

Part A.

In this course, I have known more about the Finnish culture, history and society. When comparing to my expectation before I come, I found the importance of personal space in Finland surprise me. Before I came, I have heard Finns love personal space. But I did not realise that Finns love personal space to this extent. I did not expect my Finn flatmates would use their fastest speed to finish cooking in the shared kitchen and then go back their rooms. I did not expect them to be very talkative and chatting with you all the time. But I thought they might chat with you when you were also cooking. However, they just say "Moi!" to you and then cook quietly and quickly. Once they have finished, they even did not say bye and then go away quietly. Now, I understand they love personal space and love silence. They do not mean to be rude. Although at the beginning, it was hard for me to understand, now I respect this culture and I enjoy it in some sense actually. I have a really unforgettable experience in the event of Lux Helsinki. There was a circus firework performance in front of the Helsinki Cathedral. It was impressive that no one stood very close to you or even touched you with their belongings, though it was very crowded. I felt really comfortable, since I hate strangers have body contact with you due to crowded environment. I am a person who love to have personal space. That was my first time feeling so comfortable in crowded place. I remember, during lecture, there was a video tape showing how people react when there is a person standing too close to them. That video really reflected how people need their own space. Now I also do the same when I am waiting for a bus, that is, standing far away with people. I believe I may experience reverse culture shock when I go home.

Part B.

1. I have saw kids here are independent. Their mothers will let them chasing each other on slippery ice in the park. Their mothers just sit far away quietly and look is there any serious accident happen. Even though they fall on the ground, their mothers will not rush to them and help them get up. They will get up by themselves. Compared to Hong Kong, maybe most of the Asian countries, parents like to tell the child not to do something, tell the child which decision is good for you, and not allow the child to do any activity that may hurt themselves. Finn kids raised by this method will learn how to bear the outcomes of their decisions on their own, no matter it is good or bad outcome. Therefore, they are trained to be independent when they were young.
2. I have done a group project with Finns and I have observed that they are self-motivated and self-conscious. We did not have many meetings reporting the progress of our group project. We have only two meetings, that is, one for separating the work and one before the presentation. Once we separated the work, there are no regular contact between us. Indeed, I was a bit worried about the progress of our project because no one updated their progress. In Hong Kong, we often updates our own progress and also we will ask the others about their progress, since there are always free-rider groupmates. But it turned out that everyone did their parts in details. I was so impressed. I think this is because people are independent here and they also have their own goal or timeline for their work. So, they do not like necessary regular meetings. Also, they seldom to talk with their groupmates and workmates because they want their personal space and they do enjoy silence.