

國立成功大學
高教深耕計畫出國報告書

報告名稱：113學年第1學期赴芬蘭 圖爾庫大學出國報告書

出國期間：2024年8月14日~2025年2月7日

經費來源：高教深耕計畫

單位：國立成功大學 文學院 外文所

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中華民國 114 年 2 月 20 日

摘要

在芬蘭圖爾庫交換的這半年是一段回味無窮的經歷。從學術課程到文化交流，每個方面都為我帶來前所未有的體驗。為了更積極地把握這一學期在芬蘭的學習機會，我選修了六門課，且其中五門非我專業，例如 International Business Negotiations Skills 學習談判技巧，以及以永續為主軸的 Sustainability Trends in Business。除了學業，我也參加體育課程、嘗試芬式桑拿、與國際學生交流，各式各樣豐富的活動讓我結識來自不同國家的朋友。我還透過「Erasmus in Schools」計畫參訪了芬蘭高中，向當地學生介紹臺灣文化。圖爾庫的生活十分愜意，經濟實惠的學生餐廳、應有盡有的超市、種類多元的商家及便捷的交通系統，讓日常生活毫無阻礙。對多數臺灣人來說，提及芬蘭，我們大概只聽聞首都赫爾辛基，再者則是聖誕老人村所在的羅瓦涅米……圖爾庫只是個默默無名的小城市。然而，在實際到訪並且生活過後，發現圖爾庫其實擁有豐富的歷史文化、完善的城市規劃，以及意外濃厚的國際氛圍。這段旅程拓寬了我的視野，讓我親身感受芬蘭的自然與人文，可說是滿載而歸、不虛此行。圖爾庫與這半年的回憶，無疑會是我人生中難忘的一頁。

Abstract

Spending a semester as an exchange student in Turku, Finland, was an eye-opening and rewarding experience. From academic courses to cultural activities, every aspect of life here was unique and enriching. The courses I took ranged from theoretical learning to hands-on experiences, such as negotiations practices in International Business Negotiations Skills, and startup fairs in Sustainability Trends in Business. Beyond academics, I engaged in sports, local traditions like sauna, and international student events that helped me connect with people from different backgrounds. I also had the opportunity to visit a Finnish high school through the "Erasmus in Schools" program, sharing Taiwanese culture with local students. Life in Turku was convenient, with affordable meals at student cafeterias, well-stocked supermarkets, diverse shops and a well-organized transportation system. The city itself, often underrated, has a rich history, a walkable layout, and a surprisingly international atmosphere. This journey broadened my perspectives and allowed me to experience Finland's nature and culture firsthand. My time in Turku will remain an unforgettable chapter in my life.

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Before Exchange

🚩 Statement of Purpose: The 3 'Why's

Why apply for exchange?

Participating in an exchange program offers a multitude of benefits that can enrich both my academic and personal life. Firstly, exposure to different educational systems and methodologies can broaden my academic horizons. Secondly, living in a new country and overcoming the challenges foster self-reliance and adaptability. Lastly, to experience life in a different culture, including food, customs, traditions, and daily life. It is also interesting to gain a deeper understanding of global issues and how they are perceived in different parts of the world.

Why Finland?

Finland is known for its high-quality education system, unique culture, and beautiful natural environment, making it an excellent choice for me, who is seeking academic excellence, personal growth, and a new cultural experience. Most importantly, as most Finns speak English fluently, ease of communication makes daily life and studies easier for international students.

Why the University of Turku?

Turku seems to be a historic yet vibrant city with a rich cultural life, events, and activities suited to student life. Beautiful campus conveniently located, the University of Turku offers a diverse range of courses and programs, many of which are taught in English. Moreover, the diverse student body offers a multicultural environment for students from all over the world. In correspondence to the vast international community, excellent support services such as orientation programs, counseling, and language courses are provided, which makes it an ideal destination for me to enjoy my exchange experience.



