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# SAFELY ABROAD - GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

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**SAFELY ABROAD — GUIDE FOR  
STUDENTS**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This guide has been written for all students who travel abroad in connection with a student exchange programme or work placement. For the sake of clarity, we will call both types of activities overseas assignments.

This guide provides useful guidelines and methods for identifying and avoiding risks during travel. We hope this guide will help you pick up information that will make your trip safer and more enjoyable. The nature and number of measures will vary depending on your destination. Plan your safety measures according to the needs posed by your country of destination. Irrespective of where you are travelling, the core of travel safety hinges on good planning, foresight, your own actions as well as general alertness and consciousness.

Every traveller should acknowledge that, despite good preparation, anyone can find themselves in an unexpected situation, such as an accident. How you prepare before setting off may have a big impact on the ultimate consequences and on how quickly you can return to normal everyday life.

This guide contains information on all the stages of travel. It first focuses on travel planning, which includes risk assessment and health-related considerations, such as vaccinations and medicines. Topics related to passports, visa, driving licences and the European Health Insurance Card are also discussed, as are questions regarding cash, credit cards, insurance, luggage and the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The third chapter deals with setting off from Finland and with life in the country of destination, such as transport, housing, jet lag, health risks as well as travel safety kits and travel pharmacies. The fourth chapter focuses on unexpected events and the recommended procedures to follow in such cases. The fifth and final chapter deals with the evaluation carried out after the trip.

## 2. CONCRETE ADVICE FOR OUTGOING STUDENTS

**T**his chapter deals with various aspects that you should take into account before setting off.

### 2.1 Planning your trip

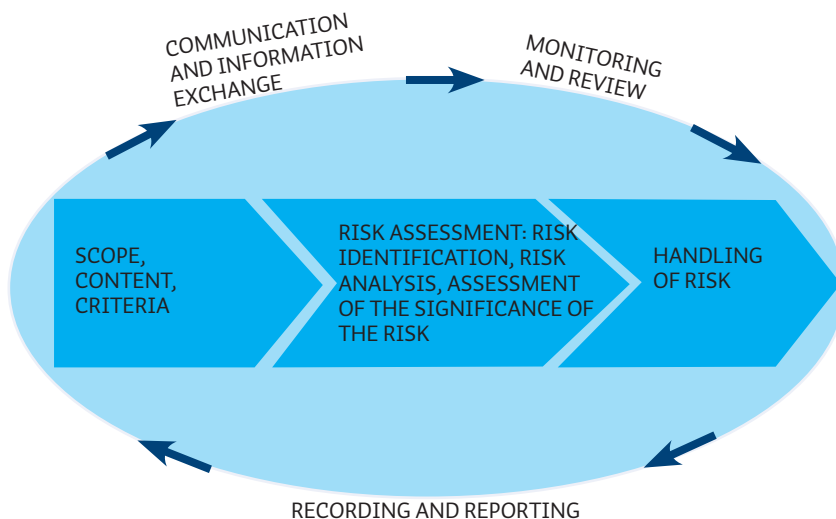
Begin planning your trip well in advance. Your plan should cover your transfer to the country of destination, activities there and your return to Finland.

#### **First step: risk assessment**

Prior to your trip, get acquainted with local legislation, practices, customs and habits in your destination. Pay special attention to aspects that are different in your home country and your destination. Areas to focus on include local culture, religion, living conditions and the safety situation. Keep in mind that the safety situation may differ considerably in different regions of the country of destination. If you plan to visit several areas, check the situation in each of them. Crises arise unexpectedly, so you should actively follow any developments in safety. (SOS International 2016; Transparency International 2018; Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2017a.)

Travel-related risks should be identified during the planning stage. This will help you decide whether it is safe enough to take off. It is easier to identify risks if you consider them from various perspectives, including your personal characteristics, assets, country of destination, form of travel, housing and leisure time.

Risk refers to the impact that uncertainty can have on the goals, and it is often described as a combination of the probability of an event taking place and the consequences of the event. Risks can be either positive or negative, but this guide deals with the unwanted, negative kinds. (SFS Opas 73:2011, 8.) Figure 1 depicts the risk management process.



