

Erasmus Student Network Finland Activity Report

by the National Board of 2022-2023

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the operations carried out by the National Board (NB) and the support structures of ESN Finland during the period of 01.06.2022-31.05.2023. Within these pages, you will discover various activities undertaken by the NB, financial analysis, attended events, and comprehensive reports on partnerships, causes, and projects. Furthermore, this report aims to offer meaningful insights into the organization's endeavors and their impact.

The Mandate of 2022-2023 was the first one without any Covid-19 related restrictions. The effect of the pandemic on HR, knowledge, and organisation's operations, stability and finances is still in the background but gradually being overcome. The 2023-2024 National Board is the first one with members who started during or after the pandemic. The National Board 2022-2023 suffered from HR issues and from proper knowledge transfer. Still, overall, the year

During the 2022-2023 mandate ESN Finland focused on members, volunteers and development.

As this report concludes, we express our heartfelt appreciation to all those who have contributed to ESN Finland. Your dedication and commitment have propelled us forward, enabling us to make a positive difference in the lives of students and the wider community.

May this report serve as a testament to the depth of our work and the impact we strive to achieve.

Tiia Niskanen
President of ESN Finland 2022-2023

2. National Board and Supporters

2.1. National Board

During the year 2022–2023 the national board started its mandate on 1.6.2022 with three members. Quite soon a fourth member was elected. In January 2023 a fifth member was elected. The National Board (NB) was composed as follows (dates of mandate):

- Tiia Niskanen, ESN Uni Turku, as President (01.06.2021–31.05.2022)
- Randa as Vice-President (01.06.2021–31.05.2023)
- Onni Oikari, ESN Uni Turku, as Treasurer (10.6.–31.05.2023)
- Mohammad Shahidul, ESN Aalto, as Events' Manager (06.01.2023–31.05.2023)
- Daria Zaikovskaia, ESN Oulu, as NR (01.06.2022-31.5.2023)
- Vacant positions for the whole mandate:
 - WPA
 - Communication Manager

2.2. Supporters

The board supporters are a group of specific people who support the national board with the ESN projects and other national tasks. Typically, these positions include the National Coordinators (NC) for the causes of Social Inclusion, Mobility, Health & Well-being, as well as the positions of Education Officer (EO), IT Coordinator and Training Coordinator.

We had 3 board support position filled:

- Training Coordinator: Daniela Mård
- Social Inclusion Coordinator: Yannick Schuurmans
- IT coordinator: Jacky Cao

In addition to the national coordinators, the board supporters include the National Events Committee (NEvCo), dedicated for working under the Events' Manager, in order to create the ESN Finland national events, such as Pirates of the Baltic Sea. The Chiring Team members were appointed to their positions by the board.

NEvCO Chiring Team:

- Vice-Chair for PoBS Balázs Agrez
- Vice-Chair for iNEt Reija Tolvanen

3. Meetings

During the mandate 2022–2023, several meetings were held and attended by both the national board and sections alike. The national board aimed to meet once every one or two weeks. In total the National Board had 30 board meetings: 3 out of the 30 meetings were held with the board physically in the same place. The Physical Board meetings were deemed necessary for smooth and inspiring board work. These meetings were held in Helsinki, Jyväskylä and Turku.

In addition to the National Board's meetings, 7 National Assemblies (NA) took place during the board's term, including two statutory regular NAs and 5 extraordinary NAs: all of which were held either via Zoom or Google Meet. The statutory autumn NA was held in Jyväskylä in October. The National Board 2021-2022 was not released of liability nor was a financial report presented. ESN Finland also elected its Arbitration Board members for a two-year mandate (01.01.2023–31.12.2024).

The statutory spring NA took place in Lappeenranta in March . In addition to the election of the National Board 2023–2024 members, the programme included a variety of workshops and presentations. The budget and action plan for 2023–2024 were approved. The five extraordinary NAs were held in Google Meet. These meetings made decisions on: Arbitration Board elections (remaining two members), General Fund amendments, National Board elections (Treasurer and Events Manager 2022–2023) and more.

