



**EUTOPIA CERTIFICATE OF INTERNATIONALISATION
(EUCI)**

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CHAPTER 1

THE WORLD WITHIN ME

There are moments in life—quiet but powerful— when we find ourselves standing on the edge of the unfamiliar, and the only way forward is to make a choice. It's terrifying, not because we fear failure, but because we fear the unknown. I still remember one of those moments vividly.

I packed my life into two large suitcases, carefully folding in memories, hopes, and pieces of the world I was leaving behind. I wasn't just moving cities—I was moving lives. I was crossing continents to begin again in a country where everything, from the language to the weather, was new. That move shaped me in ways I'm still discovering. It was the first concrete step in what would become a deeply personal journey of internationalisation, not just across borders, but within myself. Once upon a time, I made a choice. And I have never regretted the choice I made.

WHERE I COME FROM MEETS WHERE I'M GOING

A continuous pursuit of opportunity defines my family's journey. My father migrated from our ancestral village—Hanabhe, a small rural village in Southern India—to Bangalore, a global hub for IT and engineering. That move represented more than just a change in geography; it was an act of generational transformation, driven by education and ambition. He broke through barriers of geography, social class, and expectation to carve out opportunities that didn't exist before. That journey shaped the course of our lives.

In many ways, my own international journey echoes that same spirit. When I moved from India to Sweden, I was not just chasing personal or professional goals; I was continuing his legacy of stepping into the unknown with hope and purpose. His journey laid the foundation for mine, and every milestone I reach abroad feels like a continuation of the path he began.



GROWTH BEGINS WHERE COMFORT ENDS

My husband's journey adds another key layer to this narrative. Nearly nine years ago, he moved from Bangalore to Gothenburg to pursue a career in Automotive Engineering. It was only in 2022 that I joined him here, beginning a new chapter of my life—both personally and professionally.

While my parents gave me the wings to fly, it is my partner who has been the wind beneath them, helping me soar high every step of the way. He gently encouraged me to embrace discomfort—to step away from the familiar and open myself to new experiences, even when it felt overwhelming. It wasn't always easy, but it was necessary. In being uncomfortable, I learned to adapt, to question, and to grow.

FROM HANABHE TO GOTHENBURG

Today, wherever I am in the world, I am reminded of my legacy: of where I come from, of the paths paved for me, and of the responsibility to carry those stories forward.

CHAPTER 2

CARRYING CULTURES: MY INTERNATIONAL WAY OF BEING

Some of the most powerful lessons in internationalisation began long before I ever left India. For me, it started not with crossing borders, but through lived experiences in a multilingual, multicultural society. I learned to navigate cultural differences and think beyond borders—not in an abstract or future-oriented way, but as a lived, daily experience. That early foundation continues to shape how I understand and engage with the world today.



Learning to navigate diversity as a child prepared me to embrace global experiences as an adult. I didn't realise it then, but those early encounters were setting the stage for a far more transformative journey ahead. The lessons in pluralism began early—rooted deeply in my upbringing in India, a country that is, in every sense, a mosaic of cultures. Living in such a rich pluralistic society taught me one of the most valuable lessons of all: tolerance—and more importantly, acceptance.

In that sense, internationalisation began at home. Every aspect of life in India nurtured a sense of international consciousness by immersing me in a vibrant environment. I began developing a worldview that was both rooted and expansive. This awareness took shape in the classrooms of my school and university in Bangalore, where I completed my early education. These spaces offered more than just academic learning—they encouraged critical thinking and global awareness. They also shaped my earliest understanding of what it means to be a global citizen. It prepared me to engage meaningfully with global experiences long before I physically stepped into them.

I developed the ability to listen, to adapt, and to coexist with mutual respect and intercultural sensitivity. I learned that there is no single “right” way to be. This understanding became a cornerstone in my definition of what it means to be international: not merely to encounter difference, but to embrace it. Living and studying abroad, I've come to see how profoundly important that foundation has been.

Here in Gothenburg, I've come to truly understand what it means to live between cultures, to think beyond borders, and to be a part of a larger, interconnected world. Growth didn't happen in comfort. It happened in unfamiliar grocery stores, in classrooms where I hesitated before speaking, in systems that functioned differently from what I was used to. It happened when I felt a little lost—but kept going anyway.

The borders that once felt so fixed have begun to blur. As the world becomes more interconnected, internationalisation is no longer just a policy or concept—it is lived, it is shared, and it is the new normal. And if there's one key lesson I've taken from this journey, it is this: to truly grow, you must be willing to risk not knowing. This experience has challenged me, stretched me, and helped me grow.

Because on the other side of fear, there is possibility—and on the other side of possibility, there is transformation.