**Figure 1.** Risk management process (SFS-ISO 31000: 2018, 13)

## 2.2 Health information, prescriptions and vaccinations

Determine the health regulations applicable in the country of destination as well as the main risks to health well in advance of your trip. If you have a chronic illness, consult with your physician to determine whether travelling may be harmful to you. You can find useful information on the website of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. You can also turn to your local health centre for advice.

Take your health information with you, including details on your blood group, illnesses and any regular medication, and store the information in a place where the medical staff can find it, if required (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 23). Illnesses that may restrict air travel are, among others, a recent myocardial infarction, cerebral stroke, symptomatic coronary artery disease, severe chronic and acute pulmonary diseases, severe anemia and/or need for oxygen therapy, psychotic behaviour or other serious mental health disorders as well as certain infectious diseases. (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 176).

Take the required amount of any regularly used medication with you. For security and border control, you should also take the prescriptions with you as well as scan and save them in, for example, your email. You could also ask your physician to write a statement on the purpose of your medication to help you obtain an equivalent medicine in the destination, if required. It may be that a specific manufacturer's products are not available in the country you are travelling to, so you have to opt for an equivalent product.

Check the recommended vaccinations for your destination well in advance. A severe primary disease, such as cardiac insufficiency or uncontrolled diabetes, may require

advance preparations up to three months prior to departure. In the case of a healthy individual, travel preparations should begin one to two months before a trip to tropical destinations and a few weeks before a trip to southern Europe. Recommendations for individual countries can be found on the website of the National Institute for Health and Welfare. (National Institute for Health and Welfare 2016a.) Also ask for a vaccination certificate and take it with you in case you fall ill.

## 2.3 Passport, visa, driving licence and the European Health Insurance Card

Before travelling abroad, check the entry requirements into the country and the required travel documents. The most common ones are passport or identity card and visa. Some countries may also require other documents. (SOS International 2016; Heljaste et al. 2008, 124.) In some countries, the traveller's passport must be valid for six months after the end of the trip.

Well before your trip, check any visa requirements on the website of the country's embassy. When applying for a visa, ensure that the period of validity is adequate. In the case of a work placement, make sure that the visa entitles you to carry out the intended work. Further information is available from the destination country's mission in Finland. If no such mission operates in Finland, locate the closest mission handling Finnish citizens' entry into the country. Information about individual countries can also be found on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website. A residence permit is usually required if you plan to spend over three months in the destination. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018c; 2018d.) When Finnish citizens travel to another Schengen state, a passport or identity card is usually adequate travel documentation. If the trip to another Schengen state lasts for more than three months, citizens of Schengen states must register their stay at the local police station. The Schengen states include Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018c.)

Check the condition and validity of your passport well before your trip. If your passport is torn or damaged, apply for a new one without delay. Your trip may come to a halt at a border control post due to a damaged or defective passport. (Police 2018b.) Take a copy of all your documents and carry them separately from the originals. A good option is to scan the documents and send them to your own email where you can access them, if required. National legislations specify the kind of driving licence accepted in each country. Under the EU's directive on driving licences, a licence granted in an EU Member State is valid in all other Member States. Some countries require drivers to obtain a local driving licence if they stay in the country for more than three or six months. Car rental companies may set their own conditions on driving licences, which differ from legislation. You could consider getting an international driving permit, which is an official translation of your national licence, translated into the main world languages. The content and layout of an international

driving licence are specified in international road traffic conventions. In Finland, the Automobile and Touring Club of Finland has the right, granted by the government, to issue international driving permits. The applicant's right to drive will be checked with the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency before the permit is issued. In addition to an international driving permit, you also need to take your national driving licence with you. The website of the Automobile and Touring Club of Finland contains information about the countries that accept the international driving permit and the countries that do not, the countries that require drivers to hold an international driving permit and the countries where the permit is recommended. (Automobile and Touring Club of Finland 2018.)

When travelling to other European countries, you should apply for a free European Health Insurance Card that may be needed in the event of accident or sudden illness. You can order the card through Kela's online services. The European Health Insurance Card entitles the holder to necessary medical treatment, in line with the practices followed in the country of destination, in the EU Member States, EEC countries and Switzerland. The card can be used in public health care, as well as at private practices and hospitals with a contract with the public health insurance scheme. (Kela 2018a, 2018b.) Keep in mind that the European Health Insurance Card is not a replacement for travel insurance.

