

## Trip to Finland

I feel lucky because I was selected to spend a week in Finland to meet Finnish students and get an insight into their everyday life.

The trip took a whole day. Our flight left on Saturday evening, we spent one night in Helsinki, and the next day we took the train to Kuopio.

From the train window we saw the many beautiful lakes and forests of the beautiful Finnish countryside.

Kuopio is a very peaceful city, surrounded by a lake and some districts are built on islands. We stayed in a comfortable hostel, in four-bed rooms. On Monday, after breakfast, we went with excitement to the local high school, Kuopio klassillinen lukio. We used the local bus transportation.

The students welcomed us very kindly, gave us a presentation about their school, and then one of the teachers told us about the features of the Finnish education system.

In Finnish high schools there are only 4 classes per day, but each class lasts 75 minutes. Students can make their own schedules, so there are no fixed classes. Finns grade from 1 to 10. Grades are not revealed to the rest of the class. They don't take books and notebooks with them because they work on laptops, which they get for free. Not only that, but the entire education is free, including meals, school trips and school supplies. All expenses are covered by the government. There are a lot of choices for lunch and what I really liked was that there was always a vegetarian menu.

They gave us a Finnish lesson where we learned Finnish words and simple Finnish phrases from Henna, one of the Finnish teachers. I managed to remember some of them, "kiitos" means thank you and "hyvää päivää" means good day! The favorite welcomes of the group were "hei hei" and "moi moi" which means hello.

During breaks we met Finnish students at the meeting points and had a good conversation. For example, we asked about traditional Finnish food and what they do after school.

During the week we could choose which classes we would like to participate in. We visited several English classes and took part in classes like psychology, history and biology. We usually worked in groups with the Finnish students. In the afternoons we went sightseeing or visited local attractions such as the Puijo Tower, the Kuopio Museum and the Old Kuopio Museum. In the evenings we enjoyed the hotel activities, the golf course and the wellness area.

On Thursday, we visited Hatsala School, where we also had the opportunity to visit some classes. Here, unlike the previous school, the students study from books and they did not wear shoes, only socks. I was glad that we could spend Friday at Kuopio klassillinen lukio school again, because here we had more opportunities to speak English. This day was also special because the teachers brought their pets to school. We got to meet Helen, the 12-year-old dog of one of the English teachers, and the cute kitten of the biology teacher.

The week went by quickly and I was very happy to meet Angel, Veeti, Mila and the others. It was very interesting to see a completely different educational system. I would be happy if in Hungary we didn't have to carry heavy bags to school, could study on laptops and have a maximum of 30 minutes of homework a day, like the Finns. Grades would only serve to measure performance. I'm really glad that I got this opportunity from my teachers to get chosen for the Erasmus+ program and I will always be thankful to them.

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## Appendix



Finnish countryside



PuijoTower



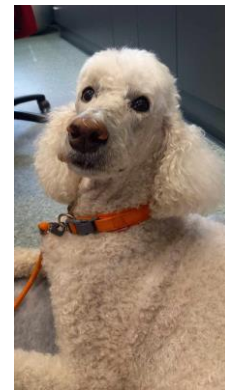
Old Kuopio Museum



View from Puijo Tower



Kuopio Museum



Hilda, the dog