



**BI** NORWEGIAN  
BUSINESS SCHOOL

Fall 2015 Exchange Report

BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo

Sonya Heera

BBA in Marketing and Information Systems

I am a third year student currently pursuing two majors: Marketing and Information Systems. In 2015, I was given the opportunity to do an exchange program at BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo (the capital of Norway).

### **August 2015**

I arrived in Oslo around the mid of August. From the airport I took the NSB train, which takes a bit longer than the Flytoget. On the train I was just so amazed by the greenery and the field. I made my way to getting the key from the SIO office at the Blindern station. And got to settle down in Bjolsen. Over the next few days, I made trips to IKEA buying bedsheets, pillows and cutlery. You can take a free shuttle bus from the city center and it will take around 15 minutes to either of the two IKEAs in Oslo.

It was very easy for me to get adjusted to the Norwegian transportation system and I felt very settled by the end of my first week. I also went exploring around the city with a few friends, going to the Royal Palace, Art Gallery and having Ben and Jerry's.



### **September 2015**

In the middle of September I had some friends over from Sweden and I showed them around Oslo. They also agreed that Oslo is such a beautiful and bright city in comparison to Stockholm and Copenhagen. At the end of September, I went up north to visit a family friend near Alesund. The views in the northern part of Norway are the most beautiful. And I went hiking up mountains everyday. And let me tell you, Norwegians are indeed the most experienced hikers! It was nice just seeing how happy people were living here.



## October 2015

In October I travelled down to Sweden and Denmark. I went to visit a friend of mine in Lund and it was such a cute village. Everything looked so doll-like. And I realized in comparison to Sweden prices just how expensive Norwegian prices were. A Norwegian friend told me that it's actually very common for Norwegians to bring a trunk filled with food back from Sweden because it was just so much cheaper!



## November 2015

In November, since presentations, exams and other deadlines were coming up I stayed in Oslo and hosted a few more friends from other universities. I also discovered this very hipster place called Valken, which is an indoor food market. There were also some Norwegians selling cupcakes and delicious homemade food for Restaurant Day.



## **December 2015**

After all the exams were done, I flew to London. And it was by far my favourite city in Europe. It reminded me so much of Hong Kong and I knew then just how much I missed a real busy city. There are so many things to do and see in London. I also found it so strange hearing other people speaking English on the Tube, when I was attuned to Norwegian! I was also able to see some of my high school friends in London too which was so nice. After London, I went back to Oslo and was able to see the Northern lights from Sognvann Lake! It was the perfect way to end my exchange in Norway.



## **Why choose BI (BAE-E as the Norwegians pronounce it)?**

### **Location**

Norway is the perfect place for you if you are a nature lover at heart. Sure it can be pricey in terms of expenses particularly eating out, but trust me you will find it worth every penny. Oslo the city itself is smaller than Hong Kong and is a cross between a city and the suburbs. Oslo is a very safe city.

### **People**

The people there are absolutely friendly and will think you know Norwegian at first! Do not worry though they can speak English very well and are very willing to help if you approach them first. Being in Norway, you kind of adapt to the Norwegian lifestyle; university does not take up majority of your time and you have plenty of time to take up a sport, hike, read or any new hobby.

### **Activities**

BI offers a vast amount of activities prior to the beginning of the semester just for their exchange students. Some of these activities include hiking, going to the beach, spending a day at a cabin and many more. Also there are Blnners, which are free dinners arranged by BI. Just remember to register to get yourself a ticket to enter the Blnner.



## **Preparing for your Exchange**

### **Accommodation**

You will be given the opportunity to choose between two types of accommodations: SIO and BSN. SIO is catered for all university students within Oslo. And BSN is only catered to the students at BI. Personally I chose to live in a studio flat in Bjolsen through the SIO system. It was a very convenient location where I had access to the KIWI and MENY supermarket. Also Bjolsen is located 5 minutes by bus from the BI campus and 15 minutes walking distance. I also recommend selecting Kringsja as an accommodation as it's a large student village. For the SIO system you have to pay a deposit of 10,000 NOK when you submit your application for the accommodation. If you are willing to spend a little bit more on rent, I highly recommend living in BSN as you will highly likely be rooming with an international or even an exchange student.

### **Visa Procedures**

As I have the British National passport, I did not need to apply for any visas prior to flying to Norway. However, I had to fill in a form from BI to hand in to the Police Station downtown and then you can collect your Norwegian card from the student office at BI. For HK passport holders, you will have to visit the Norwegian Consulate and pay a certain amount of fee in order to obtain your visa.