## 2.4 Cash and credit card

Before your trip, make sure you can use your debit or credit card in the country. Write down your card number in case you lose or misplace your card. Also store the phone number for cancelling lost cards in your phone prior to departure. Many accommodation providers and car rental companies require payment to be made by credit card. However, credit cards are not accepted everywhere. When using a debit or credit card, do not lose sight of it at any time. When entering your PIN code, protect it, for example by shielding the keypad with your other hand. Check the final amount before accepting payment. Keep the receipts for your purchases and ask for a receipt for any unsuccessful payment transaction. If you feel uncertain, use cash instead. (Heljaste et al. 2008, 125; Korttiturvallisuus.fi 2018.) A person in your home country can transfer money around the clock through an online money transfer service. You can then pick up the transferred sum in cash, or through your bank account or mobile wallet. (Western Union 2016.)

## 2.5 Insurance

Statutory accident insurance that companies take out for their employees is valid all around the world during working hours, but the protection it offers is limited. It is recommendable to take out voluntary travel insurance. Passenger insurance offers protection against illness, injury or accident occurring during the trip, as well as interruption or cancellation of the trip or delay to the trip. You can also take out luggage insurance, which covers theft, damage or delay of luggage. Travel liability

insurance covers damage caused to a third party. Legal expenses travel insurance provides compensation for legal and court expenses. (Fennia 2018; Lähitapiola 2018.)

## 2.6 Luggage

If you are travelling by air, acquaint yourself with the security check instructions in advance. They explain what items are allowed in your carry-on luggage and what you must check in. Also pay attention to the items that are not allowed on flights under any circumstances. (Finavia 2018c.) You should also note the size and amount of carry-on luggage specified by the airline. This may vary depending on the airline.

Pack your things in a durable suitcase or rucksack. Luggage that is checked in may get lost or end up in a different destination. Make a list of the items you have packed in case your luggage goes missing. Attach a luggage tag with your contact information to your bag in case the bag is lost. Pack the most necessary items and items that are most difficult to replace in your carry-on luggage. (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 31.) As for valuable devices and items, write down their serial numbers and other identification.

Check the weight of your luggage while packaging so that your bags do not end up too heavy. In air travel, restrictions apply to the weight and content of carry-on luggage. Regulations apply, for example, to electronics, cosmetics, alcohol, food items, scissors, knives, matches, lighters and e-cigarettes. Separate rules are also in place for fishing, hiking, hunting and skiing equipment. Further information is available on the Finavia website (2018c).

### 2.7 2.7 Ministry for Foreign Affairs website

If you have doubts about the safety of your destination, check early on with the international affairs coordinator whether the country is a safe place to travel to. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs publishes travel bulletins with information about the safety status of different countries. The bulletins are available for countries in which Finland has a mission or of which reliable information can be obtained.

Collect as much information as possible in advance about the country and travel destination. Follow the websites of official parties and well-known travel companies. Before your trip, find the contact information for the Finnish embassy in your country of destination and store it electronically or in print for later use. Embassies help travellers in all emergencies, including cases of crime, accident and illness. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018b.) In the case of emergency, travellers should primarily contact the local authorities, who are also responsible for assisting foreigners in the country. If this is not possible, you can turn to the 24/7 service of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. It provides round-the-clock service every day of the year. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2017c.)





Terminal 1  
A-E









## 3. ON THE DAY OF DEPARTURE

**T**his chapter focuses on the actual departure and topics such as heading off, accommodation, jet lag and health risks.

### 3.1 Travel and safety

Check that you are carrying all your travel documents before you leave. If you forget your passport, the police service point at the Helsinki-Vantaa airport can issue a temporary passport. It is valid for a single trip. (Police 2018a.)

Find out in advance how and when you need to check in. The procedures differ depending on the destination, airline and travel operator. You can find instructions for the security check procedure on the airport's website. Check in advance which terminal the airline uses. Also take into account the airport's rush hours. For example, the busiest times at the Helsinki-Vantaa airport are in the morning from 6:00 am to 8:30 am and in the afternoon from 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm as well as at the beginning of school vacations in June, September and December. At check-in, you register your luggage that will be transported in the cargo area. Passengers and their carry-on luggage then pass through security check before being allowed to the gates. (Finavia 2018a; Finavia 2018b; Finavia 2018d.) Go to the assigned gate in good time.