Application Process

STAY TUNED for every announcement and deadline!

If you are considering an exchange early, here are some key steps to prepare:

- ✓ Work hard on your academic performance – your GPA accounts for 50% of the on-campus selection criteria.
- ✓ Ask for approval from your advisor (MA students).
- ✓ Take English proficiency tests (TOEFL, IELTS, etc.) as early as possible to allow for retakes if needed.

A. On-campus selection

- a. Carefully review the application guide and requirements for different exchange schools. Mind every deadline.
- b. Research your ideal exchange schools.
- c. Attend the OIA briefing session.
- d. Prepare and submit application materials:
 - Application form (select up to 6 preferred schools)
 - Transcripts of record
 - CV / Autobiography
 - Study plan
 - English proficiency test score reports
 - Other supporting documents
- e. Follow OIA announcements.
- f. Submit the confirmation form and guarantee fee.

**Passing the on-campus selection does not guarantee admission to the exchange school.*

B. Outgoing recommendation

- a. OIA nomination to the exchange school.
- b. Receive emails from the exchange school with instructions to upload application materials to their designated platform.
- c. Pass the review and receive the acceptance letter.
- d. Confirm the exchange offer.

Get Ready for the Journey

Keep an eye on emails from the exchange school in your inbox.

June-July

- Submit an online application for a residence permit: <https://migri.fi/en/residence-permit>
Note 1: Taiwanese passport holders **do not need a visa for short-term stays (up to 90 days within 180 days) in the Schengen area.*
Note 2: At this stage, you can only fill out the form (a highly time-consuming task that may take months to complete) and book an appointment online for the Finnish Immigration Service point. You must **visit the service point in person after arriving in Finland to complete the application process.*
- Apply for housing.
- Book flight tickets.
- Obtain health insurance (e.g. Swisscare).
- Complete bank transfer for applying for Clarification of Income from your bank.

August

- Enroll in courses.
- Set up telecom services (e.g. DNA, Elisa, etc.).
- Pay the NCKU tuition fee.
- Arrive in Finland before your reserved appointment at the Finnish Immigration Service point.
- Arrive at UTU for orientation.
**Note: Orientation week is the latest required arrival date.*

Starting Package

<https://www.tyy.fi/en/starting-package-storage>

Borrowing a starting package with €70 (of these €50 is a deposit, which you will get back if you return all the items clean and in good condition) could very much lessen the burden of luggage packing. The starting package includes:

- a pillow (50x60)
- a blanket (150x200)
- curtains
- a cooking pot
- a cutting knife
- a dinner plate
- a soup plate/bowl
- a drinking glass
- a coffee mug
- cooking items (plastic cooking spoon or spatula)
- a can opener
- a set of flatware (a fork, a knife, a tablespoon, and a teaspoon)

Please note that the starting package does not include bed linens, pillow case and blanket covers.

During Exchange

Residence Permit Application

After submitting your online application and making a reservation at a Finnish Immigration Service point of your choice, be sure to arrive on time. The pictures below show the service point in Helsinki, where applicants waited in chairs before being assigned to a room. Inside, an officer handled the process, which was quick and smooth as long as you had all the required documents with you. Your residence permit card will be mailed to you a few weeks after your visit. Usually, you will receive an email instructing you to pick it up from a nearby supermarket based on your registered address.



Courses in English

Finnish Survival Course for Exchange Students (2 ECTS)

As exchange students, we could take a variety of language courses, which were available regardless of faculty. The language courses for exchange students were organized by the Centre for Language and Communication Studies at UTU. This particular course was an entry-level course designed for students with little to no prior experience with the Finnish language. It covered some basic greetings, common phrases, numbers and grocery-related vocabulary. In short, it was a useful course for helping exchange students navigate daily life in Turku.

