



# Exchange Report

## 2017 Spring

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## Part 1: Monthly Activity Log

### January

This year, we got 8 UST students going to BI Norwegian Business School for exchange together. We have already created a WhatsApp Group at the very beginning and thus we got to know each other before the start of our exchange. We all finally decided to apply for the same accommodation, Kringsja Student Village, and fly together at the 5<sup>th</sup> January. We arrived 3 days before the semester started to settle down and buy some necessary stuff from IKEA and supermarkets. You could almost buy all the things you need in IKEA such as pillows, blankets, kitchen stuff and of course a big bag of Swedish meatballs! There were a lot of orientation activities in the first month organized by BI such as talks, games and parties for us to make some new friends from other countries. In the last week of January, we went to Lithuania to celebrate the Chinese New Year. All the things are very cheap in Lithuania and some are even cheaper than Hong Kong. I personally suggest you buy more stuff you need from Eastern Europe and bring them back to Norway as you may be amazed by the price in Northern Europe. One of my friends just brought 8 packs of super large-size chips back to Oslo!

### February

The weather was still very cold in this month (around -10°C), but this also provided us a good opportunity to go skiing. The Oslo Winter Park is quite a good place to ski as it provides more than ten different skiing routes for both beginners and professionals. The student price for borrowing equipment and entrance fee is around NOK550. You may also borrow the skiing equipment from SIO, which just costs no more than NOK400 for three months. But you may have to borrow that as fast as you can since equipment is not sufficient in SIO. In the middle of Feb, we also went to the northern part of Norway, Tromsø, which is a very popular city to see the Northern Lights. Although we had spent a whole night waiting outside under the super cold temperature, we could rarely see the Northern Lights in a very strong green color. So, you may check for the KP value forecast first, before you plan for your trip to see Northern Lights.

## March

My exchange journey had almost gone half here, so we spent more time in travelling around different European countries, especially when there were not much assignments and projects in this month. It is very cheap to travel to UK from Oslo. With the Ryanair, it just costed me NOK100 for a return ticket. If you are a big fan of Premier League, you definitely won't miss UK. Iceland is another place worth to go, despite the fact that everything is super expensive there. As we have missed the Northern Light in Tromsø, we had joined another tour in Iceland and this time, we could successfully see some strong and amazing Northern Lights. There are also a lot of famous natural scenery in Iceland, such as the Blue Lagoon, ice cave, the Golden Circle, etc. You can also try some special and novel food in Iceland like the whale and shark meat (you would never forget that smell). We had also been to the Paris and Brussels. Just be aware of the pickpocket then is fine.

## April

We don't have much lectures or lessons in this month because of the long Easter holiday, and thus we made good use of this chance to travel six different countries at once. Starting from Berlin, the capital of Germany, we went through the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Croatia and back to Oslo from Italy. Four of us had tried our first time of skydiving and real gun shooting range in Prague. It was so crazy but the feel was great. I would never forget the moment I jump out of the plane 14,000 ft high. This trip also was a good time to start looking for some interesting or special souvenirs for my friends and family. However, it was quite hard to book the hotel during this period as Easter is the peak season for travelling. So, it is better to start planning your trip at March, if you do not want to live so far away from the city center or afford the high price.

## May & June

This is the last month of my exchange journey and I got 4 finals in this month. For those courses I taken, the final exams counted 100% towards the total grade, and thus I had to spend the whole month in Oslo to practice the past papers except few days that I visited the Baltic States and Bergen. Bergen is the second largest city in Norway, and it is famous for its beautiful landscape and seafood. I had brought some smoked salmon and caviar from the seafood market as souvenirs. The last trip of my exchange is the "Troll Tongue" situated about 1,100 meters above the sea level in

Odda, Norway. I and my friend spent almost 12 hours to “climb” through the whole journey and we were extremely exhausted when we eventually reached the ground. It was still snowy everywhere up in the mountain even though it was June at that time, and this made the path very slippery and hard to walk. But when you get to the top of Troll Tongue, you would just find out that everything is worthwhile and this drew my exchange to a perfect end.



*Norway in a nutshell*



*Ice Cave*



*Troll Tongue*

## **Part 2: General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedures**

Although you can enter Norway using your HK passport, you still have to apply for the study permit as you are going to stay in Norway for more than three months. You can just simply make a phone call (2546 9881) to the Royal Norwegian Consulate Hong Kong to make an appointment in advance. Just remember to bring all the documents (Passport, ID Card, application form, admission letter from BI, proof of accommodation and passport photos) required. The whole procedure takes around a month so it is better for you to reserve some time for applying the study permit.