The traffic culture in your travel destination may be very different from that in your home country. When travelling abroad, find out in advance what routes and forms of travel are considered to be safe. It is important to follow what is going on in your surroundings. Move in areas where you see other people. To increase safety when walking, proceed purposefully and favour pedestrian routes along the main roads. Stay away from slums and areas known to be dangerous.

Leave any valuables and excess cash in the place you are staying at. It is important to look after your belongings on public transport, at railway and underground stations and at market places. Do not show off your possessions and avoid moving alone

in the dark, at night and especially if drunk. Also avoid rides offered by unknown people as well as unofficial transport options. Use official taxis that you can order by phone and keep written driving instructions in the local language at hand. Do not pick up hitch-hikers. (Hellsten 2009, 201–202; Heljaste et al. 2008, 126–128; SOS International. 2016.)

### 3.2 Safe housing

If you plan to stay abroad for a longer period, find out about accommodation well before your trip. The recommendations for housing in your home country also apply to life abroad. If possible, visit the area in advance, both daytime and later in the evening. Avoid ground-floor apartments because of the risk of break-in. As for escaping a building, the floor you are on makes a difference, so avoid apartments on the fourth floor and higher. (Hellsten 2009, 202.) Reserve your room from one of the recommended hotels (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2017, 17). You can also find information about suitable accommodation through your workplace or place of study. Once in your place of residence, locate the emergency exits as soon as possible (SOS International 2016).

Ensure that your room is equipped with a smoke alarm or bring one with you from Finland. Make a visual inspection of the condition of electric devices. When leaving your accommodation, ensure that the doors are locked and the windows are closed. Do not invite strangers to your apartment. If possible, use a safe-deposit box for your valuables, cash and travel documents. Also check the best route from your apartment to the workplace or place of study in advance.

### 3.3 Jet lag

Jet lag occurs after flights across multiple time zones. It is easier to travel west than east, because our internal circadian rhythm follows a schedule slightly over 24 hours. Symptoms of jet lag include morning or afternoon fatigue, broken sleep at night, nausea, headache, irritability, trouble concentrating, abdominal problems, dizziness and decline in physical performance. The symptoms arise from a disruption in the sleep-wake cycle and other bodily rhythms. (Terveyskirjasto 2012.)

There is no point trying to adjust your circadian rhythm during a trip lasting only a few days. The best way to maintain your rhythm is to avoid bright sunlight at the wrong time compared to your internal clock. On the plane, set your watch to the time of your destination. (Terveyskirjasto 2012.)

Light plays a key role in synchronising our circadian rhythm and it determines how quickly the traveller's internal clock adapts to the destination. Use sunlight to synchronise your biological clock during the first two days at the destination, as described in Table 8.

(Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 71, 73.) After an eastward flight, spending time in bright sunlight in the morning and daytime speeds up the adjustment of the circadian rhythm. After flying west, add light especially in the evening and early night-time during the first days. (Terveyskirjasto 2012.)

On the third day, gradually begin delaying your exposure to light if you have flown west, and, if you have flown east, begin to expose yourself to light earlier. (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 71, 73.) Dark sunglasses weaken the synchronising effect of sunlight. Exercise is a good cure for jet lag. (Terveyskirjasto 2012.)

**Table 1.** Using sunlight to synchronise the biological clock (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 74; Current Care Guidelines 2015)

Flight from Finland	1st day at destination		2nd day at destination	
	light/time of day	no light/time of day	light/time of day	no light/time of day
west/time difference				
7 h (New York)	3:00 pm–9:00 pm	10:00 pm–4:00 am	7:00 pm–midnight	1:00 am–
10 h (Los Angeles)	noon–6:00 pm	7:00 pm–1:00 am	4:00 pm–9:00 pm	10:00 pm–
12 h (Anchorage)	10:00 am–4:00 pm	5:00 pm–11:00 pm	2:00 pm–7:00 pm	8:00 pm–
east/time difference				
6 h (Beijing)	11:00 am–5:00 pm	4:00 am–10:00 am	10:00 am–3:00 pm	– 9:00 am
7 h (Tokyo)	noon–6:00 pm	5:00 am–11:00 am	11:00 am–4:00 pm	– 10:00 am
9 h (Sydney)	2:00 pm–8:00 pm	7:00 am–1:00 pm	1:00 pm–6:00 pm	– noon