Language and Culture Tandem (1 ECT)

Students taking this course were paired with a language partner to practice their target language. For example, I wanted to practice Finnish, while my partner, a Finnish local student, wanted to practice Chinese, so we were matched accordingly. Together, we designed our learning plan for the semester and submitted it to the teacher. Basically, we met once a week for about 1 to 1.5 hours, during which we could talk about any topic of our interests or do any kind of activities. The only course requirement was to send a personal learning diary to the teacher.

Critical Discourse Analysis (5 ECTS)

This was a master's-level course in my major, linguistics. It was an independent study, meaning there were no regular class sessions. The course requirements included reading the assigned course book(s) to prepare for the final exam and writing a research paper on a related topic. The final exam was an e-exam, which I scheduled based on my own availability by booking a time and an e-exam room through the system. The final exam consisted of four essay questions, but students were required to answer only two of them.

English: Intercultural Communication (2 ECTS)

Just as the course name implied, this was a course where you had a chance to talk with students from different countries and backgrounds. A significant portion of each week was dedicated to group discussions. In the first few weeks, the teacher introduced key Intercultural Communication (IC) topics. The following weeks focused on student presentations. Each student had to present on one of the assigned topics and prepare discussion questions for the class. This was a relaxed and enjoyable course. It was always refreshing to exchange ideas with students from all over the world.

International Business Negotiations Skills (3 ECTS)

The first half of this course covered negotiation theories, including typical negotiation stages, key terms, useful phrases, and short clips illustrating both positive and negative negotiation examples. The second half focused on practical in-class negotiation exercises. Two groups paired up to enact a case from the booklet, with the teacher assigning each group their respective sides. We studied the scenarios and planned our negotiation strategies based on the provided information from the booklet. Each group participated in two rounds of negotiations.

Sustainability Trends in Business (3 ECTS)

Personally, this was the most demanding course out of the six I took this semester. It was primarily an online course, requiring only one week of on-site participation for the fair. The teacher recorded lecture videos and uploaded them to YouTube, and we wrote learning diaries for each video after watching. Additionally, we worked on a group project where each team developed a startup idea and wrote an analysis report on it. During the fair, each group had a stand and had to be prepared to introduce their company whenever visitors arrived.



CampusSport

<https://www.campusport.fi/en/>

CampusSport offered versatile sports services for one fee, depending on the chosen period (academic year/semester/month). The fee covered instructed classes, ball sports shifts and the use of gyms. The daily sports schedule, including activities, times, locations, and instructors, can be checked on the website. To join an instructed class, an online reservation was required, which opened one week before the class. If you accumulate two absences from your reservations, your membership rights would be temporarily suspended for two weeks. Notably, the check-in system closed 10 minutes before class time, meaning that arriving exactly on time would be considered late. To avoid this, make sure to check in at least 10 minutes before the class starts.

I paid 55€ and participated in two instructed classes this semester. One was badminton, and the other was volleyball. Taking a Finnish PE class with students from different countries was an interesting experience. At times, the weather and darkness outside made me feel lazy and unenergetic, which was not ideal for my health, but these sessions helped me stay active at least twice a week.



Daily life

Food

Student cafeterias

In Turku, and Finland in general, students were eligible for a subsidized meal for 2.95€ at all student cafeterias with a valid student ID. A typical meal included a salad, a main dish with a vegan alternative, sides, two drinks (water and milk/juice) and slices of bread with spreads. All student cafeterias in Turku operated in a buffet style, allowing students to customize their meals as they preferred. Menus, locations, and opening hours could be checked in the TUUDO app, also where students showed their digital student ID. A fully loaded meal could look, for example, like this:



Groceries

S-market, K-market, Lidl, Alepa, Asian markets (surprisingly, there were quite a few around the city center, and you might find some Taiwanese products, so hopefully you won't feel too homesick), etc.