4. Local Level

4.1. Members

As of 31.05.2023 ESN Finland has 16 sections located in 10 different cities. 13 of the sections were registered associations and 3 were part of their higher education institution's (HEI) student unions.

The member list of ESN Finland in 2022–2023 included the following sections:

1. ESN Aalto
2. ESN FINT
3. ESN HELGA
4. ESN Kuopio
5. ESN Joensuu
6. ESN Jyväskylä
7. ESN KISA
8. ESN Lapland
9. ESN Lappeenranta
10. ESN Laurea
11. ESN Metropolia

12. ESN Oulu
13. ESN Uni Helsinki
14. ESN Uni Turku
15. ESN Vaasa
16. ESN Åbo Akademi

4.2. Interaction with National Level

The most important interaction channel between the board and the sections is through the monthly Councils of Local Representatives (CLR) held via online tools. Various topics of interest to the sections are discussed, opinions gathered regarding topics on the international level, feedback collected and best practices shared. This year, the Council of Local Representatives (CLR) of the Erasmus Student Network Finland undertook significant changes. The need for optimization was evident and thus we restructured and reorganized the way we operate. The formerly general meetings were transitioned into dedicated sessions, each focusing on a specific challenge or problem that was relevant to our sections.

The agenda was diversified with a total of ten scheduled calls over the year. We kicked off with an introductory call, followed by eight calls each centered around different crucial topics, and concluded the year with a final call. The topics discussed spanned across areas such as sustainability, financing, communication, leadership, and legal issues. This provided a well-rounded perspective on the matters influencing our operations and decisions.

In an effort to ensure the highest quality of content, for each topic an expert was invited to present or conduct a workshop. We were privileged to have two representatives from the International Board attending the CLR sessions, providing their unique insights and expertise.

One of the new features of the reorganized CLR was the opportunity given to sections to request specific topics in advance. This allowed us to cater to the specific needs and interests of each section and to make the meetings more relevant and interactive.

In line with the major restructuring, the length of the meetings was extended. Instead of the previous 30-minute to 1-hour meetings, the sessions were increased to a length of 1.5 to 2 hours. This allowed ample time for both updates from the National Board and discussions on the designated topics, thereby increasing the productivity and relevance of each call.

However, as our organization is committed to constant improvement and adaptability, a significant change was decided upon towards the end of the year. Given the identified need for greater efficiency and the need for relevance to specific positions, we are replacing the CLR with Community Meetings. While we appreciate the contributions and progress achieved by the CLR, we believe this change will lead to more productive and effective meetings moving forward.

Through these transformations, we seek to create an environment that encourages open dialogue, fosters collaboration, and focuses on problem-solving to continue to improve our operations and better serve our network.

There have also been online meetings exclusively for local presidents. The purpose has been to build communities with the sections for peer support and easier access to the national level. In the future, the NB is planning to establish a community for each position.

This year, the NB was unable to practice sections' godparenting to its full extent due to lack of human resources and workload. Only some of the NB members were able to go and meet their godparent sections. However, we believe this practice would foster communication between the NB and local level, so we hope godparenting could be improved in the next mandate.

5. National Level

5.1. Finances

Overall situation with the finances was good throughout the mandate. Most of the income came from the partnership with the travel agency Timetravels. The biggest expenses were student overalls and administrative costs. Overall production costs have risen significantly although all overalls were invoiced and paid by the sections. In the future we may need to have an upfront at least partly payment from the sections in order to have the necessary funds to facilitate the order. Also section commissions from Timetravels were paid to sections via ESN Finland. Also Pirates of the Baltic sea cruises were much higher than anticipated in the budget although separate budgets are made for these events.

