

A person with a red backpack and a straw hat is seen from the back, looking towards a train. The train is white with a red stripe and is moving along a track. The background is slightly blurred, showing a clear sky and some greenery.

EUROPE AND NORDIC COUNTRIES

Departure Orientation
International Education Services
13.10.2026



AGENDA AND TOPICS OF THE SESSION

- Before the exchange
 - Feelings and expectations
 - Learning goals
 - Insurance
 - EHIC
 - Student exchange terms and conditions
- Abroad
 - Culture shock
 - Changes to your LA
 - Different way of studying
 - Health and safety
- Returning home
 - Important documents and credit transfer
 - Making use of your exchange experience



PART 1: BEFORE THE EXCHANGE





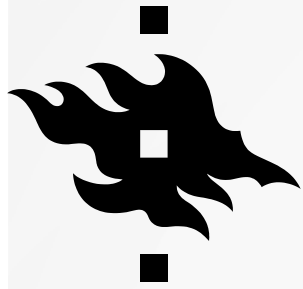
FEELINGS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Do you expect to experience a change in your life during your stay abroad?
- Does change stress you out, excite you or something else?
- Expectations are necessary, they can motivate and excite you
- You may also feel anxious – it's normal



SET LEARNING GOALS FOR THE EXCHANGE

- Goals help you track your own learning and analyse what skills you have acquired, and how your attitude towards the world around you may have changed.
- Examples of goals
 - Improving academic expertise
 - New interactions and networks with experts in your study field
 - Development of language, interaction and cooperation skills: you'll know how to work in a multilingual and multicultural environment
 - Increased self-awareness, confidence and flexibility
 - You'll have developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills
 - You can follow your progress, for example, by keeping a learning diary. Be sure to start the process before leaving for the exchange and continue after returning!



INSTRUCTIONS – STUDY ABROAD

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI FLAMMA

SUOMI SVENSKA LOG IN

 STUDIES SERVICE
STUDIES.HELSENKI.FI

Q
SEARCH

FRONTPAGE MY STUDIES INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS COURSES SISU ↗ SERVICES AND TOOLS ▼

[Home](#) / [Instructions for students](#) /

STUDY ABROAD

Select degree programme

By selecting a degree programme you are able to see the general content as well as the possible degree programme-specific content. You do not have to select a degree programme to see the Open University's instructions.

Bachelor's Programme in Cultural Studies ▼

INSTRUCTIONS

Corona: information for outgoing exchange students

The International Exchange Services has created this page for outgoing exchange students on COVID-19 virus and its influence on student exchanges.

→

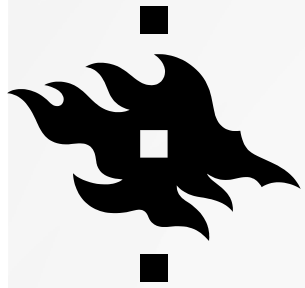
Do you want to study abroad?

You should begin to consider your destination and timetable as early in your studies as possible.

→

Feedback

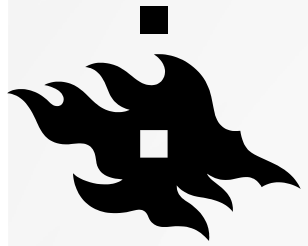
Submit your request



INFO SESSION FOR STUDENTS CHOSEN FOR EXCHANGE

- Did you participate in our previous information session where we covered the below subjects on 16.9.? If not, **please read the presentation and familiarise yourself with the contents!**
- Making an application to your host university
- Funding of your exchange and extra financial support, e.g. green travel and special needs and inclusion support
- Housing arrangements
- Learning Agreement
- OLS language test and courses
- Student Exchange Certificate





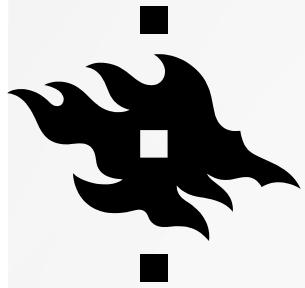
BEFORE THE EXCHANGE

Checklist: [Before your exchange - instructions for those chosen for student exchange](#)

After receiving the letter of acceptance / e-mail from the host university, **remember to update the exchange time** (start and end date of the exchange) in the Mobility Online system (Erasmus +) OR send the information by e-mail to studentexchange@helsinki.fi (Nordplus, SEMP or if not successful in Erasmus) -> **Your grant amount depends on this!**

NB: Orientation and first round of exams are included in your exchange time, not re-sit exams etc.