HANSA

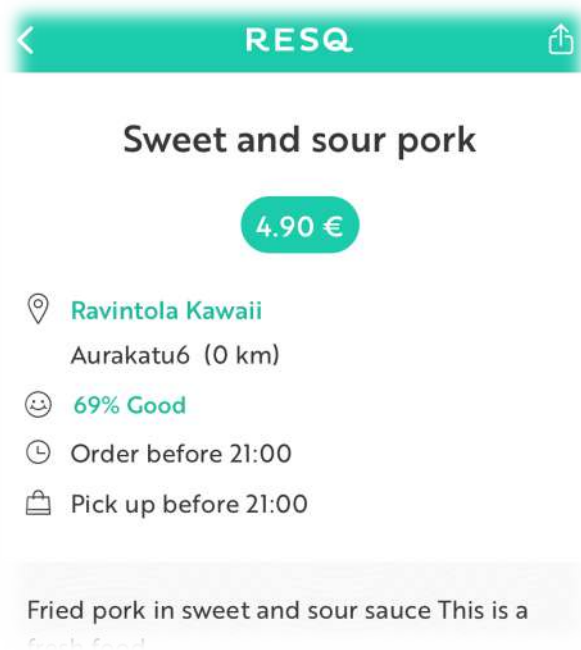
A department store in Turku where you can find everything you need. There are also several nice restaurants inside.

Turku Market Hall

Full of delicious and reasonably priced Finnish local and Asian food stands.

ResQ

A mobile APP where you can find numerous discounted foods nearby and contribute to a more sustainable environment at the same time.



Housing

The housing was not provided by UTU itself but by a separate organization, TYS, which offered accommodation to students from all three major universities in Turku. Since the demand exceeded the supply, dormitory spots were allocated through a lottery system. Unfortunately, I was the unlucky one. It seemed that the timing of your application didn't matter much. I submitted mine the day after the application period opened, but I knew students who applied later and still secured a dorm. From what I heard, the TYS housing conditions were pretty nice. You can check the prices and room pictures on their website.

As for my personal experience, I eventually found an apartment through emails sent by the school. After the lottery results were announced, the school began sending information about available apartments. There were always students left "homeless" like me who needed housing options. Most of the available apartments were sublet by UTU students who were going on exchange studies abroad, so some of them might have been part of the TYS housing pool as well. Of course, there were some other ways to search for an apartment, but I preferred the ones provided by the school, as they felt much safer than finding one through Facebook groups (where scams could happen) or searching elsewhere on my own.

I live by myself, and my rent was 640€ per month, excluding water, electricity, and internet. My landlord (a UTU student) asked me to sign contracts for those three utilities myself, which was

another long story. Despite the somewhat high price compared to TYS dorms and the trouble with signing contracts, my apartment was quite satisfactory. It had the perfect location, right next to the city center, with an S-market just downstairs, and I had my own bathroom and kitchen. While it was a bit of a shame to miss the opportunity to live with a foreign roommate, I'm grateful for having my personal space and the chance to practice my cooking skills during my time in the apartment.



Public transportation

A. Between Turku and other cities (Vantaa Airport, Helsinki, Tampere, etc.)

- a. VR Train – Finland's national rail operator uses surge pricing. VR trains are fast, clean, and reliable. It takes about two hours between Turku and Helsinki. Book the earlier the better as it usually gets more expensive at the last minute. Student tickets are available.
- b. Onnibus – Often cheaper than the train, especially with early booking. Student discounts are also available. Prices typically rise as the departure date approaches. Onnibuses are actually a common sight on the roads in Finland.