### 3.4 Health risks during travel

Good hygiene is important to health. Unwashed hands always carry microbes, and the importance of handwashing can hardly be overemphasised. By carefully washing your hands you can help prevent the spread of stomach flu and influenza. (Finnish Food Safety Authority 2016.) Many problems can be avoided through proper handwashing and careful selection of what you eat. In high-risk areas, opt for cooked foods only. (Matkailijan terveysopas 2016.) The climate in the destination also affects health. The high temperatures and humidity of tropical countries can quickly fatigue anyone unused to such conditions. Many countries, and especially large cities, suffer from poor air quality. Air pollution strains the heart and respiratory organs, in addition to irritating mucous membranes and causing skin and eye symptoms. (Terveyskirjasto 2017a; Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018a.)

Travel insurance usually does not cover normal health care. At the beginning of your stay, find out where your nearest reliable medical centre is located. (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 191; Terveyskirjasto 2016.)

## Diarrhoea

Traveller's diarrhoea is usually contracted from contaminated food or drink. The risk of developing traveller's diarrhoea is highest during the warmer seasons and in areas with inadequate hygiene or poor access to clean water. Traveller's diarrhoea is caused by bacteria, viruses and protozoa, even though the infectious agent usually cannot be identified based on the symptoms alone. The incubation period of bacteria and viruses is 6–72 hours and that of protozoa 1–2 weeks. This is why traveller's diarrhoea usually begins towards the end of the first week of travel. In addition to diarrhoea, other common symptoms include fever, headache, nausea and abdominal cramps. The diarrhoea usually lasts for 3–5 days. There is no vaccination giving general protection against traveller's diarrhoea. If a returning traveller has a high fever in addition to diarrhoea, this may point to malaria or dengue fever. (Matkailijan terveysopas 2016.)

Food and hand hygiene can help prevent traveller's diarrhoea. For health reasons, it is extremely important to wash your hands with soap or use a hand sanitizer before handling food, before eating, after going to the bathroom and after handling raw green vegetables, root vegetables and raw meat. Use bottled water as drinking water, to brush your teeth and to make coffee or tea. Do not use ice cubes to cool drinks. (Matkailijan terveysopas 2016; The Finnish Society for International Health 2016.)





The safest foods include:

- Fresh fruit that you peel yourself
- Vegetables served hot, cooked or in baked dishes
- Bread and other dry grain products
- Freshly prepared, hot meat and fish dishes and soups
- Carbonated, bottled beverages
- Hot drinks, such as coffee, tea and boiled water. (Matkailijan terveysesopas 2016.)

If you are uncertain about the standard of food hygiene, avoid the following:

- Fruit and vegetables that you cannot wash or peel yourself, as well as berries
- Food from street kitchens
- Soft-boiled eggs, omelettes and scrambled eggs
- Sauces
- Oysters, mussels, crabs, crawfish and other seafood
- Cold desserts
- Cold cuts
- Homemade preserved food
- Mayonnaise-based salads
- Juices and drinks with ice cubes
- Unpacked and unpasteurised milk, cream, ice cream, butter and cream cheese
- Raw and inadequately cooked meat, fish or egg dishes that are served cold or lukewarm.

(Matkailijan terveysesopas 2016; The Finnish Society for International Health 2016.)



## Sexually transmitted diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases are a considerable travel-related health risk. You can easily avoid them through proper protection. According to statistics, the likelihood of contracting a sexually transmitted disease when travelling is 6–8 times higher compared to normal daily life in the home country. Vaccinations against sexually transmitted diseases are only available for the hepatitis B and papilloma viruses. The best way to avoid being infected is to abstain from temporary sexual relationships. Always use a condom in a temporary sexual relationship. Take a supply with you from Finland, because they may not be easily available in all countries. The most commonly contracted diseases during travel are chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis. One in ten chlamydia infections is typically contracted in another European country. Half the gonorrhoea and syphilis infections are contracted abroad. Gonorrhoea is usually contracted in southeast Asia, while syphilis is common among travellers to the Baltic countries and Russia. LVG infections from sex between men have been reported from different areas of Europe, the USA and Canada. (National Institute for Health and Welfare 2016b.)

