

Finland, Turku, Turun Yliopisto (Turku School of Economics), ERASMUS+

That report is just written for you. It is just written to give you the opportunity for a short look into a new world which you want to see and enter in the future. Additionally, it is written for you as a tool to prepare yourself in the easiest way! So I will take my time for that **to explain you the preparation (planning, organisation and applying to the host university), accommodation, studying at the host university, the daily life and free time of my exchange in Turku, Finland.**

It is hard to picture areas with no people because of the rights (recommendation for that report). But I gave my best to picture you a few places to give you a little impression of Turku, although pictures are just a small view!

First of all, I am a student who of course likes to have a good time with family and friends and who likes to enjoy the life. But I am also a person that is striving for greatness! And I also like to do some sports - go jogging, playing football (soccer) and do some intensive body exercises (Freeletics).

Second of all, I did not really have a lot of pre knowledge about Turku or Finland at all before. And I also have never been there before. My motivation to go there started actually because of my family and friends who have been a couple of times in Sweden and Norway and they told me that Scandinavian countries are so worth it to go there. But since there was no offer for my course (Business Administration and Engineering) from my home University with ERASMUS+ to go to Sweden or Norway, I could not go there. For Turku, Finland was an offer and since I heard that living in Finland is a kind of the same than a Scandinavian country because of the big influences of Sweden (Swedish is the second national language), I decided to go there. And I also heard before that in Finland are as pretty women as in Sweden!

So all in all, I was a student who did enter a new world with no clue what will happen, but with the inner calmness that everything will be fine because of the motivation to get to know the Scandinavian countries and Finland!

The **preparation** was honestly not that difficult, but a lot. But I followed the time schedule from the home international office and when you have still the same time schedule you will see: When you solve everything in time it is just a few little assignments per day or week. It is like climbing a hill with a lot of breaks. At the end you are on the hill without big stress - when you do everything in time!

Since I heard that Scandinavian countries COULD BE expensive, I **planned** and calculated some costs that might come to see whether it is too expensive or not. I will let you know the costs more in detail in the daily life part later on. I do not really planned a lot more on that point of time.

As I already wrote one step back about the time schedule, I do not really had to **organise** a lot, because there was no need to! The main body of my trip was really well organised by the international office from the home Uni, so I could just work on the assignments I got.

So let us go to the next little point of preparation: the **applying at the host university**. It is actually really easy as well. We had to choose five Unis and sort them from the most favourite Uni to less favourite Unis we want to go. And since there was no choice for me to go to other Scandinavian countries or Finnish Unit, Turku was my first choice and blessedly, I was picked!

The next point is the **accommodation**. Everything I needed to know about that was written on the internet page from the host Uni. And I got also helpful news from the host international office as well! I do not wanted to live somewhere in the city alone, but to live alone in a student apartment to get to know others. I could choose between Student Village and Retrodorm and finally, I picked Retrodorm. In **Retrodorm** are student apartments for exchange students. You can have your own room for one person and you share the kitchen, the living room and also the shower room (just the shower, not the bathroom!) with others on the same floor. You share the floor with 18 other exchange students. I lived there for four month and **my evaluation** is:

You can live there with a really low rent in comparison to other apartments in Finland! You also have wifi and I did not need to bring or buy anything for the kitchen, except for food and drinks. Also looking into my room, there was a table with chair, enough space in the wardrobe and a blanket and pillow for the bed. So everything necessary was there! It is not the fanciest Accommodation, but it was so magnificent to live there for four month!

It is so great to get to know people from all over the world in Retrodorm so easily! Although I did not spend time with people from my floor so often because I found great buddies in my faculty, it was amazing to talk to them in the evening or sometimes to hang around with them in the living room or kitchen.

So all in all, it was great to have the possibility to live there.

About Student Village I cannot really tell something.

The following point is about **studying at the host university in Turku**. The host University and the host International Office are really structured, organised and furthermore, they are really friendly and dedicated! So from the beginning they helped me and gave me a really comfortable feeling in every case during and after the whole stay! During the whole stay was no problem at all and I am sure that if there would have been a problem, they would have helped me without hesitating!

The whole system they are using in that University is really modern and user-friendly. For example the registration for courses is really easy. You can also go to the Uni with your chip card 24/7. I could choose between a lot of courses in English and I also took a Finnish and a Swedish course. Both for beginners. The semester is divided into two periods. So you just have to focus on a couple of courses for two month with an exam period after that. Right after you can pick a few other courses with the next exam period two month later. Since the teachers are really friendly (you ask them things by the first name, not surname(!)) and since there was also a lot of group work for me, the courses were really easy to handle and you just had to concentrate on a few courses at the same time! Btw on the next picture is the Turku School of Economics where I studied. It is a separated big building. It was great to study there and you see many people again and again, so you can get to know a lot of people really easily!