B. Inside Turku

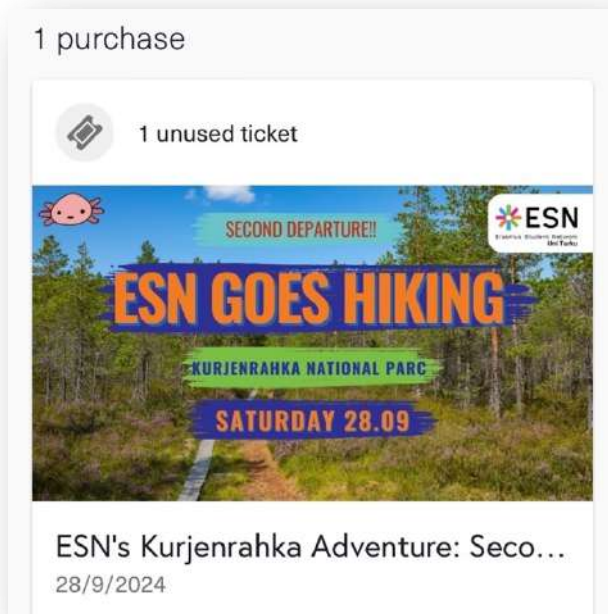
The main transportation options in Turku are the yellow Föli buses and Föli bikes. A season ticket is recommended for daily bus users, as it also grants free access to Föli bikes.



Extracurricular activities

Erasmus Student Network (ESN) of UTU

If you wish to make new friends quickly, joining ESN's activities is a great way. ESN is a student organization that hosts various events, from week-long trips to the Lofoten Islands or Lapland, to day hikes in national parks or all kinds of night parties. Of course, the prices vary depending on the activity, ranging from hundreds of euros for longer trips to under ten euros for smaller activities. Follow their Instagram account to stay tuned for their latest events and buy tickets on the Kide app (see section Useful Mobile APPs). One fun fact is that participants can collect patches specially designed for each event. Most students sew these patches onto their colorful "overalls," which you'll often see around the city. This is the patch I received when I joined the Kurjenrahka National Park hike:



Sauna

Sauna is a well-known activity that originated in Finland and is a must-try when visiting. Many apartments, including mine and TYS, as well as private households, have their own sauna facilities. I tried it twice with my swimsuit on, but I also heard that some saunas are used without swimsuits, and both genders share the same cabin. The standard Finnish sauna experience involves showering first, then entering the cabin to warm up. Once sufficiently heated, you bathe in a cold or even freezing river just outside the cabin. I never tried this full experience, as I always used the sauna in my apartment, where there was no river. It sounds intimidating for someone like me who dislikes the cold, but it is said to be good for health.



Moon Festival Events

There were about ten Taiwanese exchange students at UTU this semester. Most of us stayed for one semester, while some stayed for the whole academic year. We organized a Moon Festival dinner gathering on Friday night during the festival week, where everyone brought a dish to one of the students' TYS dorm kitchen. We introduced ourselves, chatted, took photos and had a great time.

Interestingly, the Chinese faculty at UTU also hosted a Moon Festival Event, and I was invited by my tutor. The venue was beautifully decorated with Chinese elements like lanterns and oil-paper umbrellas. They even prepared mooncakes, mahjong, and calligraphy for participants. It was surprising but also heartwarming to see so many international students enjoying Chinese culture together in a foreign country.