## Coping

Mental balance and stress management are important aspects when studying or working abroad. It is necessary to take care of your own coping. Realistic expectations, good control of your own work, participating in trip planning, getting acquainted in advance with your country of destination and its culture all help you adjust to the new situation. It is particularly important to monitor your health and ability to cope if you travel abroad repeatedly and for long periods of time. Aspects to keep in mind include the quality of sleep, adequate recovery, lifestyle and risk factors related to cardiovascular diseases. (National Institute for Health and Welfare 2016c.)

The mental load from work or studies is related to the organisation of work or studies, the content of work or studies and the social functioning of the work or study community. Turn to the coordinator for international affairs or your supervisor for help if you begin to experience problems with coping. To achieve the best possible results, corrective measures should be adopted as soon as possible after problems emerge. (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2015, 7, 12.)



### 3.5 3.5 Travel safety kit and travel pharmacy

The content of your travel safety kit depends on your country of destination. It may include, for example a torch and a spare set of batteries, disinfectant cloths, first aid supplies or smoke and burglar alarms.

It is also a good idea to take a ‘travel pharmacy’ with you. It will offer you help for pain and fever, insect bites, stomach flu, blisters and sores, among other things. Other recommended products to take along include sun screen, motion sickness medication, antidiarrhoeal medicine and, perhaps, temporary dental filling material. (Terveyskirjasto 2012.) Medication for primary diseases are also part of the travel pharmacy. In developing countries, counterfeit medicines account for as much as 10–30 per cent of medicines on the market, and they can even be found in medical wholesale outlets, retail stores and pharmacies. The number of counterfeit medicines has also increased in economically developed countries, including the EU. Since it is impossible for medicine users to identify counterfeit products, you should take any medication you need for a primary disease with you from home. (Finnish Medicines Agency 2018; Kanta Services 2017.) It is best to transport medication in your carry-on luggage and in the original packages. Also pack the prescriptions for medication in your carry-on luggage where you can easily access them, if required, in customs or security control. You can ask the pharmacy or your doctor for an English-language, signed list of your prescription medication. (Kanta Services 2017.)



## 4. IN THE EVENT OF THE UNEXPECTED

**C**rime is present around the world, and robberies and pickpocketing also happen abroad. This chapter focuses on maintaining contact and communication during travel, as well as adopting a careful approach to overly helpful individuals. The chapter also provides advice on what to do if you lose your passport, face an emergency or accident or are the victim of crime.

### 4.1 Communication and contact

Write down your main contact information at home and abroad. As a minimum, include in your list the closest consulate or local mission, the local emergency number, family or close relatives in your home country and your local contact. You should also store an ICE contact (In Case of Emergency) in your mobile phone so that the authorities can contact your close relatives in the event of, for example, an accident. (Bergholm, Leppänen, Antti-Poika, Härmä & Mukala 2015, 191.) It is important to maintain regular contact during your trip with other people in your travelling group, at home, at school and in your local organisation so that any emergency can be quickly identified.

In the case of a crisis, use social media if you cannot rely on phone lines and other means of communication to function. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finnish missions abroad have several websites and social media accounts for this purpose (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018b).

When moving around in your destination, keep only the necessary items on you. It is best to keep your passport, money and valuables in the hotel's safe-deposit box or other secure place. A wallet in your back pocket or a handbag slung over the back of your chair are easy targets for thieves. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2016a.) In the event of a robbery, hand over what the robber wants. You can carry a fake wallet with you, with only a little money and a few receipts in it, and hand it over to the robber. Carry your own wallet in a safe place, close to your body. (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2017, 24–25.)

## 4.2 Excessive helpfulness

Be careful around overly friendly and helpful individuals (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2017, 25). A description of ways in which tourists are typically tricked can be found in, for example, *Iltasanomat* (2011, 2017). Do not accept items pushed on you, because, the next thing you know, you may be demanded for payment. When taking a taxi, determine in advance the distance and price level. It is a good idea to agree on the price in advance. A broken taximeter has very likely been turned off, and in this case, you should agree on the price before the taxi sets off. Be sceptical about suggestions and recommendations. If the taxi driver says the hotel you are heading to is fully booked or closed and recommends another destination, do not agree to this. The new destination may be farther off or more expensive than the original option. Also exercise caution regarding shops or restaurants that the taxi driver may recommend. Steer clear of people around bus or train stations recommending good lodgings. Unexpected helpfulness may be dangerous, and you could be robbed on the way to such lodgings. Spontaneous actions may very well be related to organised crime, and a helpful person could be a pickpocket. Do not exchange money with currency exchangers operating on the street. (*Iltasanomat* 2011, 2017.)

