

Personal report
Kuopio - Finland
Itä-Suomen yliopisto (University of Eastern Finland)
Environmental Sciences

I decided to apply for the ERASMUS+ because it offered the opportunity to live in another country and to learn the culture of it while studying. Furthermore, it offered the opportunity to be acquainted with the education system of another country and in my case, to know about its approach towards environmental and natural resources management.

I chose two Nordics countries as my options for the ERASMUS+. One of them was Itä-Suomen yliopisto (University of Eastern Finland) located in Finland. Nordics countries have always caught my attention due to their social and economic development, and also their innovation. I never been before in any of the Nordics countries, so for me, it was clear that I wanted to go there.

When I received a positive answer from the International Relations Office at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg, I started to apply to the host university. The application process was really clear, so I did not have any problem. However, the time I waited for a positive reply was long. During that time, I did not know what to do. If I was going to Finland, I needed to extend my visa in advance, leave my room in Germany, apply for a room in Finland, buy the airplane ticket and winter clothes, etc. When I received the letter of acceptance from the host university, I was really happy and relieved, so I immediately started to do all the things I needed to do.

For the accommodation, I applied with the company recommended by the university. I waited a while, but I did not receive any offer of accommodation from them, so I decided to write them. They offered me a place located really far from the university although I had not apply to it. Moreover, they offered me that place from August to December, but I clearly applied from September to December. The company told me that they did not had any other place available and according to their policy, I had to rent and pay the room from August to December!!! I did not have any other option so I accepted. This policy of the company was really bad not only for me, but for all the students that I talked to.

The University of Eastern Finland is located in Kuopio, a Finnish city, 390 km from Helsinki. I took a direct flight to Helsinki and there, I changed to a flight to Kuopio. I arrived a Sunday, and the student in charge of me, picked me from the airport and took me to my place. This was located in a beautiful residential zone, surrounded by lakes and nature. My room was big and I had my own bathroom and Wi-Fi connection. I shared the kitchen with other 15 people and the monthly rent was approximately €325.



Studying at the University of Eastern Finland was amazing!!! It was big, and also surrounded by lakes and nature. My lectures started in the middle of October and ended on December, so I had plenty of free time on September and half of October. The Finnish educational system is different from the German. Most of my lectures required a presentation, but it was not graded. The only grade that matter was the final exam. Contrary to Germany, a 5 is the best grade that you can get and 1 is the worst.



For my free time, I enrolled in the sports offered by the university. The Finnish people love to do sports, so the sports offer was the best I have ever tried. I tried new sports like Zumba, Pump, HIIT, etc. Moreover, during my free time I travelled to the neighboring countries of Finland. I had the opportunity to go to Norway, Estonia, Russia and Sweden. Of course, I also travelled around Finland. I visited Koli National Park, Orinoron Rotko, and of course, Finnish Lapland!!! The Finnish cities I visited apart from Kuopio were Helsinki, Lappeenranta, Mikkeli, Oulu, Rovaniemi, and Tampere.



When I remember Finland, only excellent memories come to my mind. Finland is an amazing country with plenty of nature, lakes and amazing people. Finnish people are really polite, and most of them speaks English, so for me the language was not a problem at all. Finland is a really cold country, I remember that on October 25th, it already started to snow!!! I came from a country where we have the same climate all the year, so for me this climate was totally new and amazing. Most of the people get depressed with a climate like this, but I enjoyed every day I was there, and every snowflake I touched.

Finally, ERASMUS+ was the best decision I have ever taken!!! It helped me to develop new skills of competence and qualification that are vital for the modern labor market. Furthermore, it was an opportunity to live in another country and to learn from another culture. I have always thought that everything happens for a reason, so Finland and specially the University of Eastern Finland, was the best thing that could happened to me!!! Kiitos!!!