

REPORT AL RIENTRO DELL'ESPERIENZA DI SCAMBIO - A.A.

~~2016/2017~~ 2017-2018

Cognome	SABETTA
Nome	ANDREA
Matricola	848301
Anno di corso	3.L
Corsi di studi	DESIGN DELLA COMUNICAZIONE
Sezione	C3
e-mail	andrea.sabetta@mail.polimi.it
Sede di scambio	LAMK
Stato	FINLANDIA
ID ERASMUS (per sedi in EU)	SF LAHTI11
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Testo

When one year and a half ago I applied to spend six months of my life studying in Finland I didn't know what I was going for. I came back only a couple of days ago, though, and I'm already missing all the people, the places and the moment that made this experience unforgettable. But we have time to talk about those things, now let's go in order.

Enrolling for LAMK university was not the easiest, they have lots of requirements to keep the school standards at a high level, but you're guided by very clear information on their website and you can always ask to Aleksina: the almighty, superfast and extremely easygoing exchange coordinator. You'll need to send both a resume and a motivation letter; if you're enrolling in the design institute, a portfolio will also be required, printed just in case you're going to be part of the graphic design department.

Once you're accepted by the University, you'll be immediately contacted by several school organizations that will make sure that your time in Lahti runs as smooth as a baby's butt.

At first the housing agency will reach to you, sending you all the info that you need to navigate their site and to reserve your room. The process is very easy, after you say what kind of apartment you'd like to live in and how big you want your room to be (S - M - L) and they'll take care of everything. Three days later you'll already have your room locked.

At the same time also the student union we'll be in touch and will send you the details to get a Household box, a first necessity item, given that the houses are furnished, but lacking of any kind of accessory.

Then comes the time for you to get to know your tutor, that will be your savior at least for your first days in Lahti (in my case also for all the other days), and also for the very last day, when you would have had to walk for 10 kilometers with two twenty kilos luggages in your hands and an approximately fifteen kilos backpack on your shoulders. Jenna if you're reading this, thank you, really.

Then some time passes and you're stressing out about the price of the flights and packing enough socks (10 is an ok number in my humble opinion) but eventually the day of the departure comes and you leave your country and start this amazing experience. In my case, it could have started a bit better, since I lost my connection flight, due to a delay on my first plane and for that I also missed the bus that would have brought me from Helsinki to Lahti, but that's not a problem at all.

Finally, after a few misadventures I was finally in Finland, Home of the Brave. No wait that's Scotland. Or the U.S., I really have no clue about this. By the way I was in Finland and everything was snowy and I kinda fell for the first time slipping on the ice but I managed not to so everything was ok. I met my tutor for the first time and I swear she's one of the most precious girls I'll ever meet and I'll always be grateful for her. At this point it was like 10pm and we went to the supermarket, which was amazing btw, to grab some food and some basic survival stuff and reality suddenly hit me when I realized that I didn't understand anything inside the store and that I actually needed directions to figure out what to buy and in which isle it was. After the tragic shopping time it was time to finally get home and there I met two of the most amazing people in the galaxy, my Canadian flatmate and his uni friend. I will always remember the frozen pizza with pesto on top that we ate that night and that started our friendship. The next day my other flatmate arrived and the house was finally complete. I couldn't be happier about those two old buddies of mine.