Accept the terms of the grant in Mobility Online 1-2 months before the exchange when you receive an email from us *as soon as possible*. Otherwise we can't pay you your grant. However, wait until you can specify the exchange dates first. Fill in your IBAN bank account information to receive the grant. You will get the **Student Exchange Certificate after** updating the exchange dates and accepting the terms of the grant.



ALSO REMEMBER

- Notification of temporary move abroad to Kela (social security) and the Digital and Population Data Services Agency, DVV
- Notification of change in study grant (Kela)
- [Submit a travel notification](#)
- Register as an **attending student at the University of Helsinki** for the duration of your exchange
- Let us know by email if you are graduating as Bachelor (Erasmus) before your exchange!
- Take care of your travel documents. Before you travel, check that your travel documents are in order. You can check the passport and visa regulations at the mission or consulate of the destination country.
- Check country entry requirements (e.g. ETA/student visa for UK)
- Make sure you have a secondary way to authenticate yourself (university and banking) in case your device is stolen or lost.



INSURANCE

- Purchase a comprehensive insurance policy for the duration of your student exchange or international traineeship! **The required insurance coverage depends on your destination so check the requirements of your host country carefully.**
- Acquire a comprehensive travel insurance already before purchasing airline tickets and other payments related to exchange costs. When buying insurance, also check the crisis coverage provided by the insurance.
- The University of Helsinki provides an accident insurance for outgoing exchange students – valid only at the university premises and on your ways to and from -> **own travel insurance necessary for free time!**
- We recommend asking for an offer from your own insurance company or from other Finnish insurance companies. You can also ask offers from International insurance companies - please find a list of international insurance companies that sell student insurance here:

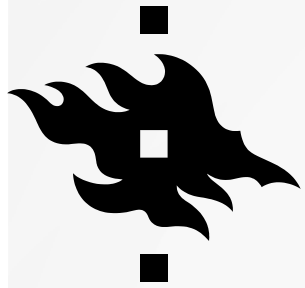
<https://migri.fi/en/insurance>



EUROPEAN HEALTH INSURANCE CARD



- If you are a European citizen traveling to EU/EEA country, Switzerland or UK, request a [European Health Insurance Card](#) (EHIC) from Kela in good time.
- With the EHIC, you'll receive medically necessary treatment in the host country with the same price as locals.
- The EHIC does not cover the costs of returning to Finland due to, for example, a serious illness or accident, so you should also purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy.



STUDENT EXCHANGE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By accepting the Student Exchange Terms and Conditions, you agree:

- To study full-time and to complete academic studies of at least 5 ECTS per full calendar month. The Erasmus+ grant is paid **per day**.
- To study within the period stated in your **student exchange certificate**
- If you shorten or cancel your exchange you will need to pay back a part of the grant, or all of it.
 - Your exchange includes the orientation, participation in courses and the first exams (excluding re-take exams)
 - The duration of the exchange will be checked from your "Confirmation of Stay" / "Letter of Confirmation form"
- If you fail to complete the required number of credits, or any credits, at your host university, you may be required to return a part of the grant, or the full grant. The number of credits will be verified by us from your exchange transcript.
Take KELA's requirements into consideration! Be in touch with us if it looks like you can't complete the planned credits.
- It is an Erasmus+ grant requirement to answer the EU Survey (for Erasmus exchanges).





