



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Communication and Life Sciences
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	29/08/2023 until 15/12/2023
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Finland
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Jyväskylä
<b>University (exchange)</b>	University of Jyväskylä
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Philosophy and Social Sciences

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I had heard a lot of student who had prior experiences with an exchange period being really positive about it. That got me interested, together with the fact that I really wanted to study together with one of my best friends who studies at another university. With that I also really wanted to know how it would be like really living in another country and experiencing the culture in another way than you would on holidays.

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

I had been to all Scandinavian countries before on holidays, and really liked the culture and way of living there. Only Finland was left to explore, mostly nature wise and Lapland in specific.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

I travelled by plane to Helsinki and from there on with train to Jyväskylä. There is an option to fly to all the way to Jyväskylä, but the airport is a 20 minute drive away from the city without any option of public transport. You'll have to take a taxi which is more expensive than the train tickets.

Some people have went by train, this is the more eco-friendly option, but will take way longer and costs more time.

## 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>	Ethics of Science	5	Course on different ethical viewpoints on science, really focusing on understanding and implementing the theories	3	Sometimes felt a bit too basic
<b>2</b>	Ethics of Global Responsibility	5	Course on global ethics, stimulating the thought processes on globality and what we can do ourselves to do 'good'	4	Really nice active lectures where everyone is involved
<b>3</b>	Democracy and Governance	5	Political course discussing the most influential authors, trying to link their works through different theories	4	A lot of information, but very graspable and good guidance in the course
<b>4</b>	Crises, Conflicts and Security	5	Political course focussing on geopolitical issues discussing many theories and theorists, trying to understand their way of thinking	2	Often too scientific and therefor a bit too hard to really understand
<b>5</b>	Theory of World Politics	5	Political course based on the most influential works on geopolitics answering and understanding difficult questions on conflict and alliances	4	Consists of a lot of reading, but is very rewarding to really understand the most influential political works
<b>6</b>	Contemporary Issues in Music Research	5	Music course discussing currently most researched topics, consisting of guest lectures of professors in the field	4	Very interesting to dive into many different research fields within music research, but sometimes too much on the surface

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

There is quite a lot of independent study in Finland, with very few contact hours. This really puts pressure on people's ability to plan well and organise the week properly. But everything is very doable in the set time for it. Examination is almost exclusively essay based, with several options to get feedback from the head of the course. The academic level is quite similar to the Dutch standard, although they are more willing to extend deadlines and won't give out fails very often (it seemed to me, not everybody agrees on this of course).

**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?)**

Local students are really not into international students talking to them, except for group work. But during lunchtime or any other moment they are really on themselves. Lecturers often act as being an equal to the students, in the Netherlands the hierarchy might often feel absent, but in Finland this is really the case, where everything is on first name basis.

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

There are amazing lunch facilities all over the campus. For only 2,95 you can get a full proper meal with meat, fish or a vegan option. There are several sports programs you can participate in for only around 40 euro a semester, sports like floorball, badminton and basketball are played several times during the week.

## **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?)**

You can apply for housing through the university, this is a really easy thing to do, and almost everyone got a room. The rent is a bit less than in the Netherlands with a common rent being around 300-350 euros.

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

People in Finland are really solitary and don't interact much with each other and definitely not with foreigners. They seem to be very shy to speak English. Yet, there are very helpful and very kind when you ask for help, but don't expect to make lifelong friendships with the locals. Food wise the supermarkets are very similar with the same options of food, only the vegetables are less fresh.

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

Really depending on the way of living of course, but most expenses are very similar. Lunch is very cheap compared to Wageningen, this can save a lot of money. But when you are

into drinking alcohol, your expenses can go up a lot, due to the high prices of alcohol. Except on Wednesdays when beer is only 2,50 euros.

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

Since I rented a bike there for the semester for only 69 euros I didn't make use of the public transportation. But generally to travel across the country the prices aren't too high, it just takes a very long time to get anywhere.

## 6. Free time

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

There are several hikes near the city, those are worthy of doing. Especially in the beginning of the semester this is a really nice way to meet and get to know people better. The ice hockey matches of the local team are a must see as well, there is an amazing atmosphere in the hall and is really a Finnish experience. Everything in the city is doable by bike, so make sure to get one.

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

To be quite honest, Jyväskylä does not have to that much regarding sightseeings. But it is a very central city for Finnish understanding, providing the option to visit many other cities throughout the country.

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

Each Wednesday is student prices night in the bar Revolution, here a lot of exchange students come. For the weekend the others clubs like Freetime and Escape are a very good option for going out. Although many are not very satisfied with the drinks there regarding the prices.

## 7.Challenges & best moment abroad

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

One of my hardest challenges was to focus on the studies, it is really easy to just relax and party due to the few contact hours. But after a while I had lunch at the library with a group of people, which really helped me getting more invested in the studies. Furthermore there where not a lot of struggles, because everything is very easy to manage in my experience.

**What was your best memory abroad?**

My best memories are going on trips with the people I met there, once we rented a boat to see the archipelago around Turku which was just a great experience, and very affordable because of the cheap Airbnb prices in Finland. Also the trips we made to Lapland are very memorable, due to the astonishing landscapes and things to do.

## 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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