



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	15-08-2023 until 16-12-2023
Exchange destination: University	University of Lapland
Faculty	Social sciences
Country	Finland
City	Rovaniemi

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to live on my own abroad for a few months and meet people from different nationalities.

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

Because I was intrigued by the arctic environment and the cultures living there, which I could study in the Arctic Studies Program of this university. I also wanted to live in Lapland to experience the climate and nature, and to see the northern lights.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

I think the flights are cheaper if you book in advance. It's also possible to go by bus and boat.

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	<i>Introduction to the Arctic</i>	5	We learnt about different topics concerning the arctic, such as what is considered 'the arctic', what is the environment like, and issues concerning the people living there	3	The content was very broad and that was a good thing, to have a bit more of an idea what the arctic is and what it contains. But every lecture was a different teacher and it was a bit chaotic
2	<i>Arctic Ecosystems and Adaptation of Species to Arctic Environment</i>	5	About how different species cope with living in the arctic environment. Also about the ecosystem as a whole	4	This was one of my favourite courses because I learned a lot of new things. The only critique is that the lectures weren't presented in the best way, it was sometimes a bit monotonous
3	<i>Arctic Governance and Law</i>	5	About different kinds of regulations and political issues going on in the arctic regions, both on land and water	4	The teachers on this course were better, they had more experience in giving lectures.
4	<i>Peoples and Cultures of the Arctic</i>	5	About the Sámi, for example reindeer herding and their culture	2	There was no structure of the course, the main assignment could have been more interesting (now it was writing reviews for articles)
5	Human Rights and Security of the Arctic	5	About cultural heritage law, food resilience and sovereignty and human security	3	Some lectures were online. But the final assignment challenged me to learn more about the topic.
6	Indigenous (Sámi) Spirituality and Religious Beliefs	5	Learned about animism and other aspects of Sámi spirituality and belief system, and issues concerning the tourism industry and cultural appropriation	5	I loved the excursions of this course, bringing theory to life. The assignments were also good.

What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

The academic level felt easier than at my home university, for example the example questions were less challenging than at home. The study forms is as following: lectures, followed by groupwork or group presentations and a final assignment/essay/exam. The workload was good, not too little and not too much. The lectures were not teachers but researchers, so often the lectures could be better. It was often the researcher just reading the text on the powerpoint.

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 lectures are very approachable, you could always just ask a question after a lecture or send an email, starting with an informal 'hei'. The engagement with local students was minimal, only existent when having groupwork with them. Differences with the WUR is mainly the organisation and structure, at the WUR the teachers are more clear with what they expect from you and what you have to do.

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

The best thing of Lapland University is that they offer very good lunches for merely 2,95. It consists of bread, a salad bar, 3 main options and a drink. Other beneficials of being a student in Finland were the possibility to have cheap sport facilities, an ESN program, and other non-university related activities.

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?

for housing you have to sign up to DAS and submit your budget, location and preferences, then they will offer you a room/studio (depending on preferences). There were various options with different price ranges, with the most common being a shared appartement (with two or three people) for 333 euro.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

One of the main differences with the Netherlands is the interaction between strangers. Fins will rarely make small talk with people they meet on the street they don't know. They are very attached to their (physical and emotional) personal space, interacting mainly with their own friend groups and family. But they are generally very polite and kind when you ask them for help. The cuisine is varied. One of the big things is sausages, which are often grilled on the campfires. Outdoor activities and saunas are also a big part of the culture.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?) Students mainly use bikes. I don't know a lot about public transport, but the bus I took a few times was only a couple of euros and was on time. There are bus stops in all necessary

places. But the best way to go around is by bike. There's also the possibility to rent a car from DAS for a reasonable price, especially if you share the cost.

6. Expenses

Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.

Ticket there:

Visa if applicable:

Vaccinations if applicable:

Insurances (extra, if applicable):

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 333

Groceries: higher

Public transport: higher

Restaurant/going out for dinner:

Daytrips/sight-seeing:

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Frozen waterfall hike Kourouma, you have to rent a car to get there. But really fun to go in the winter because you can slide down downhill. Ounasvaara, camping at laavus, you can go there by bike. Kansan and Half moon club to go out.

Inari to visit the Sámi museum. Ice hole swimming. Ice skating.

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

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

Make friends and do things together. Kansan and half moon are nice places to party.

Rosso has really nice pizza's.

Every Thursday there is an international evening in Monde, with table tennis, pool, boardgames and arts and crafts materials. Once a week there is also a laavu night, bring your own food and drinks and grill on the campfire with the other students

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

Loneliness at the beginning. I encountered it by keep trying to find my people, which I did. But it took a while and at the beginning it was difficult sometimes.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

all the fun and cosy nights with my friends, having fun in the snow and getting warm after inside.

9. Contact details (optional)

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