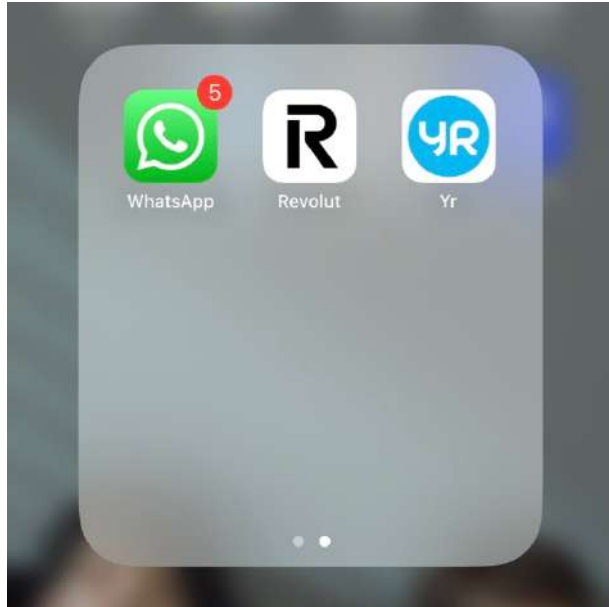
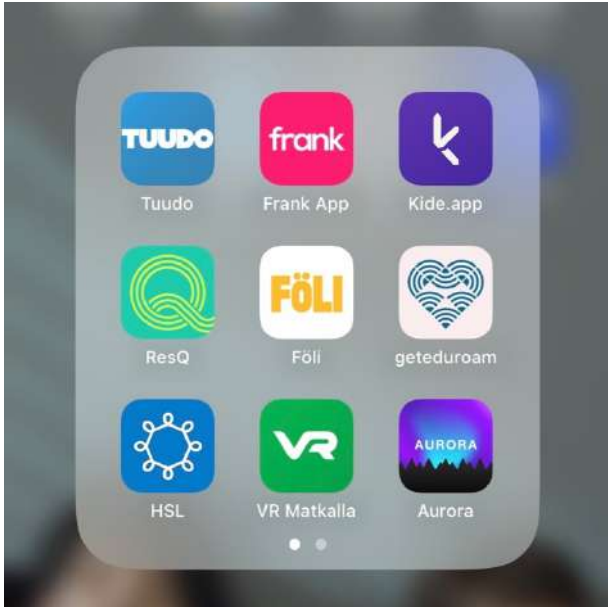
Special experience

On Double Tenth Day, I was invited to a high school in Lieto, a neighboring city of Turku within a 30-minute bus ride away. The opportunity came through a program called “Erasmus in Schools,” where international students volunteer to share their culture with local students. The program was introduced via email from UTU, and those interested could register in the system by themselves. After setting up a profile, the system matched volunteers with schools based on volunteers’ preferences such as student level and distance from the school. Once matched, a teacher from the school would contact the volunteer to schedule the visit and discuss the content.

For my visit, I prepared self-made slides to introduce Taiwanese culture. Coincidentally, the visit fell on Taiwan’s National Day, making the experience even more meaningful. It was a valuable opportunity to visit a Finnish high school and interact with local students. The teacher told me that the class was part of a program for students who wished to go abroad in the future, so they frequently invited international students to share their experiences. However, she mentioned that it was rare to have Asian international students participate, as most volunteers were from Europe. When she saw my profile, she immediately invited me and even highly recommended me to other schools after my sharing.