5.2. Commercial Partners

During the mandate 2022-2023, ESN Finland maintained its existing national partnerships and negotiated with a couple of potential new partners. However, due to lack of resources and challenging times no new partnerships were established. By the end of the mandate, the number of national partnerships remained the same as new partnerships weren't finalized. Most of the partners were also sponsoring the operations and the merchandise of ESN Finland financially.

5.2.1. Aikamatkat - Timetravels

Aikamatkat - Timetravels Oy is a travel agency that ESN Finland cooperates closely with. They offer student trips to Lapland, Norway and Iceland through the local ESN sections. ESN Finland has a cooperation contract with the company on general level and specifically on Pirates of the Baltic Sea, where they function as the responsible travel agency and manage the bookings.

5.2.2. DNA

DNA is one of the three biggest mobile operators in Finland and has been cooperating with ESN Finland since 2011. In the spirit of the cooperation, DNA provides ESN Finland with free SIM cards, which the ESN sections then offer for the incoming exchange students, allowing ESN Finland to receive commissions for top-ups of these SIM cards. The cooperation contract was renewed in the summer of 2021 and the relationship between the parties has stayed mainly unchanged, with DNA supporting many of ESN Finland's activities, such as Pirates of the Baltic Sea and National Assemblies.

DNA partnership has been fruitful and the recharge rates of the distributed DNA cards have remained stable. The amount of recharges and commissions paid to ESN Finland proved to be higher than budgeted.

5.2.3 Rekom Group

Rekom Group sponsors ESN Finland's annual joint overall order. The logo of Heidi's Bier Bar was printed to the overalls and ESN Finland delivered the contact information of local partnership managers.

5.3. Non-commercial Partners

Throughout the mandate of the NB for 2022–2023, ESN Finland maintained communication with various important stakeholders. These included Allianssi, the Finnish National Agency, and the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, continuous contact was established with national student union organizations SYL and SAMOK. Additionally, ESN Finland expanded its involvement as a grant partner in projects.

5.3.1. Allianssi

Allianssi is the Finnish National Youth Council and ESN Finland is participating in its operations as a full member. During the term of NB 2022–2023, ESN Finland had a member in the International Youth Politics working group. Tiia Niskanen was this member. The NB was able to send a participant on behalf of ESN Finland to the autumn meeting of Allianssi. National Training Coordinator Daniela Mård attended a training session arranged by Allianssi on Safer Space Guidelines. .

5.3.2. Finnish National Agency for Education and the Ministry of Education

We have promoted ESN's work and communicated with both and sought their support in sharing publications. Similarly, they also approached us for assistance in disseminating information.

5.3.3. National Student Unions and SAMOK

We disseminated ESN publications to them and discussed situation in Finland. We were invited to their events.

5.3.4. Grant Partnerships

Currently, ESN Finland is a grant partner in the following projects: (1) EC2U = European Campus of City-Universities and (2) BSYP = Baltic Sea Youth Platform and (3) ICI = Inclusive Comprehensive Internationalisation and (4) Erasmus Generation in Action. EC2U, BSYP and ICI are strategic partnerships. EC2U aims at creation of cross-campus and cross-EU-country university degrees while BSYP is about empowering the youth of the Baltic region.

Erasmus Generation in Action is an EU- funded, European Parliament supported project lead by ESN International that includes 18 National Organisations, ESN Finland being one of them. We applied for the project in early autumn and the project officially kicked off in January 2023. The first phase of the project takes place from January 2023 to July 2023. Due to lack of outreach and experience we had some difficulties with the implementation of the first phase. Next phases should be easier as they don't involve similar kinds of activities as the first phase and thus should be easier.

5.4. National Trainings

No traditional Flinsights were organized during this mandate. Workshops for section representatives were organised during the Autumn and Spring NAs.

5.5. National Event - Pirates of the Baltic Sea

The bi-annual national event of ESN Finland, Pirates of the Baltic Sea (PoBS), has become one of the most famous events in the network and enjoys a good reputation. It has grown and developed steadily during the past years. With the help of the National Events Committee, and the cooperation with both Tallink Silja and Timetravels, the event has reached a point where it has better possibilities than ever before to expand and become one of the biggest events in the network.

