

Mattipedia podcast, episode 3: Hobbies and free time in campus town

Eetu: Hi, you are listening to Mattipedia. This podcast series will discuss somewhat surprising things that can be seen as challenges when studying and living a life in a foreign country as an international student, and how to overcome these challenges. Topics of our episodes cover working and social life in Finland as well as learning the Finnish language. The podcast is in English, and each episode includes a summary in Finnish to boost your language learning. Welcome on board.

My name is Eetu Mansikka and I'm the host of this episode. I'm here with our guest, Abdessamad Boukhari. In this episode, he will talk about finding hobbies and free time activities in one's campus town. Hi Abdessamad, could you please first briefly introduce yourself?

Abdessamad: Hello, my name is Abdessamad Boukhari. I am a student of Wellbeing Management in Xamk. I study Bachelor of Business Administration. I've been living here in Finland for around two years now and I'm so happy to be a guest in that podcast.

Eetu: Thank you. Then, how easy is it to find and to participate in new hobbies or activities in the campus city?

Abdessamad: Finding or participating in new hobbies or activities in the campus city depends with the hobby you look forward to practice and the available facilities for that as well. In addition, if you are looking to practice hobbies in certain facilities, they might require payments that could be monthly or yearly depending on the situation. There are also social media groups or pages that organize meetings to do those hobbies in groups. And this could also be free or subject to a fee.

Eetu: Then what are the hobbies or free time activities that you have found?

Abdessamad: I personally used to practice football with friends and also play bowling with schoolmates in the campus city. Also going out cycling in groups, which was really a great experience in a way to meet friends.

Eetu: How did you find those activities?

Abdessamad: I mostly heard about those activities from friends and some of them were from online resources.

Eetu: Great. Well, was there a specific hobby or activity that you found to be a good place to meet new people?

Abdessamad: Personally, I found out that football was a good activity to meet friends, but it takes some time to get to know your teammates and create friendships that might last for a long time.

For example, once I was cycling by myself in the city of Mikkeli and just by accident, I stumbled upon one of my schoolmates that I didn't have much interaction with before that, but while cycling both we just started talking and we got to know each other more and after that our relationship just kind of developed, we started meeting again for cycling tours around Mikkeli area, discovering new places. And as he lived there for a while, he introduced me to new places that I didn't know before or that I wasn't familiar with, and we also started going out for restaurants or for some drinks and that just how our relationship grew in and we since then had a very good, good relationship.

Eetu: So, what does it take to keep her relationship going outside of a hobby or an activity environment?

Abdessamad: It takes effort from both parts. For example, if two students in a university, and that's one of my experiences, if we're working on a school project, we usually do effort from both of us while working on a project. I take half of the workload and the other person takes half of the workload. So, we are working to get together and helping each other achieve a certain goal. And by working on more project or more school tasks that helps us connect and also somehow get to know each other while working on a project. If we have a break then we might have a couple coffee or cappuccino and just start chatting and after that continue the work. But in those breaks the connection between those two people get strong and they get to know each other more and build their friendship. And after that the relationship or the friendship can develop to be a stronger one after the school, by going to having drinks or going to eat out or just hang out or even practice sports between each other.

Also, there's another part concerning this sauna which is a great place to not only relax but also discover the culture and know how Finnish people value the sauna, which is a personal experience every foreigner needs to have in my opinion, because it's a way to not only know the culture but know another side of interacting with people.

Eetu: That's a really good point. Well, do the relationships developed in those hobbies continue outside that environment?

Abdessamad: Yes, the relationships developed in those hobbies continued outside that

environment, but they also need to be maintained by meetings and for both parts to do effort in order to have a sustained relationship.

Eetu: Yeah, that's true. Well, then lastly, what would you recommend to a new student who might be struggling to meet new people or to find friends in the campus city?

Abdessamad: Uh, I would recommend to this new student to find hobbies that they like, that they like to do, and go to places that practice those hobbies and groups. That already creates a common between these specific group of people. It makes it easier to communicate and start conversations. Also, I encourage this new student to search online for different groups or meetings that help people meet and do group sports or hobbies. That will be very, very helpful.

Eetu: Well, thank you for your time and for sharing your experience with our community.

Abdessamad: Thank you for having me.

Finnish summary

Tässä podcastissa puhuimme siitä, kuinka helppoa on löytää harrastuksia tai aktiviteetteja kampuskaupungista, henkilökohtaisista harrastuksista ja siitä, miten löysin ne ja mikä tietty harrastus/aktiviteetti oli hyvä paikka tavata uusia ihmisiä.

Itse huomasin, että pidän jalkapallosta harrastuksena ihmisten tapaamiseen ja ystäväystymiseen, pyöräilyn lisäksi. Olen kuullut näistä harrastuksista ystäviltä ja verkkoresursseista.

Lopuksi annoin suosituksia uusille opiskelijoille, joilla saattaa olla vaikeuksia tutustua uusiin ihmisiin tai löytää ystäviä kampuskylästä, esimerkiksi harrastuksien vuoksi.

Kiitos kuuntelemisesta!

Ad: Student Union Kaakko

Have you already heard about Student Union Kaakko? Kaakko advocates students' interests, with a mission to support you throughout your studies. Kaakko provides advocacy work, tutoring, sports and leisure activities, and much more!

You can become a member of Kaakko by ordering a student card. As a member you have a chance to affect what the student union does for all the students at Xamk. Read more from Kaakko's website! A link can be found in the description box of this episode.

Invitation to suggest activities for the autumn semester

Talent Boost and Kaakko have been collaborating to develop nice and fun activities for better integration of our Xamk community this autumn and we would really like to hear it from you, our students, faculty and staff members. What are the activities you'd be interested in? Activities related to sports? Board games? Music? Culture? Nature?

Share your ideas for activities you would like to take part in this autumn by sending an email to the address in the description box.

Be an active member of our Xamk community and help us provide better and better services each day.