CHAPTER 3

BEYOND THE SYLLABUS: THE UNWRITTEN CURRICULUM

I completed my Bachelor's degree in Dental Surgery in India and practised as a dental surgeon for over five years. Dentistry was more than just a profession—it was a central part of my identity, shaped by years of dedication, continuous learning, and hands-on clinical training. I was firmly rooted in a system I understood well, with a clear professional path: diagnose, treat, and continue evolving within a familiar framework.

Relocating to Sweden meant confronting a difficult reality: my qualifications and professional experience didn't travel as easily as I had. To practise dentistry here, I would have to start over—requalify, retrain, and navigate a completely unfamiliar system. It felt as though everything I had worked so hard to build was suddenly on pause. I found myself questioning who I was without the professional title I had worked so hard to earn and once proudly held.

Yet amid that uncertainty, something unexpected began to take shape: a new path in public health. I was drawn to public health because it offered a broader lens through which to understand healthcare. What began as a necessary redirection soon evolved into a meaningful and purposeful journey. It gave me space to reconsider not just how I wanted to contribute, but why. I began to see health not merely as clinical care, but as something shaped by systems, policy, and social equity. In many ways, stepping away from the dental chair allowed me to step into something more expansive.

Master's in Medical Science: My first international degree

Enrolling in the Master's programme in Public Health Sciences at the University of Gothenburg opened doors I hadn't imagined. The education system was unlike anything I had experienced. In India, learning was structured, exam-driven, and hierarchical. Success was narrowly defined by grades, and questioning authority was uncommon. The pressure to excel was constant, and education often prioritised performance over exploration.



Sweden taught me differently. At first, the shift was disorienting. I was used to fixed standards and measurable outcomes. Gradually, I began to unlearn those expectations. True learning often happened beyond the syllabus—in group projects, peer discussions, and quiet reflection. Studying with an international cohort introduced me to diverse perspectives, turning the classroom into a global exchange.

The shift was subtle, but profound. Professors encouraged dialogue, not deference. Memorisation gave way to critical thinking. Learning became collaborative, rooted in depth and reflection. The academic environment was relaxed, yet intentional focused not just on what we learned, but why it mattered

I learned to think critically, to ask better questions, and to unlearn the notion that knowledge lives solely in textbooks or exams.

The classroom itself was a microcosm of the world—students from across the globe brought their own stories, values, and systems of thought. This diversity of thought and experience around me emerged as one of my greatest teachers. Through daily interaction, I absorbed insights into healthcare systems, cultural norms, and global thinking. This was the education I didn't know I needed—far more expansive and lasting than any formal training.

Starting over wasn't easy, but it built resilience, humility, and growth. I wasn't just reclaiming an old career; I was becoming a new version of myself—more adaptable, open, and attuned to the bigger picture of health and society. In that shift, I found something new: an education, a community, and a renewed sense of purpose.



Volunteering with the International Red Cross Society - India & Gothenburg

My journey with the International Red Cross Society began in India, where I engaged in community outreach, health awareness, and first-aid initiatives. After relocating to Gothenburg, I continued this engagement, contributing to local humanitarian efforts and support programmes for vulnerable populations. Volunteering across two countries deepened my appreciation for how global humanitarian principles are adapted to meet local needs, and it strengthened my sense of international solidarity and service.

Volunteering with Amnesty International – Gothenburg, Sweden

In Gothenburg, I joined Amnesty International to support advocacy efforts focused on human rights education and awareness. My involvement included participating in campaigns, organising events, and engaging in community discussions around global justice, equity, and freedom of expression. This experience broadened my understanding of international human rights work and reinforced the critical role of civic engagement in driving social change.

Volunteering deepened my sense of global citizenship and humanitarian responsibility. These experiences allowed me to engage directly with issues of human rights, social justice, and community resilience in a local yet global context. Working alongside volunteers from diverse backgrounds, I witnessed how shared values transcend language and culture. It was not only an opportunity to contribute meaningfully, but also to learn about empathy, advocacy, and the power of collective action.



Looking onward and upward

Internship and Master's Thesis Abroad - The Erasmus experience

The next chapter in my academic journey will take me to Copenhagen, Denmark, where I will undertake my Master's thesis and internship through the Erasmus+ exchange programme at the Parker Institute. As a Medical Research Intern, I look forward to contributing to public health research within a leading medical research environment.

This opportunity will allow me to engage with interdisciplinary teams, explore healthcare systems from new perspectives, and deepen my understanding of clinical and translational research. It is not only a chance to apply my learning in a real-world context but also to grow as a public health professional committed to evidence-based practice and global health equity. This marks a significant step forward—professionally, academically, and personally—as I continue to build a career grounded in international collaboration and meaningful impact.

