference with the wur is that you don't have the 8 week blocks. Courses start randomly here and there can be periods where you have three courses at the same time and then you don't have any lectures for a month. The schedule changes every week and depends on what courses you want to do.

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

There are subsidized lunches that are really cheap and very tasty. There is also a wellness card with which you can do sports.

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?)

Das is the organization that organizes housing. They have many different rooms. Most internationals, including me, were placed in furnished apartments for two people close to the university. Rent is about 300 euros.

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

Finnish people are different from Dutch people. Especially in how they interact to strangers. This is not a bad thing, but it does take some time to get used to. Finnish people do not want to interact with strangers. This includes not smiling to or looking at people on the street, not talking to people while you wait in line or on the bus and keeping more physical distance. It is a more individual culture, but at the same time does this allow you to be yourself and nobody will comment on something you do or wear.

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

It is more expensive then Wageningen. Groceries are expensive and drinks are very expensive. But it is manageable. For me it helped to eat the cheap lunches at school as my "dinner" and then eat "lunch" in the evening. It also helps to not go out too much or only ordering water instead of other drinks.

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

The most common way of transport within the city is biking. There are people at the beginning of the semester selling bikes. For public transport you can buy a bus card instead of paying each time in the bus. This is cheaper. Cities in Finland are more remote. Especially in the North with Rovaniemi. This means that you would either have to rent a car (which DAS also offers) or take the train to visit other cities.

6. Free time

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

You need to visit the ice hockey games in the Lappi Arena. You can bike there, but as it is uphill you can also take a taxi. The Arktikum is a fun museum about the Arctic. Santa claus village is a 10-minute drive from Rovaniemi and there are also busses going there. Most important however, is the going into nature. There are a lot of woods around Rovaniemi where you can walk or mountainbike. You can also go cross country skiing or ice skating in the winter.

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

The ice hockey games

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

You can go out to the Half moon. There are also many restaurants in the city centre. There are some Finnish restaurants, like the pancakes restaurant, but also many international restaurants. I recommend the Vietnamese restaurant where you can have lunch during the week. There is also a Japanese bakery.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

I struggled with the freedom in studying. You need a bit more discipline to read the recommended literature. It really is about how much effort you want to put in the study. They expect you to give the 100% but I struggled with doing so.

What was your best memory abroad?

Meeting all the people. I also went on a trip with the Erasmus student association to North Lapland where I went on a husky sleigh, on a snowmobile and cross-country skiing.

8. Contact details (optional)

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