

## FINLANDE – Åbo Akademi University

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<sup>1</sup> To update the agenda just click right on your mouse



## I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

Overall, I had a great experience. Finland is very different from France and it is quite “dépayçant”, that is one of the reasons why I chose to come here. So, if you want to step out of your comfort zone, it is the right choice for you. Finnish culture was really interesting to discover, and Turku is a really cute city, it isn't too big nor too small either, just the perfect size I would say. Also, if you want to travel around and discover northern Europe, Turku (and Finland in general) is a great place to be. However, if there would be one negative point about my semester it would be the choice of courses at Uni. The choice wasn't great, and I got refused two courses, so I had to choose more by “default”. That being said, you are going on an Erasmus more for the experience than the actual courses themselves.

**GRADE : 4**

**=> 0 (I do not recommend this semester abroad to my best friend) - 5 (I totally recommend this semester to my best friend)**

## II. Before the travel

### A. Preparation

#### 1. Visa

No need for any visa.

#### 2. The flight

On my outbound I flew from Paris CDG to Helsinki with Air France and then took a train from Helsinki to Turku (the Finnish SNCF is called VR trains). Finnish trains are cheap if you book them in advance (the prices start at 5€). I paid around 180€ for the flight including 30kg of luggage.

On my return journey I took a train from Turku to Helsinki and then I flew from Helsinki to Paris Beauvais with Ryanair. I paid around 100€ for the flight including 40 kg of luggage.

#### 3. My luggage

Take warm clothes! The first week I arrived it was like -10°C to -17°C all week so be prepared! Also, if you plan to go to Lapland, you will need warm clothes. So don't forget:

- Thermal underwear
- A really warm coat
- Gloves & a hat

- I would recommend snow boots because it can get really snowy and slippery but I have some friends that didn't take any so that's up to you.
- A swimming costume (you will be doing a lot of saunas)

#### 4. Bank account

Finland has the Euro so no need to change anything.

#### 5. Insurance

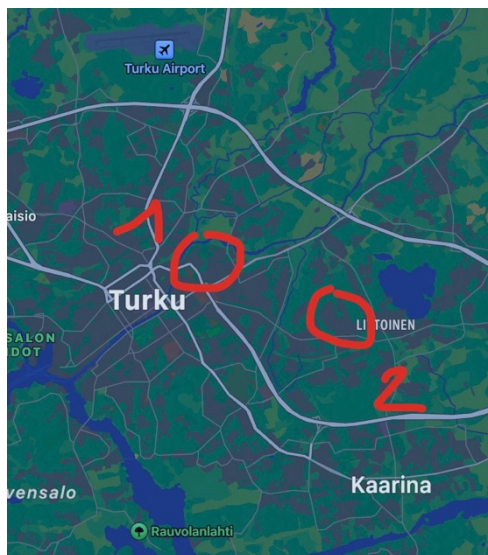
I didn't need to take a new insurance I only did a "Avenant séjour pour études" with my normal insurance.

### B. Housing

#### 1. Where to live

You have two choices of student housing in Turku:

- **The student village** (number 1 on the map) which is located close to the center, you have your own bathroom and bedroom but share a kitchen with your floor (around 10 people).
- **Iltakajo** (number 2 on map) which is more in the suburbs, it is around 20/30 min bus ride from the center and it's only shared flats of 2 or 3 people.



I lived in Iltakajo and it was a good choice for me because I became really close with my roommate and I really loved living with her. She became one of my closest friends. I also had a little group of friends from Iltakajo and we would often hang out together in each other's apartments. However, when you want to go out and party, living in Iltakajo is not great because on weekdays the latest bus is at half past midnight, so you have to take an

uber or sleep at your friend's place in the student village. On Friday and Saturday evening the last bus is at 2:30 a.m.

Overall, if you want to party a lot then definitely go to the student village but if you're more "chill", you don't mind taking the bus and want something that is more like a real home then go to Iltakajo.

## 2. Find a flat or a room

The great thing with going to Finland is that their "CROUS" system (which is called TYS) is way better than in France so all you have to do is enroll on the TYS website and you're pretty much guaranteed to have an appartement without providing much effort. You will then receive one or two housing offers that you can accept or decline. I enrolled as soon as the applications opened and received an offer beginning of November I think.

## 3. Cost

The rent for any TYS apartment is around 350€ a month (including furniture, electricity, sauna and water).

### III. When I arrive at the university

#### A. Inscription at the university

I don't remember exactly the process but I just remember there was a lot of things to do but that will be the same anywhere you go so just make a list and good luck ☺

#### B. Information on the university

1. Class
2. Organization of the Class
3. List of courses and recommendation

- **Information architecture and strategies:** the volume of work for this class was really little. You don't have to spend a lot of time on this course. You have to do one group project and one final exam. There wasn't a lot of lectures either (4 lectures of 1h30 in total I think). The course in itself wasn't that interesting but I still learnt a lot concerning websites and information systems during the group project.