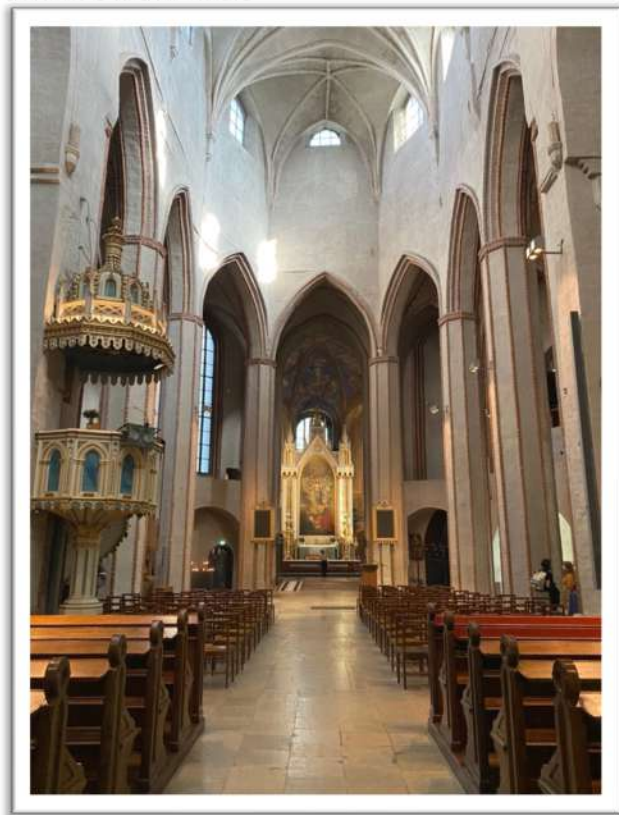


 **Useful mobile APPs**

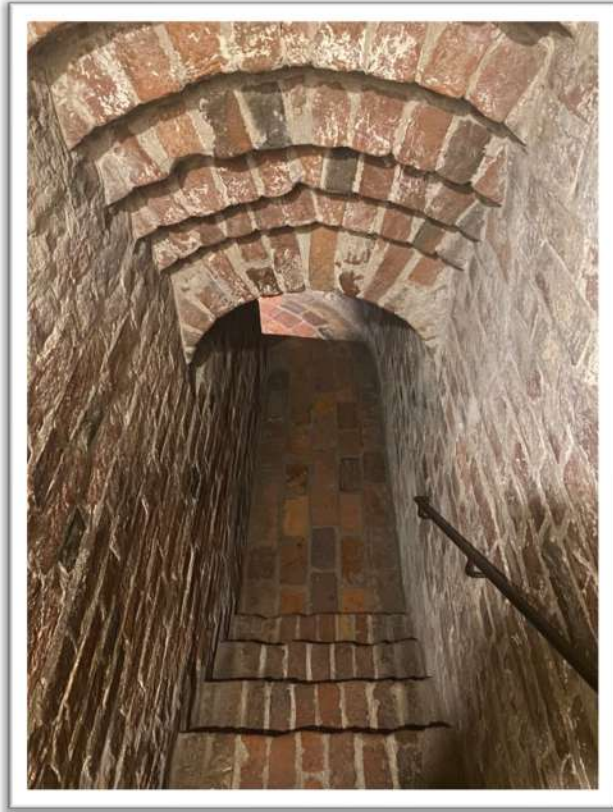
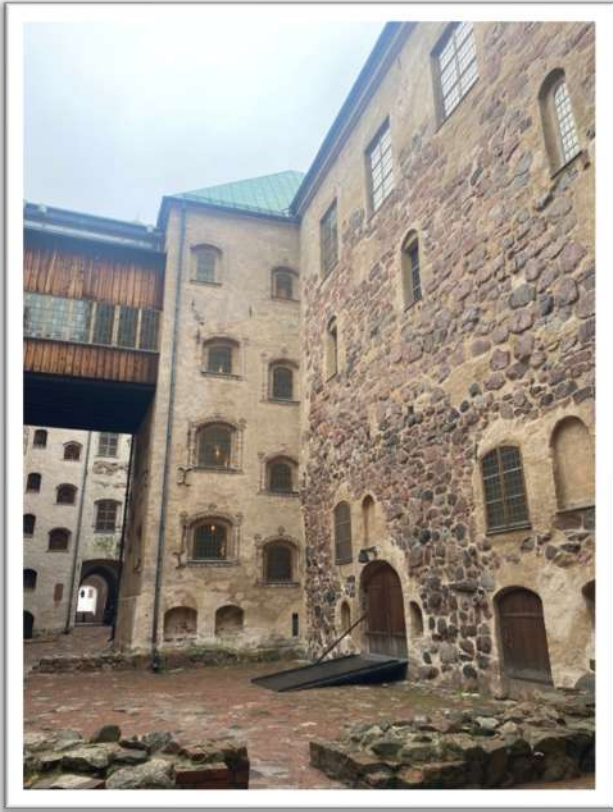


