



Nordic Secondment in Helsinki



Anne-Sofie Thomassen
Attorney

Anne-Sofie Thomassen is an assistant attorney in Corporate M&A, dealing with commercial law issues, particularly issues of company law and M&A.

As part of the DLA Piper Nordic Secondment programme, Anne-Sofie spent one week at our Helsinki office. Here are a few highlights from her trip.

I had the pleasure of exchanging the view from my office in Aarhus with a view of Finland's beautiful capital, Helsinki, where, together with an assistant from Sweden and two other assistant attorneys from Norway and Sweden, I visited our DLA Piper colleagues in Finland.

How come...?

I was lucky enough to be accepted for DLA Piper's Nordic Secondment, which is a secondment programme set up between the Nordic DLA Piper offices in Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Nordic Secondment takes place every autumn and offers the opportunity to visit one of the other Nordic offices for a week to network with our Nordic colleagues, exchange experience and sample the workday at another DLA Piper office – and obviously there is also time for some fun.

One of the reasons I applied for a position as an assistant attorney with DLA Piper Denmark was the international foundation of the DLA Piper organisation, as globalisation – in my line of work as well – has made a profound impact and continues to do so, and we are seeing a huge demand for attorneys to provide cross-border advice. Apart from making many (new) demands on the legal industry and our advisory services,

globalisation also creates many opportunities, including the opportunity to learn about new cultures, countries and forms of collaboration, which – in my view – is very exciting. That's why it felt so obvious to me to apply to join the Nordic Secondment programme, and being seconded to Helsinki, (perhaps) the most exotic Nordic capital, was just an extra bonus.

What are my key takeaways?

I had an amazing and unforgettable time, and my Finnish colleagues gave us a grand welcome and introduced us to Finnish culture. In addition to my daily work, which I had brought along from Denmark, I enjoyed, among other things, the pleasure of participating in a panel discussion for Finnish law students and I also had time to see Helsinki and its many sights. Moreover, our Finnish colleagues had organised a cocktail course and meals at various restaurants and we spent a great evening at Ateljee Bar, which is situated at a higher point than any other bar in Helsinki and features a magnificent view of the Finnish capital.

During my stay in Helsinki, I discovered that there are many similarities – but also a number of differences – between our Nordic offices and colleagues. Our dear Finnish colleagues like to come in to work between 9 and 10 in the morning, they like to have lunch at nearby cafés, rather than at the office, every day, and the office even boasts a sauna. Moreover, especially the boys have a somewhat more relaxed dress style than in Denmark and so it is by no means unusual to turn up wearing jeans and a hoodie.

I felt at home and well at ease and it was clear that the strong workplace relationships and great DLA Piper spirit is a common feature in-house as well as across all the Nordic DLA Piper offices.

So what now?

The trip to Helsinki really whetted my appetite for travels and for visiting other DLA Piper offices. It is difficult – not to say impossible – in terms of the legal work to become part of a new office and new matters in the course of a single week and, in that respect, the Finnish language was a barrier as well.

I hope to have the opportunity in the future to be seconded again and preferably for a longer period in order to be integrated into the daily working life and matter handling at one of our DLA Piper offices abroad.

Until then, I will enjoy my working life and the Danish language at our Aarhus office as well as my amazing Danish colleagues, because they are also like no other.