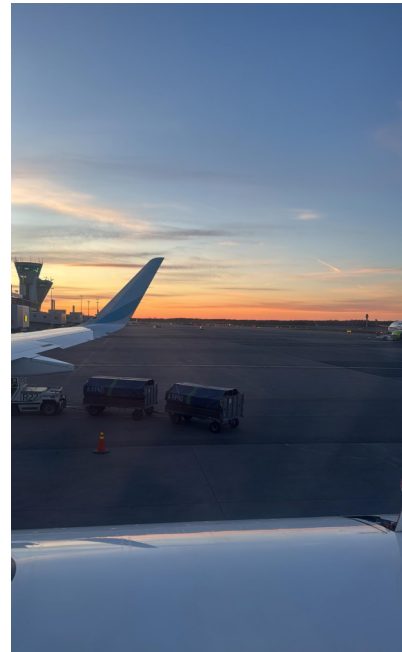


**International Project Week**  
**3 – 8 May 2026**  
**Helsinki, Finland**

**Preparation**

First, all students were invited to apply for the excursion by mail from Prof Dr Michael Jaensch. The mail included general information about the event: Where is it held? How long does it last? What activities does it have in store? ... After that, the interested ones submitted their transcripts of record with a motivation letter. The Professor then chose six of us from all the applicants. We are from different semesters in the Bachelor's program, but we share the same interest in the topic of sustainability. We got to know each other and the professor in a kick-off meeting beforehand, where most of the paperwork was completed, and questions were answered by Prof. Jaensch. We even created a WhatsApp group to discuss further and keep in touch if anything happens. And a few weeks later, we were heading to Helsinki for the event.



**Arrival**

The International Project Week (IPW) officially started on Monday, 4 May, but our group began arriving throughout the preceding weekend, with everyone landing by Sunday morning. Those who arrived early began to settle in for their accommodation and wander around the city, discovering what Helsinki had to offer. Our housing arrangements differed throughout the group, with only a few people sharing, whilst others opted to remain solo or with friends. After gathering our bearings, our first joint activity would take place on late Sunday afternoon.

**Sunday**

On Sunday, there was a meeting planned in the late afternoon to get to know the other exchange students from the different universities. - mostly from Germany and Belgium. We met in front of the Oodi library, got to know each other a bit and took some pictures. Afterwards, the group dispersed. Some went to eat something, explore the city a bit more or went into the library.

## Monday

On Monday morning, we were welcomed by our student assistants, who guided us into the auditorium for the Welcome Ceremony. We were informed about how the week was going to look for us and that we will be randomly matched into groups. There was a guest lecturer from the Finnish company Metsä, which introduced us to the topic of sustainability by elaborating on how the firm operates.



After the Opening Ceremony, we received little papers with our group numbers and assigned rooms, we collected our Mensa Card and went to meet our group. We were introduced to our company case and what exactly we would be working on during the week. Then, everyone went to the mensa during the oddly early lunch break, which was at 11:30hrs. Some people stayed with their groups, some went to look for their friends.

After lunch, everyone attended two lectures held by guest lecturers from partner universities of Metropolia. They were 1.5hrs long each time, so we were occupied from 12:45hrs onwards. Our first official day ended at 16:00hrs.

The student assistants had kindly arranged a walking tour for us that afternoon. Starting off from the campus entrance, we made our way to the city center together, grabbed an early dinner or snack and then made our way to the harbour. Before the tour, some students took the opportunity to take a ride in the flying cinema, which gave us a nice, digital view of the city. Our walking tour started right at the Helsinki Market Square and ended at Senaatintori. Another Finnish student took her time to prepare a little background information about the sights. After the tour, some students decided to end the evening in an Irish pub, connecting a bit more with the other exchange students.

## Tuesday

Tuesday, again, started with lectures from 9.00hrs-12.00hrs. Afterwards was lunch, where we could talk a bit with the Finnish students following work in the case study groups until 16.00hrs. Working on this case study with the Metropolia students was a great chance to get to know the Finnish culture from a local's perspective. This day, the Finnish students had planned to go to Suomenlinna Island, which



