



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

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|---|---|
| Field of study in Wageningen | Environmental science (BSc Soil Water Atmosphere) |
| Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy) | 11-01-23 until 25-05-23 |
| Country (exchange) | Finland |
| City (exchange) | Helsinki |
| University (exchange) | University of Helsinki |
| Faculty (exchange) | Faculty of Science |

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I chose to go on study exchange to experience a different culture and to meet new people from around the globe. Next to that I thought it was of great value to learn something about a different climate/landscape concerning my studies.

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

The choice for Helsinki University was mainly made based on the offered courses. The university is known to have good quality courses on Atmospheric science, where my main interest is. Next to that, I wanted to go to a Nordic country because of the good high quality English education.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

In January on my way to my exchange location I travelled through Denmark and Sweden (car and train) to take the ferry from Stockholm to Helsinki. When it was time to go home, I travelled through the Baltic countries and Poland (bus and train). For me these journeys were very enjoyable, but there must be noted that Helsinki is too far to travel in one day. I chose to make small trips from my journeys to travel environmentally friendly. If you want to get to Helsinki more efficiently it is probably easier to take a plane from Schiphol.

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 | Forest and peatlands as modifiers of atmospheric composition (FOR-217) | 5 | During the course you learn about how and why plants emit BVOC's to the atmosphere and which effect this has on the atmospheric composition and air quality. | 4 | |
| 2 | Glaciology (ATM343) | 5 | The aim of the course is to understand the basics of glaciers. Energy balance and main flow laws are included. | 4 | The level of mathematics was quite high. Comparable to fluid mechanics. |
| 3 | Atmospheric General Circulation (ATM355) | 5 | Course about the general circulation of the atmosphere. How are the energies distributed around the globe. | 3 | Quite statistic approach to the atmospheric circulation. |
| 4 | Geophysics of Snow and Ice (ATM335) | 5 | Basics of snow and Ice geophysics. Learn everything about the subjects, from making the snow profiles, ice-formation, glaciers, sea ice. With short two-day excursion. | 5 | Covers all the basics of the subject but does not go into details. |
| 5 | Chemical transport Modelling I (ATM313) | 5 | During the course you make your own Biosphere-Atmosphere model. Including Meteorology, emissions, chemical reactions, aerosols and deposition. | 4 | I would recommend following part I and II |
| 6 | Chemical transport Modelling II (ATM314) | 5 | See Chemical transport modelling I | 4 | I would recommend following part I and II |

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

In general, the scheduled uni hours are way less on the University of Helsinki compared to Wageningen. You are though expected to do more work on your own. I would not say the academic level is lower because of this, especially the level of mathematics was higher in my experience. The examination mostly consisted of multiple parts, usually there was an exam together with exercise

sheets or reports/presentation you needed to do as part of your grade. All lesson material was online or available in the University library, you did not have to buy any books.

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?)

I think the university of Helsinki was similar to the WUR. The most courses were small which allowed you to engage with the teachers. Most teachers were very open and willing to talk to you. I had a lot of courses with international/exchange students which were very easy to connect with. Since Finnish people are usually a bit more closed the engagement with these students was not very good.

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

On all the University campuses there were different Uni-Cafes where you could get a complete warm meal for only €2,95. Next to that offered the university several sport locations throughout the city.

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?)

University housing is offered by HOAS and UNIHOM. If you register to the university, you apply automatically to housing, here you can indicate preference for one of the two organisations and which type of housing you would prefer. They offer shared and studio apartments.

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

In general Finnish people are more quiet and calm compared to Dutch people. They do not really like small talk and are most likely to mind their own business.

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

I would say that in general the prices are quite comparable. For my shared apartment I paid approximately the same price as in Wageningen. In supermarkets I would also spend about the same amount of money as in the Netherlands, but I found fruits and vegetables somewhat cheaper and 'unhealthy' food a bit more expensive. Alcohol was way more expensive than in the Netherlands. The same holds for going to a bar in the city centre, €8,00 is considered as a normal price for 0.5 L beer and don't be surprised to pay €10,- or more.

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 in Helsinki was very good. There is a metro line running from west to east, which runs every 3 min. To reach other parts of the city, buses and trams were available, rarely I had to wait more than 5 min. All the public transport was accessible with one card, which the university provided for you. Next to that did the university give you a

discount on public transport, cost for one month was around €40,-. Single tickets and day tickets are available on their HSL app.

6. Free time

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

In the city make sure to go to Suomenlinna and Oodi. Also are all museums free from time to time, make sure to look up when the free days are. For a day trip I would recommend going to Tallin (only a 2.5 hour boat trip away) or one of the near national parks (reachable by public transport). Next to that is it certainly worth it to make a trip to Lapland and/or Stockholm.

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

I would recommend going to Sompa Sauna, this is a public sauna next to the sea which gives you also opportunity to go ice swimming.

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

Finish culture is Sauna, there are public saunas around the city and most buildings have their own sauna. I would recommend making use of this. I also liked to go walking in all the nature areas around the city.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Living in a country abroad means you get to know a lot of new people. But my biggest challenge was missing my family and friends at home, you really get to know how much you value them.

What was your best memory abroad?

My best memories are all the beautiful trips I made and the simple things as having dinner with my roommates and neighbours.

8. Contact details (optional)

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