Summer Courses in Copenhagen

This summer, I am enrolled in specialized courses at the University of Copenhagen, further expanding my knowledge in public health and related disciplines. These courses will complement my Master's studies by offering new perspectives and skills, preparing me for my upcoming internship and thesis research.



CHAPTER 4

COVER LETTER:

BELONGING EVERYWHERE, BECOMING MYSELF

I'm Kruthika Hanabhe, a Master's student in Medical Science – Public Health at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. This journey has been a pivotal step in my internationalisation, shaping me into a globally minded public health professional.

As I prepare for my Erasmus+ internship and Master's thesis at the Parker Institute in Copenhagen, Denmark, I see this next chapter as both a continuation and a deepening of my global engagement. More than academic growth, it reflects my commitment to becoming a reflective and collaborative healthcare practitioner.

My goal is to evolve not only as a student, but as someone who belongs everywhere—curious, resilient, and grounded in purpose. This international journey has helped me become more fully myself.

LEARNING OUTCOME 1: REFLECTIVE

My international journey has been a powerful catalyst for self-reflection. Volunteering with the International Red Cross Society in both India and Sweden, and with Amnesty International in Gothenburg, exposed me to a wide range of perspectives and lived realities. These experiences taught me to pause, observe, and truly listen—skills that have shaped how I approach problems, lead initiatives, and engage in collaborative environments. I've come to understand that empathy and inclusivity are not just ideals, but practical tools for meaningful action.

Living and studying in Sweden further deepened this reflective practice. In a multicultural classroom, every conversation became an opportunity to unlearn assumptions and embrace new ways of thinking. The shift from performance-based learning to dialogue-driven education encouraged me to think more critically—not just about public health, but about my role within it. Reflection is no longer a passive act for me; it's a conscious process that guides how I learn, grow, and contribute.



LEARNING OUTCOME 2: INTERCULTURAL

Living and learning across multiple countries has fundamentally shaped the way I engage with the world. From my roots in India to my academic journey in Sweden and upcoming internship in Denmark, I've been immersed in environments where cultural differences are not barriers but bridges. Volunteering with international organisations like the Red Cross and Amnesty International has strengthened my belief that meaningful integration comes from inclusion—ensuring that every voice is heard, regardless of background. These experiences taught me that diversity is not something to be accommodated but something to be celebrated and centred.

LEARNING OUTCOME 3: INTERSECTORAL

Studying in a global classroom has reinforced the idea that we grow when we move beyond singular viewpoints. I've learned to collaborate across differences, and to lead with empathy. Intercultural competence, to me, is not just about understanding others—it's about actively creating spaces where everyone belongs.

My journey through public health has consistently shown me that health does not exist in a vacuum. It is not isolated, it is deeply intertwined with education, environment, policy, equity, and culture. Through my academic training in Sweden, upcoming research internship in Denmark, and volunteer experiences, I've learned to approach issues from an intersectoral lens. These experiences have taught me that lasting solutions are built through shared values—sustainability, inclusion, and adaptability—across disciplines and cultures. Public health solutions demand collaboration beyond disciplinary borders—and this understanding now anchors the way I learn, think, and act.



LEARNING OUTCOME 4: CHALLENGE – BASED

Across my academic and volunteer experiences, I've embraced challenge-based learning as a way to grow through real-world complexity. From addressing health equity in my Master's to navigating cultural nuance in Red Cross outreach, I've learned to co-create solutions by balancing evidence, ethics, and empathy.

In group projects and public health simulations, I've had to navigate differing perspectives and priorities—balancing scientific evidence, cultural nuance, and ethical considerations to co-create actionable solutions. Embracing challenge has become an essential part of how I learn and lead—and these experiences continue to prepare me for a future in global, solution-oriented public health.

My upcoming Erasmus+ internship at the Parker Institute will further this growth—offering hands-on research experience in an international clinical setting. These challenges continue to shape me into a public health professional who learns by doing and leads with purpose.

CONCLUSION

Looking back, I see that my journey has never been just about crossing borders—it has been about expanding horizons, both personal and professional. I've come to understand that the international and the local are not opposites but deeply connected: our roots give depth to our reach, and our local experiences enrich our global contributions.

Through this portfolio, I've reflected on how the learning outcomes—Reflective, Intercultural, Intersectoral, and Challenge-Based—are not just academic benchmarks, but lived experiences that have shaped who I am. My personal growth, academic pursuits, and volunteer work have all been intertwined with a commitment to diversity, collaboration, and meaningful change.

In a world that is increasingly interconnected and complex, I stand grounded in my values and open to continuous learning—ready not only to belong everywhere, but to contribute meaningfully, wherever I am.

