**Cross-cultural journal**

**Task A: What have you learned about Finnish lifestyle, culture, history, society, communications,etc.**

Finnish people really like their privacy. When they enter the bus they want to sit alone and maybe just reflect on what happened during the day. Sometimes they change seats just to get a place on their own. Additionally, it is not usual to greet friends or co-workers when they meet each other. Just a short nod or maybe a smile and that is it.

When Finnish people eat, sometimes they talk to each other and sometimes not. One similarity is that they eat at such a fast pace that it is impossible for people who aren't used to eating at that speed to participate in the conversation, let alone that they can finish their lunch at the same time as everyone else. When the Finns are done with everything, they just leave and go back to work.

Finns are very proud of their history, even though they have been ruled by Swedes or Russians several times. That is maybe because the Russians made Finland an independent region and made them the first country where woman were allowed to vote for a government.

Another interesting aspect is the language in Finland. Compared to Swedish, it is very different and it is closer to estonian or hungarian. Also, Swedish is the second main language and has been the first main language in the past. In Finland everything is written in Finnish and Swedish, for example when you enter a supermarket. In the Finnish language they have many different cases in which they can express what they want to say. But it makes it even more difficult to learn and to understand it.

In Finland the taxes are very high when you earn a lot of money. But everybody agrees with that because the government uses the money to help for example students during their studies with financial support.

So all in all, Finns are very introverted and like their privacy. But it does not mean that they don't like you. It is just their way of life.

**Task B: Your observation/description and opinion/analysis on some event you saw**

When I got the confirmation that I can study abroad in Finland, I was very looking forward to that because I never been to Scandinavia or Finland. The first thing I learnied when I arrived here, Finland is not Scandinavia. So from now on I just call these countries the northern countries.

If my tutor would not have picked me up at the airport, I might have been lost. Of course I could have found out which bus I should take, but the next problem would have been where i was supposed to leave the bus. Only in the line 550 there is an announcement. In all the other busses you just have to know where to leave. With the help of my tutors and my smart phone I got used to it and driving with the busses became more and more easy.

My accommodation is in Espoonlahti. When I got the mail from HOAS that I can have a room there I was just thinking about taking it. Then I have a roof over my head. Actually, there are good and bad sites of this location. The nature is very nice. It is only 5 to 10 minutes walk to come to the beach or the cliffs. And I think when the sea won't be frozen anymore, it is even better. But it is very far away from the campus and most of the activities provided for the students. However, now I have to say that I like the transportation system in Helsinki. There is always a bus you can take to go to the campus or helsinki and it takes only 25 minutes to get to Helsinki. That is very fast when you consider that it is more than 20 kilometers away.

The teaching in Finland and Helsinki is different to the one in Germany. Here, you have small classes and nearly every lecture includes practical work. Therefore, it is a very good learning atmosphere. Another thing that really surprised me is that the lectueres are called with their first names. In Germany it would be impossible to realise that. I noticed, that this is not a kind of low respectfulness. It is more a way to have a low hierarchy and that the communication is easier.

All in all, I think that Finland is a very interesting country. After one and a half month there is a lot fro me to discover and I think i will enjoy it completely.