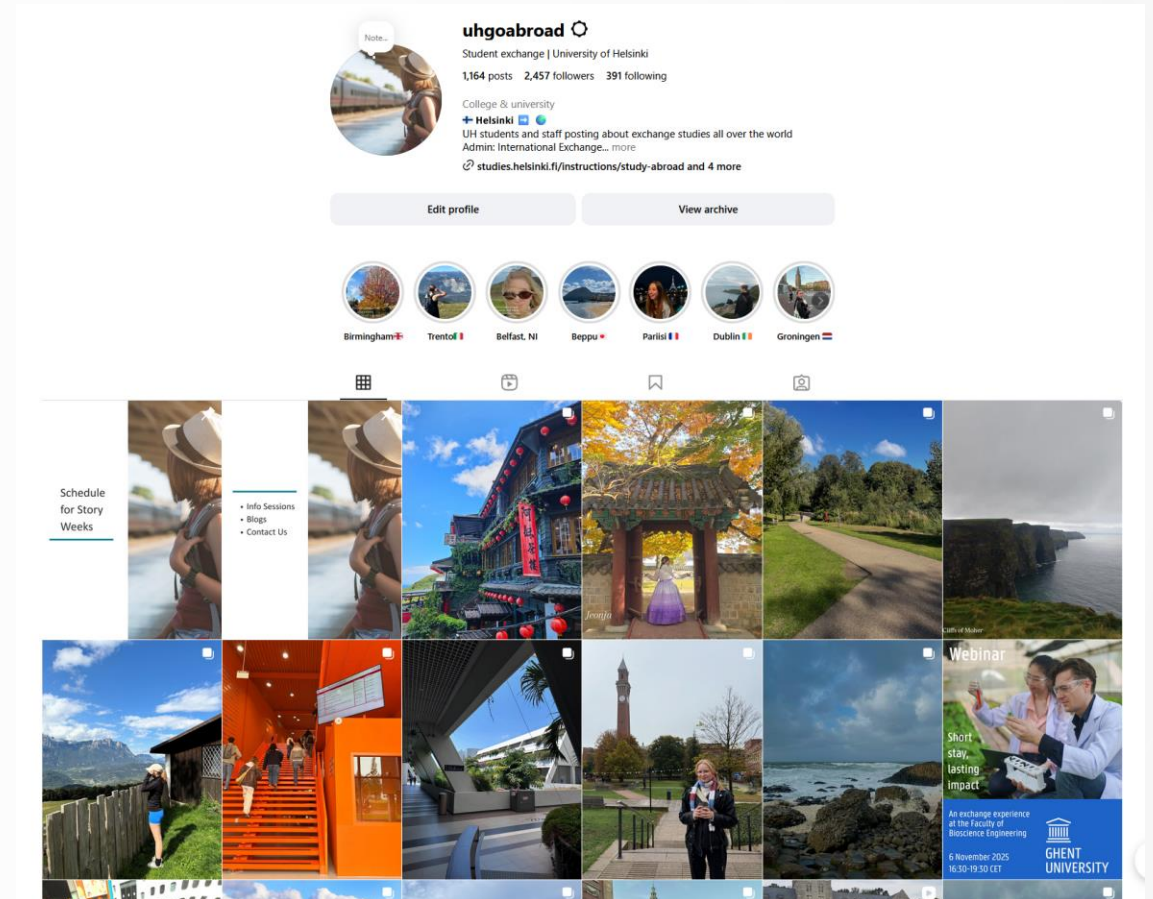
COURSE FOR STUDENTS GOING ON EXCHANGE TO AUTHORITARIAN OR ILLIBERAL COUNTRIES

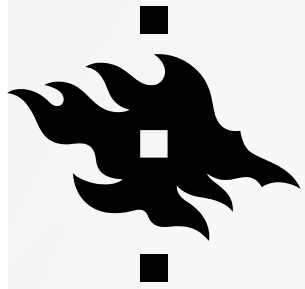
- It is essential to recognize that each nation's academic landscape varies significantly. As you prepare to embark on your academic journey abroad, understanding these differences becomes paramount.
- This course caters to students (and staff members) who are venturing to countries with distinct political and legal systems. Its purpose is twofold: first, to equip you with essential knowledge relevant to your destination, and second, to provide additional resources for further exploration.
- **New mini-course open on the [DigiCampus platform](#)** (Academic visit to an authoritarian country)
- The course has been developed in collaboration between the UH and the University of Turku



STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES

You can read [blog posts and stories](#) by previous exchange students (some are in English) or follow us and read about the experiences of students who are on an exchange right now on [Instagram](#): **uhgoabroad** to get inspiration.





SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES ON INSTAGRAM

- You have received an email about signing up for the possibility to update our Instagram account during your exchange.
- Chosen students were given their own story week and asked to post regularly during their exchange.
- Instagram (@uhgoabroad) posts will be compensated (50€) after the exchange.
- If you are asked to tell about UH during your exchange, there are plenty of information and images you can use available in [Checklist for those selected on exchange](#).
- Note: after the exchange you may be contacted regarding a blog post. Compensation 50€.
- If you don't want to update our account, but still wish to share your experience, use the hashtag #uhgoabroad when posting the photos from your exchange.





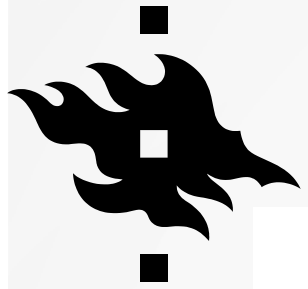
QUESTIONS?

- Feelings and expectations
- Learning goals
- Insurance
- EHIC
- Student exchange terms and conditions



PART 2: ABROAD





FEELINGS RELATED TO THE EXCHANGE



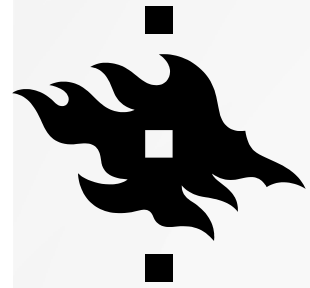
[You can read more about cultural shock](#) here



COMMUNICATION AND SELF-REFLECTION

You will get to know your destination thoroughly, but what about where you come from and who you are?