- **Development of digital services:** this course was more interesting than information architecture and strategies but not very well structured and there was a lot of work



(weekly group projects + lecture reflections + a final group project and video). The teacher wasn't very well organized and not very clear sometimes. I would recommend you pick the course usability testing if you're interested in information systems and website planning ect.

- **Sustainable business:** I think this was one of my favorite courses. There is quite a lot of lectures, but you don't need to learn them by heart as you do for Moma. There is no final written exam but lots of little deadlines (three group projects + two individual essays). My team was really great and we worked really well so that also influenced my judgment for this course. It is easy to have a 4 or 5 in this course if you do your work correctly. Overall, this course is quite demanding because you have quite a bit of work (but you will have plenty of time to do it don't worry) and I would recommend it.

- **Climate change in the Baltic Sea Region:** This course is an online course with the open university. You have weekly deadlines (quizzes or mini essays) that count for 30% and a final essay that counts for 70%. I learnt a lot when preparing my final essay but I would still not recommend this course.

- **Democracy :** If you're interested in political sciences then definitely pick this course. The teacher is great, and the topic is very interesting. You have no final exam just essays to do about articles and books. I would recommend.

- **Policy processes in the EU :** The volume of work for this course is also little. You have one essay to write of 3 600 words (around 15 pages with bibliography, cover page ect) and you don't have any lectures only checkup meetings. I wrote about a topic that I was really interested in so I really enjoyed working on my essay. I would also recommend.

#### 4. Exam

I only did one "examen sur table" when I was there the rest was essays, presentations or group work. The "examen sur table" I did was quite easy, you had 4 hours but actually only needed 1h30/2h. If you learned the course, then there was no problem. Teachers in Finland really want to see their students succeed so they will not be nasty and give you a subject you barely talked about. You also have three chances to redo the exam.

Grades are from 0 to 5 (0 you fail, 1 you pass, ..., 5 is excellent). Most of the time, if you put the effort into it is quite easy to have a 4 or 5.

#### IV. When I live there

##### A. Safety

Finland is the safest place I have ever been too in my life. Of course, there are still a couple of strange people around but it's 1/10 of what there is in Montpellier or in France in general.

## B. Phone and Internet

I had a phone contract that included Europe so no need to change. I also had a router in my apartment for WIFI.

## C. Events

Follow ESN Uni Turki and ESN Åbo Akademi on Instagram they will be organizing events during the semester.

## D. Sports

You can enroll with Campus sports. It's around 50€ for the semester and you have everything unlimited (gym, collective courses such as Pump or Zumba and collective sports such as Basketball ext). Go and check the website if you have a specific sport in mind but there is a lot of choice and you can try everything, there is no obligation to continue the sport you have started for the whole semester because you book them online one by one.

## E. Eating

The university restaurants are really nice and they are all vegetarian and vegan friendly. A meal costs 2,9€ which includes a hot meal, unlimited starters (salads ext), bread and water. There are a lot around the city but I would definitely recommend you go to Kulma, it's my favorite ! It's really modern and fancy inside, the food is nice and it's in the center of Turku + you can eat outside when it's spring (yes yes you will be eating outside in spring).

Apart from uni restaurants, you have to eat at the market hall and don't forget to ask for student discounts! You also have to try Hesburger (the finish Mcdonald's).

## F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

Because I lived in Iltakajo I had a bus card which was around 35€ a month but if you live in the student village no need for a bus card you can do everything on foot. To go to Uni I would take bus 32 or 42 and then walk maybe 8 min from the bus stop to Uni. Buses are really regular, there is one every 10 minutes.

## G. Travels

I travelled around a lot. I have been to Lapland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia and Latvia.



Honestly, I would recommend every single trip I did but my two favorites were Lapland and Norway. I only did one “organized” trip with ESN which was Lapland and the rest I organized myself (it was way cheaper that way). If you want a short and cheap trip then go to Tallinn in Estonia, you can go there and back from Turku for 40€ and sleep in a cheap hostel for 10€ a night.

#### H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

You will really not have a lot of courses compared to MOMA. I had in average two courses a week and I never had more than 10 hours a week, which felt really weird at first but it was actually perfect because it left me lots of time to prepare my master’s applications (pass the score IAE message and TAGE MAGE), internship applications, organize trips, ect.

#### V. After your semester abroad

##### A. What are you planning do to?

This summer I will be doing a three-month internship (from June to August) in retail at Montblanc in Paris and then I am starting my master’s degree in September.

##### B. Did you apply for master?

I actually passed both the TAGE MAGE and score IAE Message for masters so if you have any questions about applications (both for Business Schools and IAE), I would be happy to help you if I can.

I realized I didn’t want to do a PGE because I really wanted to specialize myself so I finished by accepting an offer from Skema Business School for their MSc in Global Luxury Management in dual degree with NYU School of professional studies.

If you want more information about my Erasmus, master or masters in Luxury management I would be happy to discuss it with you (I did a looooooooooooooooooof of research about masters haha).