Follow local customs and legislation and show respect for the country's religion and culture. Keep in mind that foreigners may be required to dress and behave in a certain way owing to religious or social norms. (SOS International 2016.)

Be careful at ATMs and petrol machines. Be watchful of your environment. Overly helpful people can be dangerous. When queuing for the machine, keep your card in your wallet, and if the machine looks in any way suspicious, find another one. You must be able to use the machine undisturbed. If an unknown person stands next to you, do not use the machine. Make sure you hide your PIN from others when entering it. (Korttiturvallisuus.fi 2081).

Always check the bill before paying at stores and restaurants. When paying by card, keep your card in view at all times. It is also important to protect your PIN code at stores and restaurants. (Korttiturvallisuus.fi 2081).

### 4.3 Losing your passport

If you lose your passport, report the loss or theft at the local police office, if possible. You can apply for a new passport for your return trip at any Finnish mission that issues passports. If there is no Finnish mission in your country of destination, you can get an emergency travel document (ETD) from the mission of another EU Member State. A copy of your passport is helpful when reporting theft and loss or applying for a new passport. You also need a photo to get a new passport. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2016b.)

### 4.4 Emergency, accident and robbery

Prepare for emergencies in advance, even if your destination is a low-risk area. Keep in mind that the risk category of a country may change quickly. In the case of emergency, take into account the aspects mentioned in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Aspects to ensure and avoid in case of emergency (SOS International 2016.)

Make sure to:	Avoid:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be alert and follow developments.</li><li>• Charge the battery of your phone.</li><li>• Store important numbers in your phone.</li><li>• Carry your passport or other official documentation with you to prove your identity to the authorities.</li><li>• Follow the news through local media or, alternatively, through international news agencies, such as the CNN and BBC.</li><li>• If uncertain, ask the locals for advice.</li><li>• Follow the authorities' recommendations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attracting attention</li><li>• Big crowds</li><li>• Public transport</li></ul>

Report with the local police if you have been in an accident or been robbed. In a criminal case, you need the crime report number supplied by the police. (The Centre for Occupational Safety 2017.) Victim Support Finland (2014) offers support and advice to victims of crime abroad, and can be contacted through the contact form or by calling the service number available during office hours.





