

[FINLANDE] – [Laurea Leppävaara]

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¹ To update the agenda just click right on your mouse

I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

[Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back in time, would you go to this university and why ?]

It was a good experience abroad, although I remain a little ambivalent.

I loved the country itself: Finns are very attached to nature (the forest, lakes, saunas...), and that's something that really appealed to me.

But the Finns themselves are not very sociable, I didn't make many friends, and the university didn't help because most of the classes/assignments were video conferences and homework.

The city of Helsinki itself is very beautiful, but quite cold: people don't party much, restaurants close quite early...

On the other hand, it's possible to travel to Lapland and even to other countries/cities close to Finland for very little money (I went to Tallinn, Stockholm, etc.).

Personally, I really enjoyed this semester abroad, but I don't think it's what most people are looking for in an Erasmus semester. But if that's the case, then I recommend it.

GRADE : 3.5

GRADE : [a grade between 0 and 5]

=> 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

[Help : Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?]

You don't need a visa to go to Finland.

2. The flight

[Help : what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket]

I traveled to Paris by train, and flew from Paris Charles de Gaulle to Helsinki Vantaa with FINNAIR. I booked my tickets a month or so in advance.

3. My luggage

[Help : what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)]

Honestly, I don't have any particular comments, except that it's important to bring winter clothes (not just a thick jacket, but also thermal clothing, gloves, and maybe a mask to cover your nose, mouth, and neck). A special pair of shoes for the snow (boots or other footwear) is also something to consider. One last thing: if you're staying with HOAS, remember to bring a sleep mask, as their shutters let in light most of the time.

4. Bank account

[Help : did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.]

You don't have to change bank in Finland.

5. Insurance

[Help : What insurance did you subscribe to ?]

B. Housing

1. Where to live

[Help : Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)]

Honestly, the country itself is very safe and I haven't had any problems anywhere. I recommend living right next to the university in Leppävaara, or directly in Helsinki to enjoy the city, as there are few in-person classes and it's only about a 20-minute train ride away.

2. Find a flat or a room

[Help : How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation]

The best way to find a furnished apartment for relatively little money is to go through HOAS (similar to the Finnish CROUS). Fill in your details on the website, apply in advance, and you are sure to receive an apartment offer.

3. Cost

[Help : How much should I plan for a room or a flat?]

HOAS is reasonably priced compared to other apartments in Finland, as the cost of living there in terms of real estate is higher than in France. I still paid €550 for a large room with an en-suite bathroom, but I shared the kitchen with my roommates. Expect to pay between €450 and €650 at the very least.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

[Help : How was the process, what did you have to do?]

It is a relatively simple process explained on the first day of class, similar to other universities.

B. Information on the university

1. Class

[Help : for each class tell us how was the class, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?]

Service design is a subject involving group work (randomly formed groups, with other Finnish students). Heavy workload, not a very interesting subject.
Digital marketing and sales: same thing, group work, but each group worked directly with a Finnish company, which was much more interesting.
Data-driven decision making: a big business game like the ones we do at MOMA, but longer and more elaborate. It wasn't bad.
Corporate social responsibility: a subject that was completely at home, nice but just a series of big quizzes.
I can't really recommend it or not, because it was the only subject available for our semester, and I'm afraid it will be the same for the 2026 semester.

2. Organization of the Class

[Help : tell us the duration of the class, the volum of work, the behavior of teachers etc. ?]

The workload isn't huge; it depends on the subjects. I was at university two or three days a week, which isn't very much, and the length of university classes is similar to France, although sometimes a little longer: for some subjects, you can spend the whole day on them.

As for the professors, I didn't find them particularly competent, perhaps a little less so than in France. However, working with business professionals was more stimulating.

3. List of courses and recommendation

[Help : list your different courses and let us know what do you think : level (easier, same or harder than the 1st semester course at MOMA, what you liked about the content, how is the class organization, who is the professor). Finally, for each class, tell us if you recommend the course.]

All of them are easier than the first semester course at MOMA, and I gave all these details in the B1 part.

4. Exam

[Help : How was the exam? Format? Duration? Grade]

The exams were either group oral exams or online quizzes, except for data-driven decision making, where we had to write long graded summaries explaining why we had made certain decisions in the business game. Grades are simpler than in France, ranging from 1 to 5.

IV. When I life there

A. Safety

[Help : Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid]

The country is very safe.

B. Phone and Internet

[Help : How to be able to call and have internet]

It depends on your internet plan: personally, I had data allowance abroad with my plan, but that's not the case for everyone. A good option is to get a Finnish SIM card with data allowance and a Finnish phone number that allows you to send messages and make calls.

For Wi-Fi, if you are staying at HOAS, it is included in the rent, but you must purchase a router to enable it in your room.

C. Events

[Help : How to know about the events?]

Follow ESN Laureamko on Instagram, they often organize events; everything is explained there.

D. Sports

[Help : What sport can I do ? and how?]

Ice hockey is very popular there, but otherwise it's just like France: there are swimming pools, you can go running, play tennis...

E. Eating

[Help : Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. an international house buffet)]

The university cafeteria is very good. It costs \$2.90 for students, and the meals are relatively good and plentiful. You can go to the one in Helsinki (UniCafe) when you can, which is even better for the same price.

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

[Help : How did you get access to the bus, car or bike]

I went in the university by train. Everything is done with HSL, which is a bit like the Finnish SNCF, except that HSL takes care of everything: buses, trains, boats, trams... It costs around €3.50 for a ticket that is valid for all these modes of transport for an hour and a half. I recommend getting a monthly pass for €65. It's expensive, but it quickly pays for itself, as you can travel anywhere as much as you like.

G. Travels

[Help : What do you recommend and what do you not recommend]

Going to Lapland is expensive, but I highly recommend it. It's a magical trip, the atmosphere, the northern lights, it's truly magical and well worth the price. It's a little cheaper to go with the university by bus, which is what I did. Otherwise, you can go to Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Estonia/Lithuania/Latvia... these are all beautiful trips and, since you're close by, they're not that expensive. For example, I went to Stockholm and Tallinn by boat, and it was amazing. I mean, the trip was great, Stockholm was great, but I wouldn't necessarily recommend Tallinn. Even though it's very cheap, I didn't really enjoy it.

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

[Help : What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time]

V. After your semester abroad

A. What are you planning do to?

[Help : What do you want to do next year]

I'm going to continue my studies with a master's degree at MOMA.

B. Did you apply for master?

[Help : in which master where you accepted]

I have been accepted into the Master's program "Marketing du sport et des loisirs" at MOMA, and that is where I will be studying next year.

[remember to fill in the excel : <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11-vB4ABdkzIJR1AQ82drWyAVXfnCpRYr8COkeKihnIs/edit?usp=sharing>]