5.6. Causes & Projects

ESN Finland participates in some of the causes and projects of ESN International. The sole project of ESN International includes ESNcard, while the programmes through which ESN Finland have advocated the causes in the past are: Social Inclusion, Mobility, Health & Well-being, Education and Training. This mandate, ESN Finland aimed to promote dissemination of project surveys. These were for example InternationalHousing Survey and GreenErasmus+.

5.6.1. ESNcard

It has been a custom in ESN Finland for the Partnership Manager or the Treasurer to handle the ESNcard project. In 2022-2023, the Treasurer Onni Oikari was responsible for

coordinating the national orders. Sections had the possibility to order ESNcards in autumn 2022 and spring 2023.

5.6.2. Social Inclusion

Yannick Schuurmans was appointed as the National Social Inclusion Coordinator. Him together with Local Social Inclusion Coordinators discussed for example how to make events financially accessible. Although no activities were organised by the sections for the SI weeks the improvement from previous years for the cause was huge.

5.6.3. Education

Unfortunately no EO was elected for the mandate due to the lack of applicants. Tiia Niskanen acted as the NB responsible and managed some of the EO tasks.

5.6.4. Trainings

NB attended the Physical KT of the Helsinki Sections in August and delivered workshops and presentations. The sections were also regularly informed about Eduk8 and its events, as well as about other training opportunities, during the CLR's and through ESN Finland's communication channels.

During 2022-2023, ESN Finland's pool of Eduk8 Trainers grew as two volunteers participated to Eduk8 Starter. Trainers from ESN Finland have also been facilitating NEP Arhus 2022 and EGM Bucharest 2023.



6. International Level

6.1. Northern European Platform Aarhus 2022

The Northern European Platform (NEP) took place from October 26 to 30, 2022, in Aarhus. Timetravels made a presentation. NEP's newest section, ESN Lithuania, also had a chance to introduce themselves and share a few words. The NEP offered insights into the host university, as well as a presentation from ESN's partner, Studenterhus. The National Agency of Denmark took the opportunity to outline their roles and responsibilities.

This Aarhus NEP was an eclectic blend of knowledge sharing and training, with key topics such as "Services for students & sections," including an unveiling of the new look of the Events Management Platform. Workshops covered a broad range of subjects from inclusion of Baltic and Nordic students, social media, event planning, budgeting and negotiation, to volunteer recruitment. The second set of workshops delved into internal communication, conflict resolution, and motivation labs.

The social program was not left behind, offering unique experiences such as cold sea dips and a Halloween party, encouraging informal networking among participants. The attendees also got a detailed understanding of the International Level of ESN, its Headquarters, and their projects in Brussels. The ESNcard Zero to Hero and a presentation combining ESN Survey results with the core aspects of the mobility experience gave participants insight into ways they could better support students.

6.2. General Assembly Autumn 2022

The GA is the highest decision-making body in the ESN Network. It takes place twice per year. It is a gathering where all National Organisations (NOs), committees, project teams, secretariat, liaison officers and the international board are represented, along with visits from the most important stakeholders and partners of ESN International. The agenda included numerous presentations on the current topics and voting. ESN Finland participated with 2 representatives: Tiia Niskanen and Onni Oikari. The Autumn GAs hottest discussion and votings were about the memberships for the new National Organisation and new Candidate Sections.

6.3. General Assembly Spring 2023

This mandate's spring GA Minho was held in Braga, Portugal and took place on 29.-31.4.2023. The agenda included numerous presentations on the current topics and

plenty of voting. ESN Finland participated with 3 representatives: Tiia Niskanen (NO Voting Delegate) and Onni Oikari and Daniela Mård (NO representatives).

