

Final report

Name of intern: Uliana Stepanova

Home University/Country: Saint-Petersburg/Russia

Subject: Welfare state

Guest University/Country: Turun Yliopisto/Finland

Name of supervisor: Dmitri Filimonov

Part 1. General information about

1.1 your application (motivation)

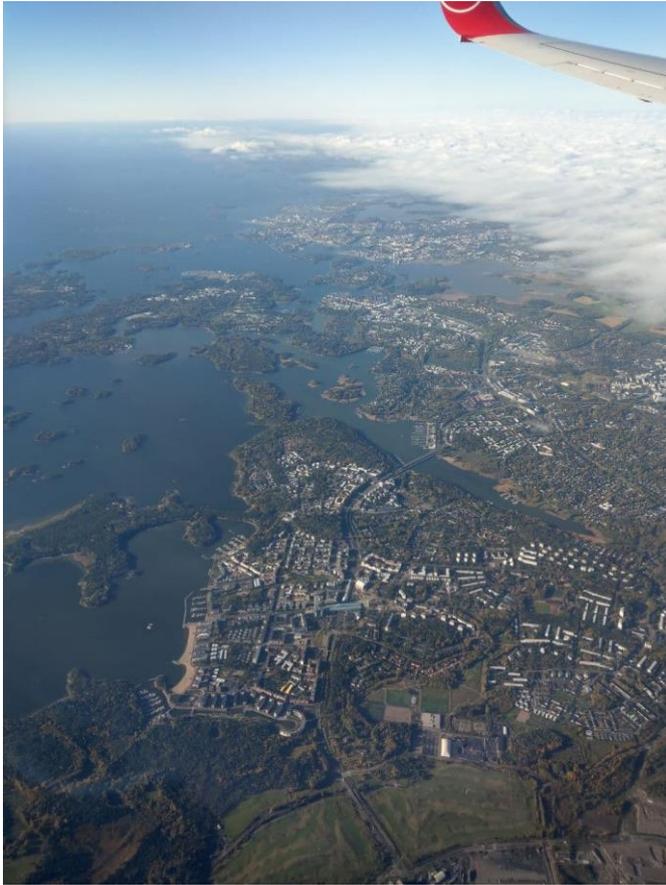
I am a bachelor psychology student keen on neuroscience and consciousness. Bachelor programmes in Russia offer wide theoretical base and deep understanding of the subject with lack of practical skills. Maybe, that is the problem of plenty of educational programmes all over the world. During my previous years of studying, I explored the EEG method and got a little practice in it, I also realised that consciousness is a perspective and enthralling subject I would like to work with. We did not have any disciplines dedicated to it, so I attended various online courses on the topic. My dream was to work with EEG, improve my skills in that method and get closer to people who study consciousness. That is why the Internship programme I found on BARI website was a perfect opportunity for me. I am really happy I found it!

1.2 your preparation

The preparation for the internship was quite complicated because of COVID. The most difficult thing was the lack of guarantees, nobody could say whether they may give me a visa or not. After I finally got it, it was not clear whether I will pass the border or not because the decision is made in the moment you enter the country. I had to collect more documents than usually and wait for the documents for a long time since the working regime was changed due to the pandemic. Another complicated question was to find a flight to Finland. Many airlines were making cancellations. Still, as my practice shows, it is possible to solve all these problems.

1.3 your travel

I travelled by Turkish Airlines. Though Finland is in 200 – 300 km from my city, travelling by air was the only possibility. And, of course, there were no direct flights)



Helsinki from an airplane window

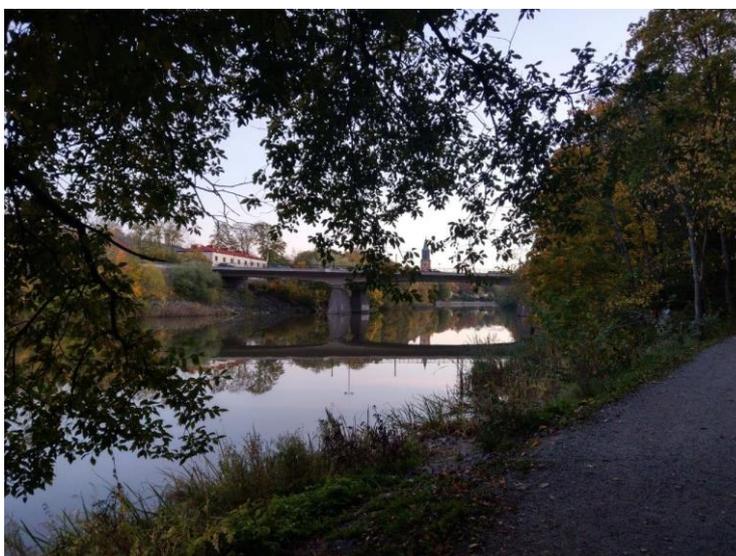
1.4 your accommodation

The University of Turku has a partner – TYS. This organization offers accommodation for students, so I lived there. The prices and conditions are different. I lived in a room with shared kitchen. There was a fridge and a wardrobe in the room, but no other furniture, so I had to find it by myself. There are some recourses where it is possible to take some furniture for free from people who do not need it anymore.