 **Sightseeing in Turku and other cities**

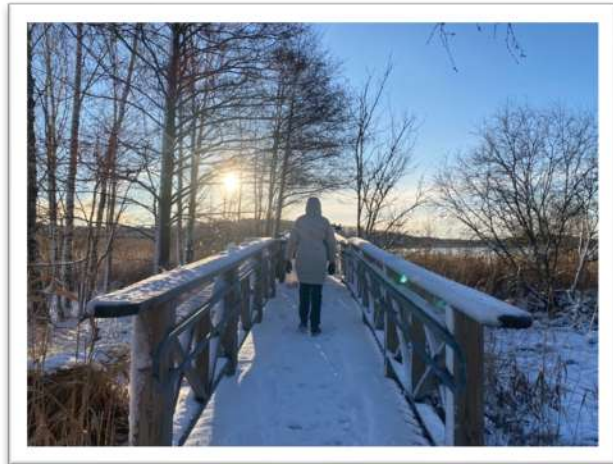
Turku Cathedral



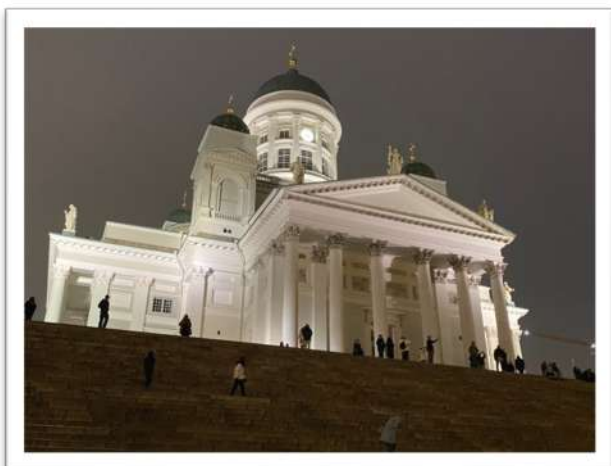
Turku Castle



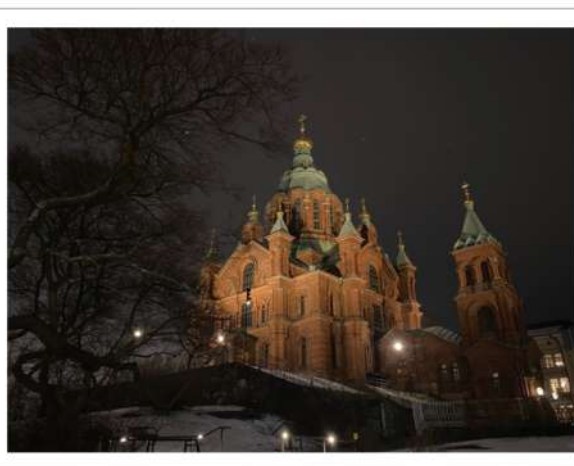
Ruissalo



Helsinki



Helsinki Cathedral



Uspenskin katedraali

Tampere



Tampere University



Moomin Museum

Rovaniemi



After Exchange

Reflections

Before setting off on my journey to Finland, I had the impression that Finns could be indifferent and not very sociable. In fact, they even joke about this themselves—just look at the humorous *Finnish Nightmares* comic series, which is so iconic that its illustrations are even displayed on the walls of Helsinki Airport. However, the Finns I met here were all kind and friendly. Rather than seeing it as coldness, I would say that the social distancing they maintain is actually their way of showing politeness and respecting personal space.



Turku is underappreciated with regards to its great location, making it easy to take a cruise to Estonia or Sweden, and its relatively mild weather, as it's in the south of Finland, so the temperature didn't drop as much as I had imagined. It is a small city, but everything you need is within walking distance. In some ways, Turku reminds me of Tainan: both were once the capital of their country, both are the oldest cities, and like Anping, Turku also has a canal. Moreover, I would say Turku is quite international, with a noticeable presence of international residents and a variety of Asian cuisine restaurants, including Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Indian. In my opinion, Turku would be an excellent choice for Asians considering living abroad.

I felt incredibly lucky and grateful for the opportunity to travel all the way from Taiwan to Finland, experiencing so many new things—the nature, the architecture, the people, and the culture. Turku and the half-year I spent here will always be cherished memories that I will miss for a lifetime.