

Exchange Report  
**BI Norwegian Business School**  
Li Cheuk In Jessica  
BBA (FINA & IS)  
Fall Exchange 2016



**BI**

## Monthly Log

### August

I arrived Oslo through Finnair (I booked through Sincerity Travel since it allows 2 checked luggages and only costs \$250 for rebooking) on 8th August with a couple of UST pals. Since it was outside of the pick up service period, we went to Blindern to pick up the keys at SIO Office and settled down at Kringsja first. Afterwards, we took a free shuttle from Oslo S to go to Ikea for the necessities. It will be a good idea to check if your kitchen is well equipped with kitchen utensils first, and then decide whether you need to buy pots and pans at Ikea. I did not travel in this month, mostly trying to settle down to buy groceries and get to meet other exchange students at orientations. It is a good idea to make a booking with police for visa procedures during the orientation. Or else, you will have to go through quite a lot of troubles to get your residence card. The weather in August is great and it is nice to explore Oslo. Besides, through the orientation, I get to meet other exchange students and we planned on our future trips together.



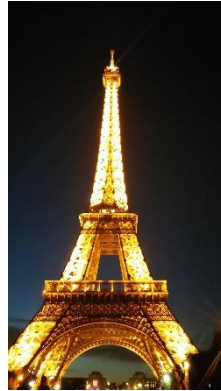
### September

Since BI do not take attendance and most of my courses only have finals as examination criteria, I have plenty of time travelling. In September, I went to Bergen, Stockholm and Copenhagen. It is recommended to take a boat cruise at Bergen since the views were very nice. The scenery of the Bergen-Oslo train route is spectacular as well. Both Copenhagen and Stockholm are great cities as well. Compared to Oslo, they are more dynamic and city-like. Although they are all Scandinavian countries, the price level is far much lower than Norway (No wonder Norwegians will drive to the Swedish borders and shopping!)



## October

In this month, I travelled to Iceland, Netherland (Rotterdam and Amsterdam) and Paris. I personally think that it is a must to travel to Paris for every European exchange students since it is probably the only chance you are able to get to see all the museums (including Louvre Museum) for free! I highly recommend to go to Iceland as well and book day tours (if you do not know how to drive). Iceland has many amazing scenery and I got to see the aurora there!



## November

It is finally time for me to pick up my studies as exams were coming. I simply explore Oslo and went to the opening of the Christmas Market. The fireworks were very nice. Exams started on 29th.



## December

My exams finished on 14th. Afterwards, I checked out of Kringsja and started my whole month of travelling. Please remember to clean up your room or else SIO will deduct your deposit. I went to Finland (Helsinki and Rovaniemi) and United Kingdom (London, Norwich, Edinburgh, Cambridge, Bath). I was quite lucky to see the aurora again at Rovaniemi! During Christmas, most stores and even transport were closed so it is better to plan ahead during those period.



## January

I went to Poland (Warsaw, Wroclaw, Krakow, Zakopane) and Czech Republic (Kuna Hora, Prague, Cesky Krumlov). The weather was extremely cold. The temperature is even lower than Oslo (-28 degree!) Although the architecture was unique, it was not that nice to travel at Eastern Europe during winter with such extreme temperature. Sadly, my exchange period came to an end on 19th. I went back to Oslo to pick up my luggage and flew back to Hong Kong.



## General Information

### 1. Visa Procedures

You can apply your visa after BI issued admission letter to you. You can call or email the Norwegian Consulate to book a timeslot for the application of Visa. They will send you a list of required documents. Just follow the instructions and everything will be fine. It usually takes around a month for you to receive a visa so it will be a good idea to apply it right after the admission letter is sent to you.

Upon arrival at Oslo, BI will organize a day to book an appointment at the police office. If you missed that day, you will have to book it yourself by calling the the police office yourself. You will receive your residence card within a month. Keep the card whenever you go travelling as it may be useful during passport check. For certain museums, you can enjoy free admission just by showing your residence card!

### 2. Orientation Activities

There are a couple of orientation activities specially for exchange students such as coffee hour, bus sightseeing, watching sunset at opera house. Although the activities were a little disorganized, it was still nice to get to know new people there. There are another series of orientation activities called the Fadderullan. Sadly, all the activities were quite expensive so I did not go to them.

### 3. International Services & Activities

In BI, InSA (International Student Association) usually organize activities for international students, for example the monthly BI-neer (It is a free dinner for BI students, remember to like their Facebook page and sign up on time! It has limited quota!) You can sign up and help prepare the dinner as well.

#### 4. Accommodations

Like the previous students, I lived in Kringsja. Although it was a little far away from city centre, I do enjoy the quiet and comfortable environment there. It was only 8 minute-walk to the Sogsvann lake and a supermarket (KIWI) nearby. It was near to the T-bane (around 5-10 minute-walk, depending on which block you live) and around 15 minute-ride to BI (change platform at Ullevel Stadium). However, unlike Hong Kong metro system, you need to wait 15 minutes if you miss a train. At Kringsja, there are overnight bus that takes you to Oslo S. The bus is quite useful if you have an early flight or early train.

Remember to bring your router to Oslo as the dorm do not include wifi. Besides, you have to top up your laundry card for washing clothes. It cost 20 NOK for washing machine and 10 NOK for drying.

#### 5. Courses Registration

Before arrival, BI will send an email regarding the course registration. BI has a wide variety of Finance courses so it will be a good idea if you are a finance major student. From this semester on, you can only choose 30 ECTS at most.

