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07.07.2013

Nordplus exchange report, spring 2013

I had studied journalism for one and a half year in the University of Jyväskylä, Finland before I got the opportunity to do an exchange semester in the Danish School of Media- and Journalism, in Aarhus, Denmark. In Aarhus I studied TV-journalism course that lasted one semester, four months. In the same class there were 21 international students from all over the world. Most of the students came out side of Europe, for example from Korea and Canada.

It was a good choice to go for an exchange. It is probably one of the best ways of meeting people from different places, building network and connecting. The Danish School of Media and Journalism gave us proper education of the practical part of doing TV-journalism. And what I have heard from the students doing either photojournalism or multimedia journalism courses, they all have been pleased with the quality of education in that school.

Going to exchange was also quite easy. I got a scholarship from Nordplus network and the Danish School of Media and Journalism had arranged housing, help with all registrations and even a mentor to pick us up from train station at the date of arrival. So I had a feeling that the school really cared for exchange students. The school and mentors also arranged several get-together happenings at the beginning for all the 64 international students that enrolled DMJX this spring.

As a city Aarhus was not so exotic place for a habitant of a Nordic country. I enjoyed my stay in this second largest city of Denmark. The only negative thing was that the student dorm I lived in was really remote from the school and city center. But in general things in Denmark many are quite similar to Finland, so there was no culture shock for me really. Danish people are quite the same as Finnish people, polite and helpful but a bit introverts.

I was lucky to have the Nordplus scholarship to help me finance my exchange. I mean lucky in two ways: The first and minor one is that Denmark is rather expensive country and life as an exchange student includes lots of going out and exploring the surroundings. Even though that is a minor fact it is something that everyone willing to do a semester abroad should consider about. The second and more important reason why scholarship helped me is that the TV-journalism course included travelling that we had to finance by ourselves. TV-course was divided to five different group assignments and for one of them the whole class travelled to a small island called Samsø for few days to film short tv-news clips and then for our final assignment all small groups travelled to different countries in Europe for making a 12-15 minutes long current affair tv-documentary. In our group, me and two other girls travelled to Hungary to do a short tv-documentary about the education of Roma.

Because the course was all about practice and group work, I think I learned a lot of doing tv-journalism. I know how to use camera, how to edit and what is the structure and content of good tv-journalism. But most of all I learned to work in groups better than I did before. It was everything but easy and during the semester there were lots of fights between members of the groups. But I think, even though it is not always pleasant at

all, it is very important to learn how you behave in a group and how you could improve it. That is what I learned in Denmark.

I wish I would have learned speaking Danish during my stay in Aarhus. Because I can speak and write Swedish I thought that the Danish language would be a piece of cake for me. It was not. I did not participate to a language course, because I did not have enough time. That was a shame because now after the four months in Denmark I cannot have a conversation with a Dane in Danish. I can read Danish newspapers and I do understand some conversations but it is too easy to switch to English than trying to learn little by little. If I would have the choice now, I would have participated to the language course. After all it was free of charge. And I recommend the same for everyone going to another country for exchange. Especially between Nordic countries it is important to learn each languages. It helps to build stronger networks and also to do your job as a journalist.

I recommend going to exchange for everyone. It is an opportunity that everyone should use. You will grow, make friends, expand your views and learn a lot. It will not only improve your English or social skills, it will make you more open minded person in general.