So let us come to **the daily life in Turku** as an exchange student. Since I got my permission to study in Turku, I got a Finnish tutor who took care of me and two other exchange students. She is in my age and studies also in my faculty (Turku School of Economics). It is really amazing that I was able to get in touch with her. I could ask her about issues and it is superb to have someone in

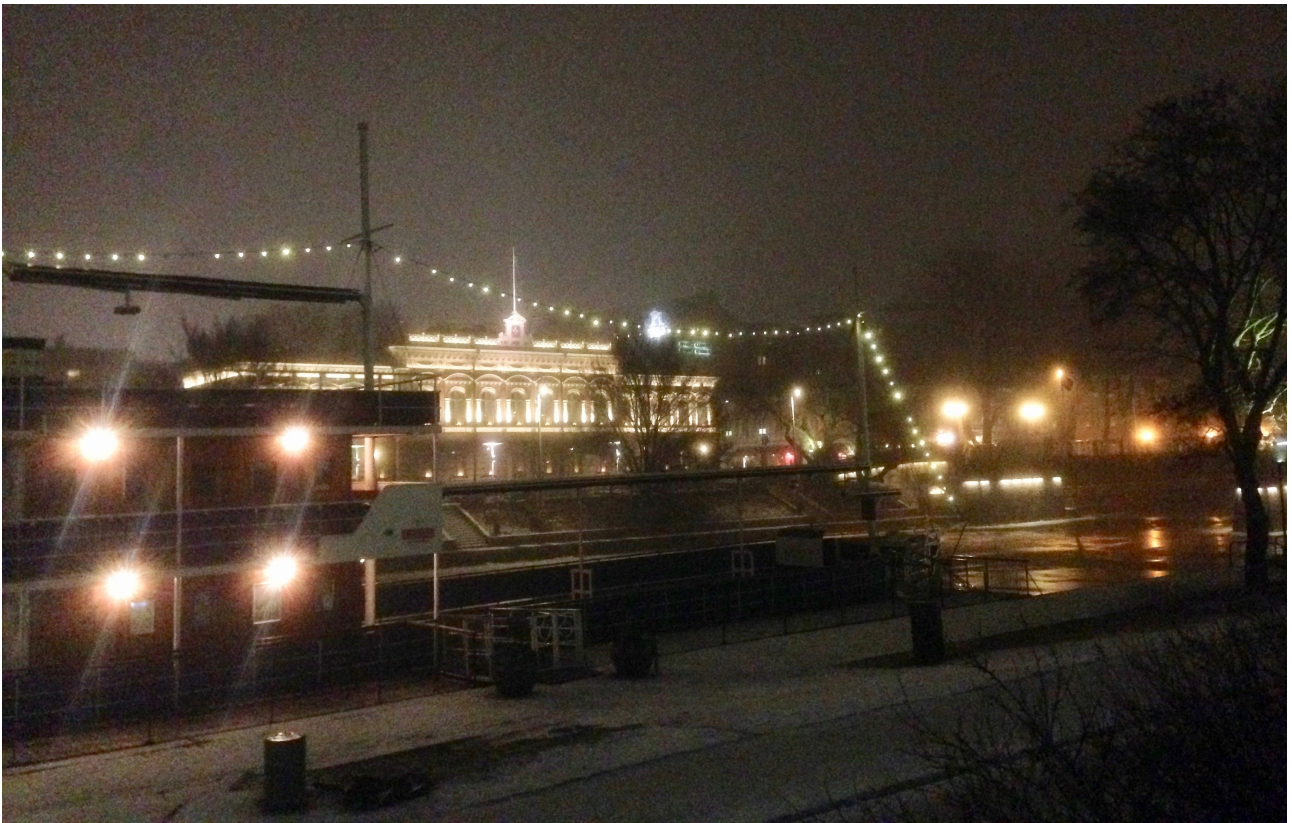
Turku to talk to before and during your stay in Turku. Additionally, she also gave us some information of events and information of good places to visit.

When I arrived in Turku, there was an Orientation Week with helpful information and a lot of events. Also after the Orientation Week during the whole semester are many awesome events! Although I studied a lot (I mentioned I strive for greatness!), there was also a lot of time for me to participate on several events! In general, the Turku School of Economics is the biggest faculty together with the faculty of medicine and the faculty of law. And furthermore, the Uni itself is one of the best Unis in whole Finland. So they have a lot of possibilities and also the money to prepare a lot of great and unforgettable events! It is hard to describe them in a few words, but honestly, all events are part in my list of the best events I have ever experienced! It is not just going into a club there. They are really creative and have party committees who are planning events the whole study year. At least the Turku School of Economics and the faculty of law have their own houses each. Not just the faculty building, but also a big family house with a dance floor and bar and so on. At least in the Turku School of Economics house is also a sauna! In the other houses of the other faculties I have not really been, so I cannot say many things about them.