### **Courses and Registration**

Registration for courses is actually a lot simpler than the HKUST system. The international office sends a link where you select your courses, a maximum of 5 can be chosen. There's no waitlist, but there is still an add/drop period and you have until the end of the first week of the semester to confirm all your courses.

I took the following courses:

#### **ELE 3775 Product and Price Strategy (MARK-4000 Level Elective)**

I absolutely loved this class. The professor provides a lot of real life examples and is very easy to talk to. There is no exam required for the course, but you need to complete a simulation assignment, a report on the simulation assignment and also a marketing report/proposal.

#### **ELE 3715 Logistics and Marketing Channels (MARK-4000 Level Elective)**

This course is very similar to ISOM 2700 course and only has one exam. The course in general combines marketing, logistics theories and calculations. There are three professors that teach this course and as long as you go through the past papers you should be fine.

### **ELE 3705 Reputation and Corporate Communication (MARK-4000 Level Elective)**

This course required you to apply both in class knowledge and your own research from other theories to a research paper. You are also supposed to present your findings to the class. Out of all the courses I took, this was by far the hardest paper I have ever written. The professor in the course is very strict on attendance.

### **ELE 3702 Social Entrepreneurship (MGMT 2130)**

In this course, you work in a group alongside a Norwegian social enterprise. In your group you will need to provide advice and evaluate their overall business model. Towards the end you need to present your findings to the class. However only the exam is graded. In the exam will need to talk about your experience with the social entrepreneurs.

## **Living and Getting around Oslo**

### **Transportation**

The T-bane monthly pass lasts for 30 days costs NOK 410 and you can travel by both bus, metro and ferry to other islands. Remember to activate your card before your first use, you can activate it on the bus or by the metro gates.

Ticket inspections are rare but they still do happen, I have seen a person got fined. The fine is around 1000 NOK. I was inspected at least 5 times during my stay.

The airport express ticket for the Flytoget is only NOK 90 with your student discount, and it takes about 20 minutes to travel from the Gardemoen Airport to the Oslo S station. There is also a direct airport bus from the Oslo Bus Terminal station which costs around 80 NOK.

### **Food**

Eating out can be expensive around 150 - 200 NOK per head. So you will tend to be eating at home a lot more often. For your fruit and vegetables you can go to the Gronland Fruit and Vegetables market by taking the T-bane. They have a whole variety of products and it is the cheapest place to buy your groceries. For buying your Asian groceries, I suggest going to Asian Food, it's in between the city center and Gronland.

I also highly suggest the BI cafeteria; their buffet salads and their bread are absolutely delicious! For my vegetarian friends, the BI cafeteria also provides hot food and some days in the week have vegan curry, which is amazing.

Next to BI there is a sushi place, which actually tastes quite authentic it's around 120 NOK, so if you ever decide to treat yourself definitely go there. Highly recommend their cucumber and avocado rolls.

If you are craving for some good old Indian food, there's a small place in Gronland right across the road from the T-bane exit. You can get an appetizer, main meal and dessert for less than 100 NOK.





### **Climate**

From what I was told, Oslo experienced the warmest winter as it only hit -15 degrees in December. Summer although it was short, it was really nice and lasted until the end of August. It only started to snow a bit in mid November. But it started to snow even more in December. From the end of October onwards, you will find that the roads have frozen over, so take care when you walk.

### **Communication**

At the beginning of the semester, BI provides a free SIM card for all exchange students. You can easily top it in a Narvasen or 7-Eleven per month.

### **Costs**

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Cost (HKD)</b>
Plane Tickets	14,000
Deposit for Studio Flat	10,000
Accommodation for 4 months	20,000
Transportation	2100
Food, Toiletries, Cutleries, Bedding Expenses	15,000
Traveling	21,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>72,100</b>

## **Checklist**

Passport  
Ticket  
Resident Permit Form  
Admission letter  
Insurance Document  
Laptop and Charger  
Adaptors  
Phone and Charger  
Credit Card/ATM Card  
Money (NOK, Euro)  
Lan Cable/ WiFi Router (you won't have wifi in your housing)  
USB  
Medicine  
Backpack and Handbags  
A few summer clothes  
Warm clothes: Sweater, trousers and jeans  
Jackets  
Down Jacket  
Hiking Boots  
Sneakers  
Gloves  
Hats (beanies)  
Scarves  
Thick socks  
Stationery

Exchange is definitely a worthwhile opportunity. Even though I went to an international school in Hong Kong, I learnt so much about the different European lifestyles and their customs. I loved living in Norway and I am so excited to be going back there soon.

I hope this exchange report have helped you in some ways to prepare for your upcoming exchange to Oslo. If you have any queries, feel free to get my contact information from the SBM office by emailing them at [bmugexch@ust.hk](mailto:bmugexch@ust.hk)