Describing what happened after the first day is really impossible, the only thing that comes to my mind cannot be translated into words for its too dense in emotions and there's really too much stuff going on. I could just try to list everything that I'm grateful for and I'm sure I'll not be able to remember everything. Well trying never hurt anybody. I'm grateful for all the amazing people that I've met, from the Spaniards to the Irish, from the Mexicans to the New Zealanders; I'm grateful for the trip to the supermarket just to do something in the afternoon and for the thrift shops that sell literally anything at any given price. I'm grateful for the beer pongs and the weird german drinking name which name I cannot pronounce nor write, and grateful for Roxanne and for Maddy's face while playing it. I'll never forget the various beer pong tournaments (that I never won) and the weekly parties in the laundry room with heir "fit in the dryer" challenges. I'm not really sure if I want to be grateful for Mugi and Wintti, otherwise known as the worst clubs in whole Finland, but I had a blast there, more than once, so probably I should just stop being so picky. I'll remember forever the first sledge competition and the first walk on the frozen lake, it was a magical moment and doing it with a full moon over our heads was seriously breathtaking. I'm grateful for the bike rides in the snowstorms and also for the snowstorms. I'm grateful for the snow when it's -20°C outside, I still don't understand how it works but apparently it can happen and it's amazing. Frozen beards, frozen hair frozen roads and bike locks, I'm grateful for all of that, even if I actually broke my bike lock and had to leave it outside the school for two days in the rain and cold and the brakes were completely jammed after that but it was a challenge and I overcame it and it was eventually fine. I'm grateful for jumping in the lake only one week after it melted completely, and yes, it was a bad idea but an amazing experience and I still can't believe I've done it. Skiing and ski jumping I personally didn't do, neither I did trampolining, but some of my friends did and I regret not doing it, so if you're going to Lahti please do it! Don't be like me! I'm grateful for the cheap gym inside the school that gives you no excuses not to go there and get a workout done at least four times a week. I'm not really grateful for the bums and tums class that really kicked my butt (I only went there once). I'm grateful for the bike rides (again I know I just like going around with a bike) to the club and to the gym and the lake, I basically really enjoyed going around with the bike with my friends and the speakers in our backpacks, it made us feel like we were in Stranger Things or E.T. I'm grateful for all the companies that I had the opportunity to work for and I'm thankful for the couches and the coffee machines in the classrooms. I'm grateful for the amazing nature, the great lake behind our house, the rabbits and the foxes that we saw around sometimes and the singing birds that woke me up the last mornings of my stay. I'm grateful for the island of Uto, the furthest inhabited island of the Finnish Arkipelago and their inhabitants, that kindly hosted me and some of my classmates for an amazing weekend. I have to thank Julia, Christoffer and also Marion, that were great teachers and actual life inspirations.

Well I think I now should really stop listing the things that I'm grateful for, it's really boring and repetitive and yes, I'm already remembering things and people that I forgot just two lines above but it's too late now, they'll never be in the cool mega-list.

So yeah that was basically my Exchange semester, a constellation of beautiful moments and beautiful people that made the moments even more beautiful. As I already said, I miss everybody and everything already and I can't believe that probably I'll never see most of them ever again in my life but I also promise with this document that I'll make anything not to let that happen.

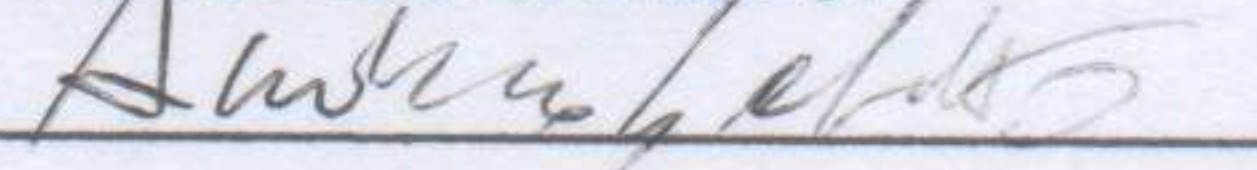
Again, and for the last time, I'm grateful for everything that made me go to Finland and I'll never forget this amazing experience. The school was incredible, the relationship with the teachers there is something completely different from what we're used to in Italy and it gets a bit to get used to, especially if you're a bit shy and introverse as I am. After a few weeks tho, you'll learn to get along with this informality and will learn to understand how this kind of relationship can be useful for your works.

It was a surreal experience, that i'll never stop being thankful for.

As Douglas Adams would say, or better, the dolphins: "So long, and thanks for all the fish."

Autorizzo al trattamento dei miei dati personali ai sensi del Decreto Legislativo n. 196/03 da parte del Politecnico di Milano.

Firma


8/6/2018