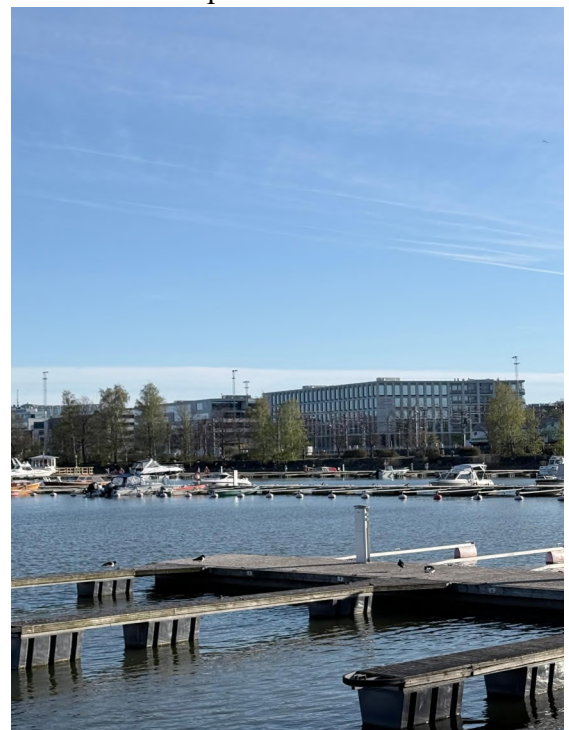


was very beautiful to explore, even though it was quite windy. We took a ferry to the island, where we got the opportunity to see the city from afar and some of the little islands around it. Before going there, we bought some snacks to have a nice picnic while it was still sunny on Soumenlinna. We explored the island and the Sea Fortress on foot and then played some games to end our second day.

### Wednesday

Wednesday, from the morning until the afternoon, was dedicated entirely to case work. We all made our way to the assigned rooms, where we were reunited with our project groups to dive deeper into our company case under the supervision of the respective mentor. Within the larger groups, we worked in our subgroups, conducting thorough research into our assigned company, identifying key challenges of its sustainability concept, and collectively brainstorming suitable solutions. The atmosphere throughout the day was focused and productive.

After a full day of concentrated work, we wrapped up at 15.00hrs, and the Finnish students had something special lined up for us. They organised a traditional sauna experience, giving us the chance to enjoy one of Finland's most iconic cultural traditions. We went to Allas Pool in the city, where we could enjoy the view of the bay, chat with each other and until the heat haunted us down. To cool down, we could use a swimming pool with cold seawater, up to 6°C, as we were informed. It was a welcome and refreshing way to unwind after an intensive day, and a memorable part of the week that we wouldn't have wanted to miss. Afterwards, we went to grab something to eat and again spent the rest of the evening with other exchange students.



## Thursday

This day started with a presentation briefing at 9.00hrs - during which we learnt more about poster presentation requirements and were shown winning posters from previous years. Additionally, we were divided into two rounds and got to know the exact presentation schedule for the next day. After that we returned to our group work, added finishing visual touches to our posters and wrote short scripts for the presentation. We also did trial presentations with our project mentors, during which we received suggestions for improvement and useful insights regarding the style of presenting to the audience. As each person within the group was obligated to present, we selected one person from each of the subgroups to create 4 joined teams for the final presentation. When the work was completed, the presentation was submitted to the organisers before 16.00hrs according to the given deadline. At this point, the only thing left for each one of us was to practise our part.

However, our day wasn't over, yet. The Finnish students who were taking care of us during the whole week organised a goodbye dinner for us at the traditional Finnish restaurant Zetor. We met at around 18.00hrs and were nicely surprised as Metropolia University offered to cover our dinner expenses, 25€ per student, which we think was a genuine and kind gesture on their part. The next event, with which Finnish students (this time the ones with whom we worked on our projects) surprised us, was an invitation to the end-of-semester party. It was organised at one of the clubs in Helsinki and made a good occasion to integrate with each other outside of the university, but also to spend the remaining time with other exchange students.



## Friday

On Friday morning, we gathered at Metropolia University for the final day of the International Project Week. The day focused mainly on the concluding presentations, where each group had the opportunity to present their project outcomes, ideas, and solutions developed

throughout the week. The setup was organised with two rounds of poster presentations, and the groups were assigned randomly into two rounds. We then got 30 minutes to prepare within our separate groups. Participants moved between presentation areas, engaging with different groups, exchanging feedback. After the poster presentations, everyone came together for the closing session, where the organisers reflected on the success of the week and thanked everyone for their contributions. And there were also rewards: snacks and certificates of merit for the best-presenting groups. Our professor's group actually won the 1st presentation round, voted on by other professors 🍷 The event ended with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere as students took group photos, said their farewells, and celebrated the connections and experiences gained during this unforgettable week in Helsinki.



### **Tips**

#### Travel:

- Book flights as soon as you are accepted to the IPW - flight price fluctuations closer to the time of travel can make the trip much more expensive.
- Helsinki public transport tickets are handled through the HSL App, and ticket checks are frequent throughout the city.
- Although the airport is in Zone C, the majority of your trip will be within Zones AB - our recommendation would be to purchase a one-way ticket to and from the airport, whilst having an AB multi-day ticket to save the most money.

#### Accommodation:

- Our group did not all stay together in one type of accommodation, but a shared Airbnb would be recommended for future groups trying to save as much of the costs together.
- We would recommend accommodation near the University in Myyrmäki or in the city centre as Helsinki public transport is well connected, giving you freedom to explore.

*Daliah Achour, Dilek Hristova, Imama Khushi, Long Ba, Tim Williams, Weronika Rus*