#### 6. Teaching & Assessment Methods

The classes at BI usually has 1 lesson per week, each lesson is 3 hour-long with 15 minute-break after every 45 minutes of class. I find the classes quite relaxing with the breaks. For final exams, some examination venue is located out of campus, so it will be a good idea to check first. BI only allows financial calculator so either bring a financial calculator to Oslo or borrow one at the student association (you may buy one at school but it will be pretty expensive).

##### ELE 3732 Financial Bubbles, Crashes and Crises

This course has 100% as final exam. On the last half hour of each lecture, the professor will give us 3 potential exam questions. On the last lecture, the professor will review all the questions which I find quite useful. The first half of this course mainly talks about the underlying principle and stages of how financial bubbles emerge. Some of the theories are a little bit hard to understand but more manageable after revisiting the PowerPoints a few times. For the second half of the course, it focus on different cases such as US subprime crisis, Euro area crisis, Scandinavian financial crisis, etc. I personally find this course quite interesting and useful.

##### EXC 3670 Financial Markets and Institution

20% of the course is Bloomberg Marketing Concept, 10% Homework and 70% final exam. The course has a few lab sessions which the professor teaches us how to use Bloomberg to extract data. The teaching of this course is quite unsatisfactory and half of the time I have no idea what the professor is talking about. The content of the book is understandable but the lectures have no correlation with the book which makes the course weird. All in all, I do not recommend this course.

##### EXC 3611 International Finance

30% Homework (3 Individual assignments) and 70% final exam. The course includes exchange rates, interest rate parity, currency options and futures, etc. The teaching of this course is satisfactory although there are quite a lot of mistakes in the PowerPoints. The homework and final are quite straightforward and manageable.

##### EXC 2901 Norwegian Culture and History

100% final exam. Essay type questions. On the last lecture, the professor will review all the questions which I find quite useful. Only the questions reviewed on the last lecture will be tested so the criteria is not that much

as it seems (still quite a lot though). The course talks about major historical incidents happened in Norway and their culture. It is interesting to take this course as you will have a better understanding regarding Norway as a country.

### 7. Sports & Recreation Facilities

The school campus is quite small but well equipped. The school has plenty of classrooms and lecture halls, a canteen, a few coffee places and library. The school has a lot of study places as well (even more than UST) so it is quite nice to study and have project meetings. There is a gym, a clinic at BI operated by SIO.

### 8. Finance & Banking (including currency / expenses)

Currency in Norway: NOK (around 1NOK=0.9 HKD)

Most people applied Citibank account for the Plus system as Union Pay is not that convenient in Europe. I personally think it is not necessary if you bring enough cash to Norway (NOK and Euro). Besides, credit card is widely accepted in Norway so it will not be a problem as long as you have one. I would suggest to have a credit card that has visa paywave or mastercard paypass. With these functions, signature is not required unless you purchase amount that is over 500 hkd. I find this quite convenient.

#### Expense

	NOK	HKD
Flight Ticket		8300
Insurance		2000
Norway Expense*	12000	
Accommodation	17375	
Travel		~45000
		~90000

\*Includes transport (414 NOK per month), food, IKEA, sundries and other daily expense

### 9. Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

BI will open a specific Facebook group for exchange student which is quite useful. There are other useful groups such as Oslo student market, ESN. On the first few weeks, the social clubs will set up booth at school in which you can join.

## 10. Health & Safety

Oslo is a safe country when compared to other European countries. As for health issues, there is a clinic at BI and it cost around 400 NOK and medicine is not included. You have to go to pharmacy stores to get the medicine.

## 11. Food

Eating out is expensive and I seldom do that. There are a lot of Asian food market around Oslo S and Gronland which sell low price vegetables and fruit. Noodles and Chinese sauce can also be found there. Among all mainstream supermarkets, I personally find KIWI at the best price. I usually use Mattibud to keep track on the discounted items of supermarkets as well.

Some special Norwegian Food: brown cheese, Kaiver, Salmon

## 12. Transportation

I purchase a monthly student pass (414 NOK) which allows you to travel within zone 1 with all kinds of transportation (trams, T-bane, bus, ships). It is a must to bring your ruter card anytime since security check tickets quite often (I got checked at least 2 times per month). If you are found without a ticket, the fine will be around 900+ NOK.

For transport to airport, apart from fly to get which cost you 90 NOK, you can purchase an extensive ticket through NSB which cost you 60 NOK only.

## 13. Climate

In August, Oslo is quite warm and comfortable with temperature around 15-25 degrees. It starts to get colder in late September to around 5 degree. The first snow is on early November. Although temperature will drop to -10 degrees in December, it does not feel that cold as the weather is dry as well. It is a must to have a pair of thick gloves, scarf and non-slippery shoes (you will easily slip with the iced ground).

## 14. Communication

Norwegians speak English very well so it will not cause an issue if you do not know any Norwegian. As for sim card, I use my call. You can top up whatever you want monthly, from data only plan to phone calls one. You can top up in any mycall branch stores or convenient stores.

## 15. Cautionary Measures

Remember to bring your residence card anytime.

## Items to bring

Router

Thick clothes

Gloves

Scarf

Laptop

Credit card and bank cards

Passport

HKID

Admission Letter

VISA

Non-slippery shoes

Personal Medicine

Personal skin care

Charger and Adapter

## Useful Links and Contact

Course Catalog

<https://at.bi.no/NO>

BI Norwegian Business School

<https://www.bi.edu/study-at-bi/international-students/incoming-exchange-programme/>

Housing

<https://www.sio.no/en/housing/>