### **Orientation Activities**

You will receive an email regarding on the orientation activities before your arrival. Usually there will be a brief orientation talks introducing Oslo and BI Norwegian Business School, and right after the talk, some staff will guide you to walk around the campus. Feel free to talk with the staff if you have any concerns and there is a welcoming party in the student bar after the walk. There are also some free courses or workshops to teach you basic Norwegian language and culture.

## International Activities

BI School will organize some international activities for exchange students irregularly throughout the whole semester. The best way to make more international friends is to join more this kind of activities if you are not on travelling. You can simply get all the information through the Facebook group (BI Exchange Fall/Spring 20XX).

## Accommodations

All of us lived together in the Kringsja Student Village operated by the Sio. The monthly rent is around NOK3,000 to NOK3,500 depending on which block and floor you are living. There is a T-bane metro station in the Student village, so it takes 15-20mins to go back school and 20-25mins to go to the city center. There are also two supermarkets called 'Kiwi' and 'Meny' inside the student village. Some blocks would be quite old but the best thing for Kringsja is that there is a very beautiful and relaxing lake called Sognsvann where you can always go there to have a jogging or barbecue, with just 5mins walk away from the student village.

## Courses

An email will be sent to you regarding the courses information and class schedule before the semester start. I had taken 3 FINA courses and 1 common core course.

### **FIN3616 Financial Decision Making with Excel**

One written final exam counts 50% towards the total grade and biweekly assignments count another 50%. Practical and useful contents with good grade and fair workload.

### **EXC3651 Shipping Finance**

One written final exam counts 100% towards the total grade. A bit boring but still good grade with little workload.

### **FIN3621 Options and Futures**

One MC final exam counts 100% towards the total grade. A bit difficult but you can practice the past papers. Good grade with little workload.

## **EXC2901 Norwegian Culture and History – An Introduction**

One final essay counts 100% towards the total grade. Quite interesting as you may discover more about the history and culture of Norway. Two non-compulsory field trips and fair grade.

## Health and Safety

I usually drink the tap water directly but you may still boil it first. Take more deep breaths as the air is fresh. Just remember to bring some medicines with you in case you get sick. It's safe in Norway and Norwegians are quite nice.

## Food

Eating outside is quite expensive so we always cooked and prepared the lunch box by ourselves. It is quite a good chance to enhance your cooking skills. There is a canteen in BI which offers pizzas, salads, pastas and rice in a relatively lower price.

## Transportation

It is suggested to buy the monthly pass for the zone 1 area only. With the pass, you can take any public transport in Oslo. However, you still have to pay NOK60 each time to extend your monthly pass when you take the train to the airport. You can buy the monthly pass in the NSB counter once you arrive the Oslo Airport. Student discount is only available for the monthly pass.

## Climate

Cold, cold and very cold. But trust me, you will gonna love the climate there as Hong Kong is too stuffy and wet. It will get warmer after March.

## Finance and Banking

I spent around HKD80,000 in total for this exchange journey including traveling expenses (18 countries), insurance, visa and living expenses in Oslo. Of course, most of my expenses went to the travelling. Actually, I didn't bring much cash to Norway instead I brought one debit card which I can use to withdraw money in Europe and one credit card to book hotels and flights. Citibank won't charge you any withdrawal fees overseas, but its exchange rate is not as good as other bank offered.



## Part 3: Items to bring

- Waterproof Jacket, Down Jacket, Thick Socks, Waterproof Shoes, Scarf, Gloves and Snow Pants (Optional as I just used it for no more than 3 times)
- Laptop, Plug Adapters, Extension Lead, Router and LAN Cable (Very Important)
- Passport, Admission Letter, Study Permit
- Medicines
- A big backpack for traveling (Better to be waterproof)

## Part 4: Useful Links

### BI

BI Student Portal: <https://at.bi.no/EN>

### Housing

BI Housing: <https://www.bi.edu/study-at-bi/student-life/housing/>

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

### Transportation

Ruter: <https://ruter.no/en/>

NSB: <https://www.nsb.no/en/frontpage>

### Flights

SAS Youth: <https://www.flysas.com/en/fr/Promotions-and-prices/youth/>

Skyscanner: <https://www.skyscanner.com.hk/>



*Northern Light*



*Sognsvann Lake*



*Skydiving*