

* Photo taken on the school anniversary



BI NORWEGIAN
BUSINESS SCHOOL

2015 Fall Exchange Report
BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, Norway

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1. Monthly Activity Log

-- August, 2015 --

I arrived in Oslo in mid August. Upon arrival, I took Flytoget to the citycentre, Oslo S. I then went to a Narvesen branch (A Norwegian convenience store) inside the station to purchase a ruter monthly pass. A line 6 train towards Sognsvann was taken and I got off at Kringsja, where my dorm locates. There should be a lot of cooking utensils in the kitchen and hence, you are advised to do a kitchen inspection before going to IKEA for necessities.

A few days later, I started to explore Oslo with my friends. We visited most of the renowned city attractions such as Akershus Fortress, Opera House, Sculpture Park, Sognsvann Lake and Homenkollen etc. At the end of the month, we went further to another city in Norway, Stavanger. We joined a fjord tour whose name is Lysefjord in a nutshell. The tour was held in a laissez faire style. (You may regard this as the Norwegian style ☺) The fjord cruise was pretty enjoyable. I was completely amazed by the scenery and the nature.



-- September, 2015 --

In early September, we went to Bergen. Taking train is more preferable since the view is stunning. There are several mountains in Bergen, and we visited Floyen, the most popular one, on the first day. On that day, we took an awesome dinner in the fish market as well. The day after, we climbed up Ulriken, Bergen's highest mountain. It was a little tough and dangerous, but all of us gained a great sense of achievement upon completion. It was probably one of the best days throughout the exchange. You are

recommended to go hiking during your stay in Norway. Try to live as a Norwegian.

Apart from travelling, we took part in some of the school activities such as the school anniversary celebration, a hiking event organized by InSA (International Student Association) and economic experiments. Life is relaxing but contented.

-- October, 2015 --



During this month, I travelled UK, Sweden and Denmark with my friends. There is a contrast between their ambiances. Northern European countries are quite similar, leasurable and calm, whereas UK is comparatively bustling and dynamic. The weather is also noted to be much colder in this month.

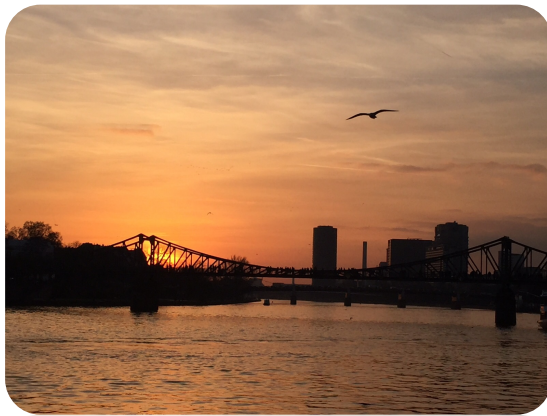
-- November, 2015 --

I spent my early November in Finland with Santa. (Yes it is a little bit early 😊) To be honest, the Santa Claus Village is quite commercial and desolate (so do the Helsinki city centre 😊), but the trip was fantastic when it was treated as the last breath of fresh air before the intensive revision. A few days later, 3 of us headed back to Oslo, and we began to prepare for our examinations, which started at the end of the month.



-- December, 2015 --

All my examinations were completed before the mid December, so the remaining time till the mid January was dedicated to travelling! (Grabbing the last chance to have fun ☺) I called on the Netherlands, Germany and the Czech Republic. We visited numerous Christmas markets. They were festive and splendid. The long journey was perfect and memorable.



2. General Exchange Information

2.1 Visa Procedures

A HKSAR passport holder does not need to apply for an entry visa. However, a residence permit is required in order to stay in Norway for more than 90 days. You are advised to work on the permit application one month before your departure. Detailed application guidelines can be received simply by dropping an email to the Norwegian Consulate (norwayhk@ncchk.org.hk). As long as you follow the instructions, there should be no difficulties.

It is necessary to make an appointment with the immigration department after you arrive Oslo. BI assists exchange students to book it during the orientation period. However, if you are not able to make it, the alternative way is calling the immigration police station on your own (It is a busy line so you may need some luck ☺) A few weeks after the appointment, you can come by the BI student service office (where you make your student card and get BInner tickets) to pick up your residence card.

2.2 Orientation Activities, Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

BI hosted some orientation activities but I didn't take part in them. As mentioned, InSA (International Student Association) also holds a number of recreational activities (such as movie night, hiking, chocolate factory visit, aurora tour etc), and you can stay tuned for them by liking its Facebook fanpage (<https://www.facebook.com/bi.insa/>)

2.3 Accommodations



Just like the others, I chose a furnished single room with a shared bathroom in Kringsja student village. In my experience, Kringsja is self-sufficient and convenient. A Kiwi supermarket, a post office and the Sognsvann Lake are situated nearby, and you must be able to arrive school within 30 minutes. You'd better check in earlier to choose a block close to the laundry and the metro station. Also remember to restore the room properly before returning the key, so as to avoid a deposit deduction.

