

EXCHANGE REPORT

BI Norwegian Business School



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Monthly Activity Log

August 2018

Before my arrival in Oslo, I stopped over at Helsinki, Finland for 5 days. It was summertime in the Scandinavian countries. In Finland, I spent some time in Helsinki, Naantali and Rovaniemi, having some sightseeing in the capital city, visiting the Moominworld and Santa Claus Village.



Tempeliaukio Rock Church



Tuomiokirkko, Helsinki Cathedral



Santa Claus Village, Lapland, Rovaniemi



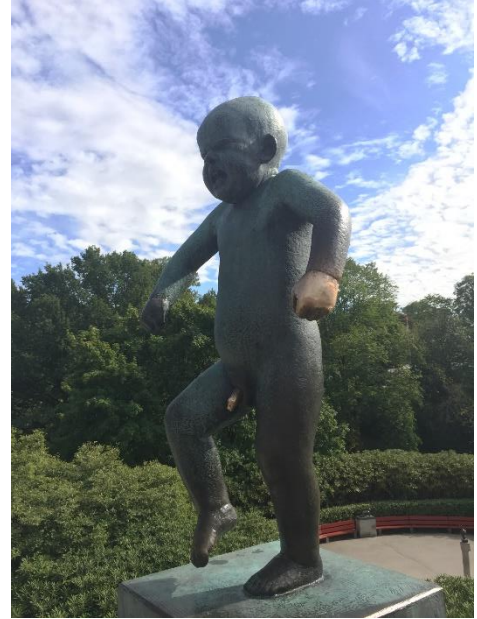
Moominworld, Naantali

After doing some sightseeing in Finland, I took the flight to Oslo on 10 August. During the Fadderullan – Orientation Week, I did some sightseeing around the city with a group of exchange students and 2 BI leaders, joined a night party, and learnt some basic Norwegian.

As I was not very occupied by coursework and term papers during weekends, I spent some time on visiting the interesting museums and parks of the city. This includes the Maritime Museum, Vigelandsparken and the Kon-Tiki Museum.



Gold medal-winning rowing boat used by the Norwegian National Team in 1976 Olympics Games



Angry baby, Vigelandsparken



Moai Statue, Kon-Tiki Museum



The Monolith, Vigelandsparken

In late August, I joined a local Dragon Boat Team, Oslo Dragons and participated in their training activities. The most memorable event was the Sandvika Byfest held on 25 to 26 August. It is a festival to give thanks to the river, and a lot of organizations would setup a booth there to recruit members. My

team was involved in the event, in which we sold Norwegian pancakes, hotdogs and drinks to raise funds for the team, and held paddling sessions for the public.



Our team's dragon boat on display at the Sandvika Byfest



Paddling with the public at the festival



Last training in August 2018 with the team

September 2018

Apart from studies, I joined outdoor team training sessions on Sundays. It is organized by "Treningsdag med Team Treningsdag", in which I can improve my physical fitness while having fun with a great team of sport lovers from different backgrounds. Our trainings were being held in St. Hanshaugen, one of the biggest parks in Oslo.



My first training session with the team

Apart from dragon boating, I tried outrigger with my team members. We paddled in the Maritim and the Oslo Harbour.



Paddling in the Oslo Harbour

My friend from Singapore, Grace joined a photo-shooting competition held by SBIO and we were invited to a coffee-tasting session at Tim Wendelboe, a popular coffee school and shop.



Grace and I joining the coffee-tasting session



October 2018

In October, the weather was getting colder than the last two months and it was the last dragon boat training we could have. It is always fun to paddle with a team and meet people from different nationalities and backgrounds.



Our last training in October

To try something completely new to me, I joined the BI Athletics – Pole Fitness team. We trained two times per week during the semester and prepared ourselves for the performance at KROA, the bar of BI in November.

Apart from the regular training sessions, we held a training camp. Our team travelled to Budapest, Hungary from 20 to 23 October 2018 for the training camp. We had pole training sessions Andrea and Anita from the Professional Pole Dance Stúdió. During the trip, we had a lot of fun, which includes bar crawling and having some sightseeing around the city.



Pole training in Budapest



Pole fitness Training



Our pole fitness team



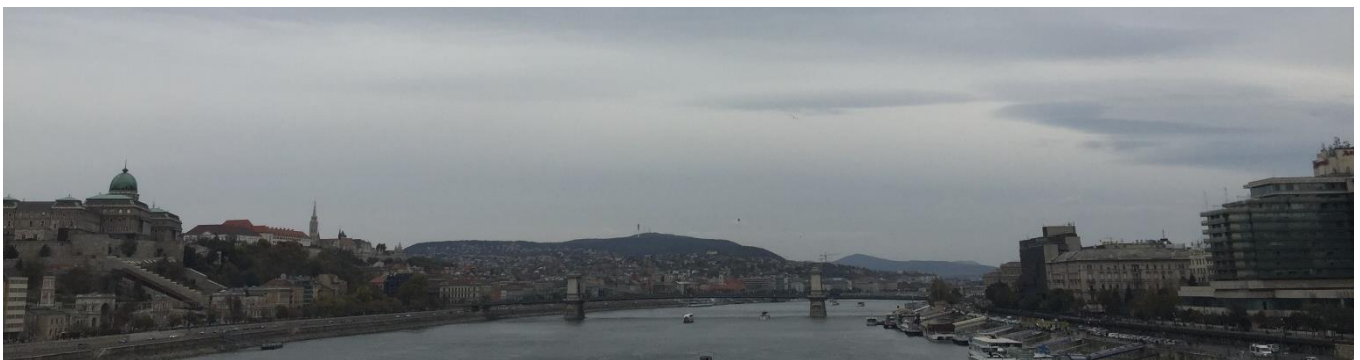
Országház,
The Hungarian
Parliament Building