In my block everything was clean and it was nice to communicate to other students while cooking. There was a river near my block, it was a perfect place for morning running.



Turku student campus



Aura river – best running place

1.5 your life in the host country

My life was first of all dedicated to my internship programme. It took the whole day on working days during the week. I also met my supervisor to help him with other tasks or to know, how the data analysis goes. It was interesting and useful for me. During my free time I explored Turku, walked along the river, met my kitchen-friends and went to the forests near

Turku – there are picturesque trails there, and you may reach them by bus. I had a plan to attend a dancing class, but finally did not have time for that.



A path through the swamp



Turku port

Part 2. Information about the project and your tasks

2.1 Information about the research project (short description of the project and your tasks)

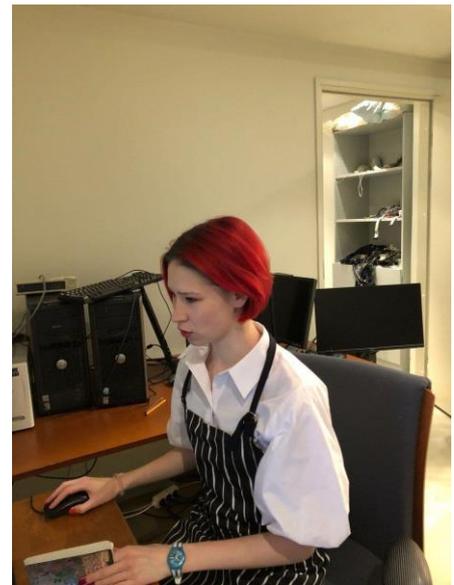
I was involved in two EEG experiments, both concerning neural correlates of consciousness. One of them used only auditory modality, the second one was much more complicated and used both visual and auditory modalities. My task in general was to hold the experimental procedure from the beginning till the end. That means I met our participants, gave instructions to them, put EEG-caps on them, held a calibration phase if necessary, worked

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with programmes for EEG, checked how the experiment goes, saved the data and explained the experiment to the participants in the end. I also made some lab maintenance work – charged the batteries, kept the lab clean and kept track on consumables.

At first I needed some time to understand, how to work with the equipment and launch the necessary programmes, it was also very valuable for me that my supervisor showed me his personal ways to make some work quicker and in more effective way. After some time, I could hold the whole experimental procedure by myself. That freed my supervisor from routine and gave him more time for analyzing data, studying his disciplines and considering further experiments. According to his words, my work also helped to end the first experiment really quickly and start a new one since the data collection process went faster.

I asked a lot of questions about designing the experiments, analyzing data, special programmes for scientists etc., and my supervisor was generous to share with me what he knows. Working on a new experiment helped me to understand all the stages from having an idea of an experiment to the publication of the article. All this information could not be gained nowhere but in the lab during the work on the project.



Lab work

2.2 your colleagues

The main person I communicated with was my supervisor, Dmitri Filimonov. I also communicated with his supervisor, Mika Koivisto, and some of their colleagues in the lab. Our talks were extremely informative for me. We talked about data analysis, philosophy of consciousness and not only of consciousness, designing new experiments, grants, new articles about consciousness, psychological theories and ways to continue academic careers in other countries. I knew how the academic life is organized in Europe and spoke about some scientific traditions in Russia. Such communications give a wider understanding of the academic world and ways to make an academic career.

2.3 the research institution

The University of Turku is one of the oldest places to study in Finland. It has a huge complex of buildings in the architectural style of modern. I used to visit two blocks of the complex – Publicum and Educarium. My lab and student canteen were there. I had no need to communicate with other structures of the University since my supervisor was always ready to help me if I needed any help or information.

The EEG lab where I worked was equipped with computers and EEG machine. There was some other technique, for instance, TMS machine in another labs, but for the experiments I was involved in they were not needed.

During my internship I learned some information about master programmes in the University of Turku, and now I am thinking of continuing my education there.



The University of Turku. Publicum on the right, Educarium on the left and a beautiful corridor between them

2.4 your experience working within the project

I got priceless and versatile experience during the internship. It includes the following:

- 1) A lot of practice with EEG method. Now I prepare an EEG cap with 62 electrodes in 15 – 20 minutes.
- 2) Understanding of all the stages of the experiment from having an idea to the publication of the article.
- 3) Deep and wide understanding of ways in which consciousness is studied and may be studied.
- 4) Deeper understanding of the ideas and postulates, in which the scientific group of Antti Revonsuo believes. I highly appreciate this experience and the opportunity to work with such people.
- 5) Communication with my lab colleagues helped me to know a lot of small details and moments of data analysis, solving problems in the code of the experimental programme, using the equipment etc. All this could be known only during practice.
- 6) Now I understand much more about academic careers in other countries, common and different moments of Russian and Finnish science.
- 7) Experience of quite long living abroad, among people from different continents.
- 8) I got a lot of experience in paper work, communicating with consulates, border control officers and acting in conditions of uncertainty. Very developing experience 😊

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