- Know your country - where are you coming from? What is your own cultural background? What types of thinking patterns do you have? What do you think of Finns?
- Know yourself – What are your hopes and dreams? What are you nervous about? How do you deal with changes? What would help when you are feeling homesick? Do you have preconceptions about different peoples and nationalities?



EMBRACING CULTURE SHOCK

While culture shock may initially be challenging, it presents numerous benefits as well. Embracing and overcoming culture shock leads to:

- Personal growth, self confidence
- Increased cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Enhanced communication and language skills
- A broadened worldview and perspective: A global mindset
- Increased adaptability and resilience, skills for coping with change and uncertainty



STUDYING ABROAD: PART 1

- Be prepared to change your learning agreement, follow the instructions from the host university closely.
- Notice that retaking exams may not be possible during your exchange.
- If you have problems with your studies:
 - The language or difficulty of the course are not acceptable reasons to drop a class and fall behind on the 5 cr / month goal.
 - Always contact your host & home university's coordinator if something unexpected happens.
- Try to be prepared for problems and make arrangements ahead of time.
- You can read more about [changes during the exchange](#)
- Students should complete exchange studies at their host university and only the ECTS completed at the host university are counted as part of the exchange. Some programmes at UH might require you to take courses from UH during the exchange.
- Don't worry too much! Of recent students on exchange overseas, only 15% felt the workload was more demanding than in Helsinki. Also, you will not get numerical grades in Sisu from the exchange, only Pass marks.



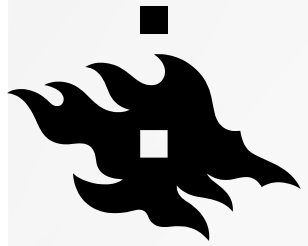


STUDYING ABROAD PART 2

Be prepared that while studying abroad you will face different ways of learning/studying:

- In UK usually broad topics in courses, not a lot of flexibility, active participation
- Netherlands: Problem Based Learning – many group assignments
- Italy: oral exams where your peers are your audience
- Sweden: large course entities (for example 15cr)
- Spain: Siesta – morning and evening classes.
- All exams during the last two weeks of the semester or academic year (for example Ireland)





EXCHANGE AND HEALTH

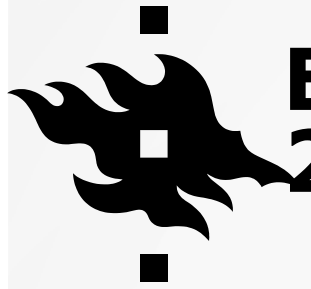
- If you use prescription medication, make sure to have an EU prescription with you in English, and that you have enough medication for your stay. However, countries may have limits on how much you can bring so find out if your medication is available in your host country. Check e.g. [Fimea's website](#) on what you can bring abroad.
- If you are seeing a therapist or a psychologist on a regular basis, it is usually best not to discontinue your treatment entirely for the duration of your exchange.
Contact your therapist or psychologist to discuss your treatment plan for the exchange.
- If you get sick during your exchange so that it affects your studies (also mentally)
 - **visit a doctor immediately. Get a medical certificate and contact International education services.**
- [Country-specific information about health services](#) can be found from the EU-healthcare pages



EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 1/4

Visit the [Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland](#) website for current travel information

- On the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' website you find information on location-specific travel bulletins.
- Travel notification allows the Ministry or Embassy to get in contact with you in the case of crisis or emergency.
- Be prepared in advance: e.g. take copies of your passport that you keep separately. Consider: Do you want to open a second bank account to have two payment cards with you? One to keep with you, the other to leave at your apartment.



EXCHANGE AND SAFETY

2/4

Before you are familiar with your exchange city, please remember to be extra cautious.

- Do not carry more cash with you than you might need at the moment.
- Get to know the traffic rules and laws of your exchange country. Find out how they deal with public intoxication, alcohol, drugs, etc.
- Follow the political situation. Stay away from unsafe areas.
- If you travel within your destination, make sure someone (for example another exchange student) knows where you are and when you are coming back.

Find out where the nearest Embassy of Finland or consulate is and follow them on social media.





EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 3/4



If something serious happens in your exchange destination:

- Follow the instructions of local officials and your host university.
- Contact the Finnish mission or consulate.
- Contact University of Helsinki International education services as soon as possible. You can also ask your friend or family member to inform us: studentexchange@helsinki.fi.
- International education services will contact you if there is a crisis in your exchange destination.
- Save your loved ones' phone number on your phone to your ICE information. A person assisting you in case of an emergency will have access to it even when your phone is locked.

The emergency number in Europe is **112**.



EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 4/4

- Everyday safety: what places are safe during night-time?
- Witnessing a violent situation: what to do?
- Demonstrations on campus
- Make sure you can use strong authentication and access your bank account even if your phone is stolen/lost





KEEP IN TOUCH DURING YOUR EXCHANGE

- During your exchange you can ask for help in exchange related questions from your host faculty and us at the International Education Services.
- Read the newsletter we send to your @helsinki.fi email.
- Follow us on Instagram: [uhgoabroad](#)
Use #uhgoabroad – hashtag when you post about your exchange
- Studies pages will help you get started if you face problems during your exchange.



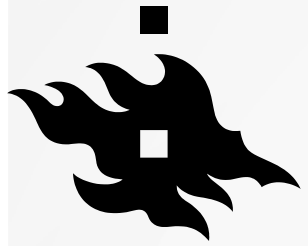
QUESTIONS SO FAR?

- Experiences and emotions during the exchange
- Studying abroad
- Exchange and health
- Safety during the exchange



PART 3: RETURNING HOME





BEFORE RETURNING HOME

Bring home from your host university:

- Have your letter of confirmation (Erasmus) signed at the end of the exchange
- Make sure your Learning Agreement is signed (Erasmus)
- Your local official transcript of studies (it might also be sent later or directly to you or International education services)
- A copy of course descriptions and syllabus (you may not have access to these later)
- Information concerning your credit points and grading scale
- Copies of your written work
- Read the [returning home instructions](#).
- Give us feedback on Mobility Online (Nordplus, SEMP) or with the EU Survey (Erasmus)
- All paperwork should be completed within two months after the end of your exchange.



CREDIT TRANSFER

- After you have uploaded all your exchange documents on Mobility Online, you will have to separately **apply for credit transfer in Sisu** yourself. It will take around 1-2 months, and please note longer processing times during holidays.
- Kela will check the progress of your studies from Sisu in mid-September.
- Instead of a grade you will receive a mark of approval (Pass).
- Read the instructions on [credit transfer](#).



MOBILITY ONLINE AFTER EXCHANGE

After the mobility

Signed Learning Agreement uploaded (only if the OLA hasn't been digitally signed)

☐

If the Learning Agreement has been digitally signed by all three parties you do not need to upload a signed pdf version of the Learning Agreement.

Signed Letter of Confirmation uploaded

☐

Transcript of Records from the host university uploaded

☐

All documents after the mobility have been uploaded

☐

Letter of Confirmation checked

☐

Number of completed credits at the host university

☐

- Number of completed credits :

Learning Agreement checked

☐



MAKING USE OF THE EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

- Continue your international experience and become part of HYY & ESN
- Share your exchange experience, for example, by writing an exchange blog post and / or acting as a tutor
- Identify your hidden skills with the SkillMill application designed to assist students in utilizing the experience gained while studying abroad and applying it to their professional lives



Lähde: Linkki: <https://www.oph.fi/en/development/hidden-competences>



QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

International Education Services

- E-mail:
studentexchange@helsinki.fi
- Online individual appointments:
[Booking Service Vihta](#)
- Tel: +358 2941 22401 (weekdays
between 12:00-13:00)
- [Drop-in services](#) on different
campuses





Vaihto oli huikea ja kasvattava kokemus, ja opin paljon uutta niin reissujen kuin normiarjenkin parissa. Suosittelen lämpimästi vaihtoa kaikille sitä harkitseville, sillä se on ainutlaatuinen mahdollisuus asua ulkomailla ja tutustua uusiin ihmisiin sekä uuteen kieleen ja kulttuuriin. Vaihdon aikana itsenäistyy huomaamattakin ja parhaimmillaan saa uusia ystäviä ympäri maailmaa, ja suomeen voi palata monta kokemusta ja koettelemustakin rikkaampana.

Geneve, Sveitsi

Nyt olen ollut kuukauden päivät suomessa ja olo alkaa taas tuntua normaalimmalta. Mietin vaihtoa päivittäin ja kaipaen takaisin saksan jatkuvasti. Mutta onneksi se on lähellä ja pääsen sinne uudestaan. Se suuri osa, mitä jäi vielä kokematta, odottaa minua tulevaisuudessa! Munchen, Saksa