2.4 Courses Registration, Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took 5 courses during the exchange and all of them are worth 7.5 ECTS. You will receive an email with all the course registration information in early July. Similarly, it is easy to deal with as long as you comply with the provided guidelines. To secure yourself, you are advised to hand in the course assessment application once the course information is made available. (Try to complete it at least one month before your departure / the start of the semester)

ELE 3766 Social Networks and Communications (= MARK elective)

I personally think that the course design is somewhat problematic. Although there is a presentation, the term paper accounts for 100% of the course grade. However, the lecture content is irrelevant to the term paper. The lecture notes are well written with all the details, but this leads to another problem – No add-ons in class so the lesson is rather meaningless.

ELE 3702 Social Entrepreneurship (= MGMT 2130)

The course contains a project - assisting Norwegian social entrepreneurs and it includes a presentation. However, only the final examination contributes to the course grade. The examination is rather simple.

ELE 3736 Real Estate Finance (= FINA elective)

The teaching is rather unsatisfactory and the syllabus is quite board so it takes time to study.

ELE 3715 Logistics and Marketing Channels (= MARK elective)

The course content somehow overlaps with ISOM 2700 and each semester's examination is more or less the same. Since the course accounts for 100% of the course grade, as long as you revise the past paper, you will be able to cope with the examination.

ELE 3732 Financial Bubbles, Crashes and Crises (= FINA elective)

The course discusses a few Scandinavian financial crises. A financial crisis is usually complex with a lot of causes and stages, and some of the lecture notes are a bit disorganized, so the difficulty increases. However, the course should be manageable with some efforts.

2.5 Sports & Recreational Facilities

There is a gym room in BI, but I heard that it is quite expensive. Apart from jogging and hiking, I suggest cycling in autumn. A NOK 299 city bike card can be purchased at the Oslo tourist centre, (Beside Oslo central station) and you can enjoy unlimited rides for all seasons. (April to December) During wintertime, Norwegians usually go ice-skating and skiing.

2.6 Expenses

Oslo is well known for its high living cost, but you will still be astonished when you first reach the supermarket (Maybe till the day you leave 😊) (Saving expenditure will then become your new hobby 😊) You can download supermarket apps to seek at-a-discount products. BI economic experiments is a good paying job, so sign up as many of them as possible 😊 (You need to be responsive 😊)

2.7 Food, Health & Safety

Dining out is rather expensive so I normally cook with my friends. We usually visit Gronland to get cheaper food. There is a Hong Kong supermarket (HongKong Supermarked) near the Nationaltheatret station. You will be able to find it with google map. BInner is held once a month. Grasp your chances to enjoy free yummy dinners 😊

P.S.1: Tap water is drinkable in Norway.

P.S.2: Be aware of the slope in Kringsja in Winter.

2.8 Transportation

The T-bane monthly pass (30 days) costs NOK 410 and you can travel by both bus and metro unlimitedly. Remember to activate your card before your first use. Ticket inspections can be frequent or rare (Purely depends on your luck ☺) A single airport express ticket, Flytoget / NSB, is worth NOK 90 with a student discount, and it takes about 20 minutes to travel from Oslo Gardermoen Airport to Oslo S station. (You can reach the airport from Kringsja within an hour) Remember to check the T-bane schedule before purchasing an air ticket – Do not select a flight which is too early!

P.S. There are two IKEAs in Oslo, IKEA Furuset and IKEA Slependsen, and free shuttle bus services are provided near the Oslo S station.

2.9 Climate

Oslo has a nice, cool, sunny summer (around 17°C) but a cloudy, foggy autumn. The winter this year is much warmer than before. The first snow appeared in mid November, whereas a persistent snowfall started in mid December. I personally think that Oslo is warmer than many other European cities (even southern regions) despite a lower temperature (-15°C – 10°C) Note that the daylight is rather short in Winter (Sunrise at 9 am and sunset at 3pm), so treasure long, bright days in the summertime ☺

2.10 Communication

At the beginning of the semester, MyCall will distribute free sim card at school. If you miss it, you can still get one from Oslo S. You may visit the website of MyCall (<https://mycall.no/>) to check for any discounts on the monthly plan before topping it up in Narvesen.

3. To-Bring List

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|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| - Passport | - Flight Ticket | - Residence Permit |
| - Admission Letter | - Fanny Pack | - Identity Card |
| - Credit Card | - Toothbrush & Toothpaste | - Shampoo & Conditioner |
| - Comb | - Towel | - Acne Water |
| - Sunscreen | - Nail Clipper | - Scissors |
| - Slipper | - Hiking Boots | - Socks |
| - Coats & Jackets | - Swimsuit | - Gloves |
| - Beanie | - Earmuffs | - Backpack |
| - Umbrella | - Bed Sheets | - WIFI Router |
| - Adapters | - Chargers | - Computer |
| - Camera | - Card Reader | - Stationery |
| - Financial Calculator | - Locks | - Compression Sack |
| - Medicine | - Snacks | |