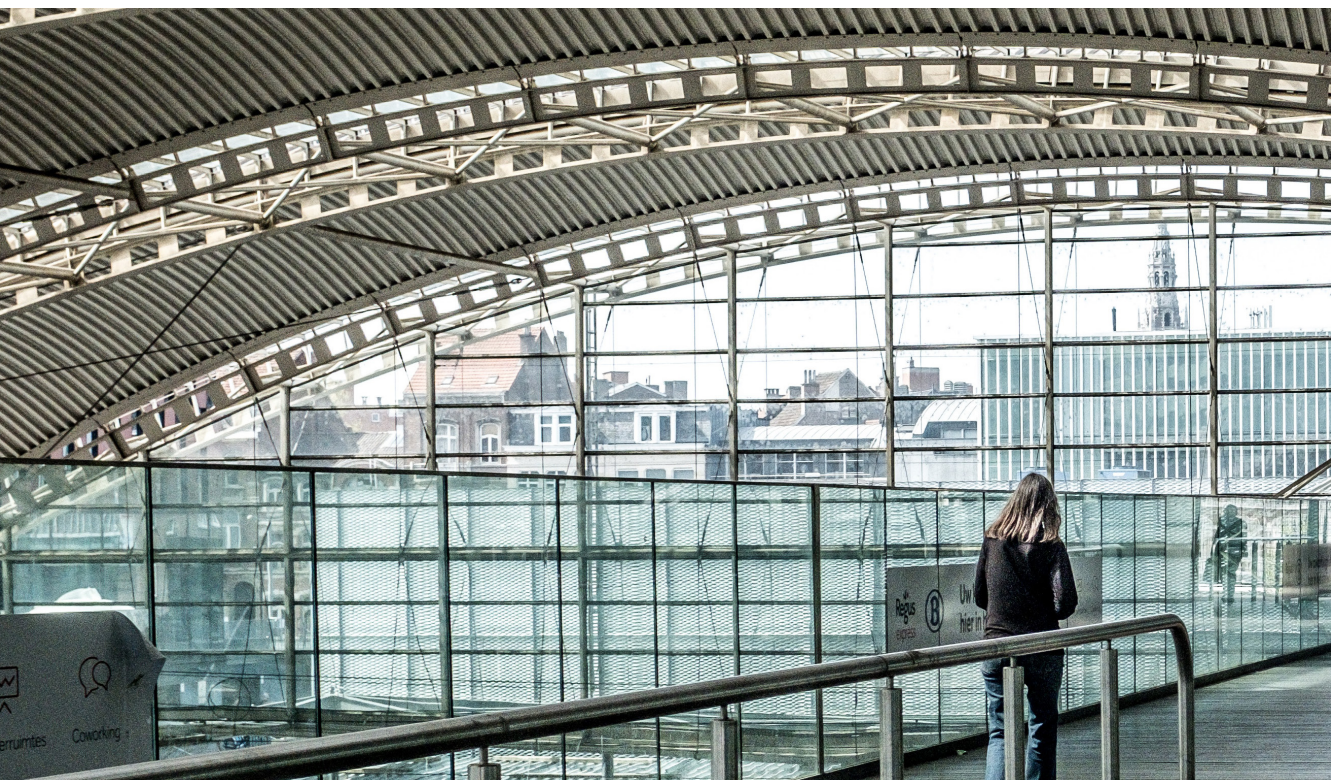


## 5. AFTER YOUR TRIP

**A**fter your return, take time to evaluate what aspects contributed to the success of your trip and whether you should do something differently before or during your next trip. You can do this, for example, with your own tutor or the coordinator for international affairs to ensure that successes and failures can be taken into account when organising future travel.

Contact the nurse at your campus if you detect any symptoms after your trip or if your workplace requires samples from people arriving from the country you stayed in. Take into account that you may experience temporary difficulties readapting after a trip or a long-term stay in another country.

If your trip involved a traumatic experience, it is important that you consult with, for example, a nurse at the latest when returning to your home country. Professionals are best positioned to help and find the appropriate support for your needs.





Review the risk assessment you prepared before the trip and answer the following questions:

- Were all the key risks identified before the trip?  
If not, what new risks did you observe during the trip?
- Were adequate measures taken to reduce the risks identified in advance?  
If not, what corrective measures would be appropriate?
- Were the measures taken in the planning stage adequate?  
If not, what corrective measures would be appropriate?
- Did the trip to the destination go as planned?  
If not, what corrective measures would be appropriate?
- Did everything go as planned in the destination?  
If not, what corrective measures would be appropriate?
- Did the return trip go as planned?  
If not, what corrective measures would be appropriate?





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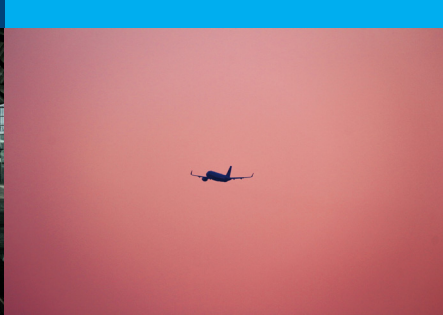
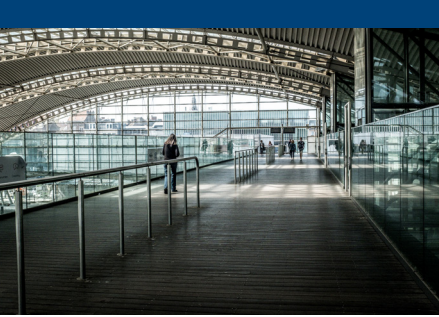
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## SAFELY ABROAD - GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

All members of our university community are entitled to a safe study and work environment – also when staying abroad – and this cannot be compromised under any circumstances. As a student, you have an important role in ensuring your safety. For example, obtaining country-specific insurance is one of your main responsibilities, as is finding out about local restrictions and instructions. Check in advance what you can legally take with you to the country of destination. Also ensure that you have adequate vaccination protection and take care of other health-related matters well before your trip.