A new international board for mandate 2023–2024 was elected, and is composed of the following members:

- President: Rita (ESN Portugal)
- Vice-President for Governance: Ioannis (ESN Greece)
- Vice-president for Development: Adél (ESN Czechia)
- Treasurer: Ayberk (ESN Turkey)
- Communication Manager: Lina (ESN Croatia)
- Web Project Administrator: Darwyn (ESN Belgium)

Statutory Bodies members were also chosen at this GA. New members were elected for the GA CT, Audit Commission and Arbitration Board.

7. EGM

12 sections of ESN Finland sent representatives to be part of the ESN Finland delegation.

From National Board Randa Romanova acted as the National delegation leader. EM Mohammed acted as her help during the EGM.

7.1. Other Non-statutory Meetings

Community Meetings. This mandate ESN Finland had its members participating to the following community meetings:

- Business and Finance Community Meeting in Cluj-Napoca Romania
- HR Community Meeting in Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- EduCom Community Meeting in Brussels, Belgium

Members of ESN Finland also attended ESN Estonia's Spring NA and ESN Italy's Autumn National Platform.

8 . General Fund revamping process

General fund operated actively throughout the year. Its budget was used to the maximum. One of the ways the National Board focused on developing this mandate was to analyze and develop the internal workings and procedures. General Fund Guidelines were found to be

challenging and vague to apply. Thus a new version of the guidelines which aimed to be more precise with evaluation criteria were approved by the NA during NA May Online.



List of Abbreviations

AB – Arbitration Board	NBM – National Boards’ Meeting
AGM – Annual General Meeting	NBT – National Boards’ Training
AISBL – Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif	NC – National Coordinator
AP – Action Plan	NCT – Network Care Team
BFC – Business and Finance	ND – National Delegate
BSYP – Baltic Sea Youth Platform	NEAC – National ExchangeAbility Coordinator
Conference/Community	NEC – Network Committee
CI – Corporate Identity	NEP – Northern European Platform
CLR – Council of Local Representatives	NETx – Network Exchange Forum
CND – Council of National Delegates	NEvCo – (ESN Finland) National Events Committee
CNR – Council of National Representatives	NMEC – National Mov’in Europe Coordinator
CoC – Code of Conduct	NP – National Platform
CoE – Council of Europe	NR – National Representative
ComCom – Communication Committee	NSIC – National Social Inclusion Coordinator
CT – Chairing Team	NTC – National Training Coordinator
E+ – Erasmus+	OC – Organising Committee
EA – ExchangeAbility	OKM – Opetus-ja kulttuuriministeriö (the Ministry of Education)
EGM – Erasmus Generation Meeting	OPH – Opetushallitus (the Finnish National Agency for Education)
EO – Education Officer	PF – Participation Fee
EPP – Event Policy Paper	PoBS – Pirates of the Baltic Sea
ERS – Event Registration System	PRH – Finnish Patent and Registration Office
ESAA – Erasmus+ Student and Alumni Alliance	RC – Regional Coordinator
FICO – Finance Committee	RP – Regional Platform / Responsible Party
FinAl – ESN Finland Alumni Network	SE – SocialErasmus
GF – General Fund	SI – Social Inclusion
GL – Group Leader	SIS – Section information sheet
HEI – Higher Education Institution	SitS – Section in the Spotlight
IB – International Board	SIW – Social Inclusion Weekend
ICE – International Committee for Education	SO – Standing Orders
IEG – International Erasmus Games	SOS – Statutes and Standing Orders
ITcom – IT Committee	SQ – Section Questionnaire
LO – Liaison Officer	TEET – Timetravels-ESN Educational Trip
ME – Mov’in Europe	TSO – Training Session Outline
MinEdu – Ministry of Education	TT – Timetravels
ML – Mailing List	WG – Working Group
MYC – Meet Your Colleagues	VIM – Visual Identity Manual
NA – National Assembly / National Agency	WPA – Web Project Administrator
NB – National Board	
NBC – National Boards’ Coordinator	