Let us mention the cost part quite short. The prices in Turku are similar to the prices in Germany. The prices of food and drinks are similar (except for alcohol - alcohol is more expensive). There are also Lidl's like in Germany. And the costs of the events are not that high. It is because the most events are organised by the faculty or the Uni.

The Uni also offers a lot of sport activities. I did football (soccer) training in the Turku School of Economics. There are playing on a quite good level. Since I played soccer as a high-performance sport, I can say that.

Turku in general is a beautiful city! There is a castle and some really great areas! Especially in the night looks the city centre amazing! Here is one picture to express it just a bit. Although it is a bit dark, you can also see a boat and a river in front in the picture.



Through whole Turku flows a river and that causes a good atmosphere! You can see the river better in the next picture.



Turku is directly at the Baltic Sea. Turku has for example a harbour with a direct ferry connection to Stockholm. Additionally, Turku has an air port and you can take cheap buses from Turku to other cities (e.g. two hours to Helsinki).

To give you a short view into my daily life: I walked/went jogging from Retrodorm to the University in the morning through a park. There is also the football stadium (soccer) and one of the ice hockey stadiums. You can see a football training field on the next picture and the stadiums in the background.



Then I usually studied until the evening or night or went to an event when I already finished my workload for the day!

By the way: The Uni food is really good! And since the government pays partly the food, one lunch is 2,60€. For that you get two glasses and one to two plates. You can fill the glasses with water, milk, butter milk or soya milk or juice. On the plate(s) you can put salad from the salad bar and you can create your own main menu with a lot of variation. But you can also take a soup. And then, there is also a bread bar where you can choose between different fresh bread types and butter types.

The next and the last point is about **free time in Turku**. I already mentioned a lot about that in the previous point (the point daily life in Turku), but I will still let you know some facts about that.

Turku is a student city. There are 40.000 students. So there are a lot of possibilities to do in your free time. You can go out every day if you want and the people are really friendly. And also in general:

Everyone is actually speaking English and they try to help you! Especially when they find out that you are an exchange student, they are really interested and they try to help you!

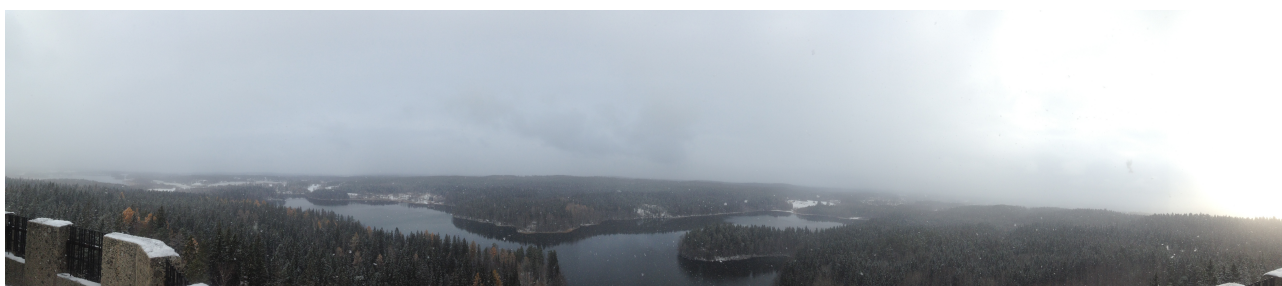
The people are in general a bit reserved, because they respect each others privacy. It was so wonderful and a new experience to see how Finnish people treat others! I am used that people see themselves above others like the motto: "At first there is me, then the others". In Finland it is

different. The people do not see themselves above others. They see themselves on the same level and it also does not really matter whether you are rich or not. They just focus on other things. The same applies to stress. Finns do not like to discuss about religions or politics. They focusing on other things. They also accept other opinions. Instead they are just focusing on they own actions, their families and friends and try to treat others well!

And that and so many other experiences were so worth it to go there!

For example on the next picture you see the landscape of Hämeenlinna. We were so lucky that our tutor invited us for a weekend trip to Hämeenlinna (one hour driving distance). It is her home town and she showed us the nature and invited us to lunch and dinners to her family places.

Furthermore, she also let us sleep there!



So all in all, before my exchange I heard so many other exchange students speaking about a great time abroad. So I tried it. And now after my exchange I can agree with that! I am honestly really grateful for that exchange! And I am so grateful for the host University (especially Turku School of Economics) to give me such a great time and unforgettable awesome memories!

It is hard to describe all experiences in such a few words - even in general. It is like watching a great movie and describing it to someone who has not seen it yet. But if you feel like going there, I can honestly tell you like my family and friends told me before: It is so worth it.

And if I would not have liked it I would maybe not plan to find a possibility go to a Scandinavian country for my next exchange, for example to Sweden or Norway.