Széchenyi Chain Bridge



Hősök tere, Heroes'
Square



The skyline of Budapest, Hungary

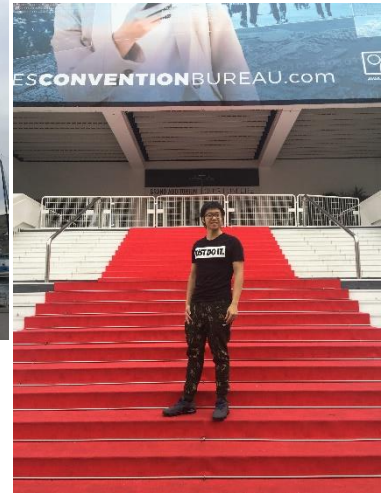
In late October, my friends and I travelled to Provence in France. We visited Marseille, Cannes and Nice, as well as Monte Carlo, Monaco.



Notre-Dame de la Garde, Marseille



Skyline of Marseille, France



Palais des Festivals, Cannes



Nice, France



Skyline of Monte Carlo, Monaco



Casino de Monte-Carlo

November 2018

In November, the weather was colder, and the sun set as early as 3pm, which was a sign that winter was coming to Oslo. As the performance at KROA was approaching, the pole fitness team spent more time on trainings and practices.

The performance was on 8 November and it was a huge success. Our audience at KROA enjoyed our performance and there was a long queue waiting to get into the bar.



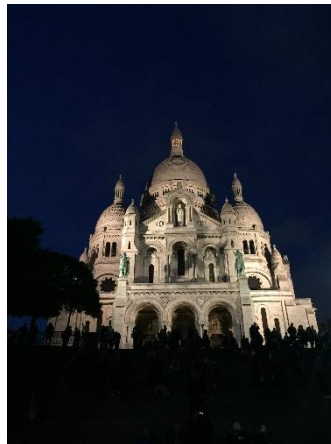
Our team's performance at KROA

In mid-November, I travelled to Paris with my friends. We did some sightseeing in "The City of Lights", where we visited the Arc de Triomphe, Le Basilique du Sacré-Cœur, L'Opéra and Tour Eiffel. We also visited Versailles and Mont Saint-Michel.

Arc de Triomphe



Le Basilique du Sacré-Cœur



L'Opéra



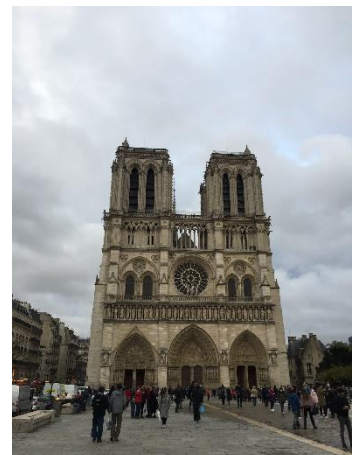
Tour Eiffel



Musée du Louvre



Cathedrale Notre-Dame



Versailles



Galerie des Glaces, Versailles

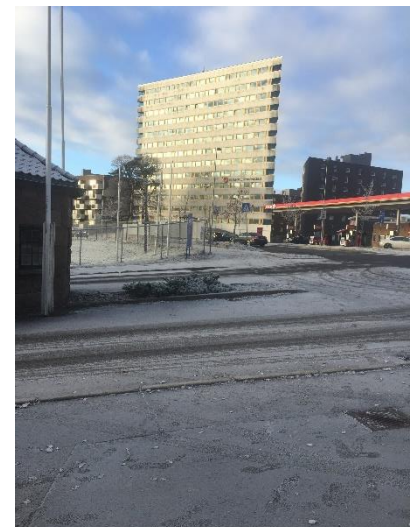


Mont Saint-Michel



The trip to Paris was the last trip during my exchange to Norway as I was busy with term papers and needed to prepare for the final exams in early-December.

In late November, it started snowing at night. There were thin layers of snow in Bjerke, the area I lived in. Winter had finally arrived in the Bjerke and Oslo. There was bright daylight between 10am to 3pm. The sun set at around 3pm to 4pm.



Bjerke Studenthus, my student house

December 2018

I had 3 exams on the 4 December and the last exam on 12 December. After submitting all my term papers and finished with my exams, I had more time to visit museums and different places of Oslo.

As winter had arrived, there was snow everywhere, indicating that there will be a white Christmas for everyone.

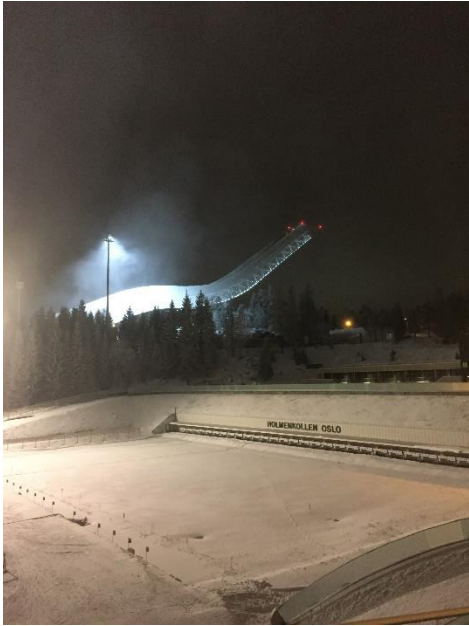


Snowman built in the Slottsparken



Crying baby covered in snow, Vigelandsparken

Holmenkollen



Vigeland-Museet



In the very last week of my exchange program in Norway, I met my friends and teammates for gatherings and dinner. I had Christmas dinner with my teammates from Pole Fitness and Oslo Dragons before leaving Oslo for Hong Kong. On 22nd December, I left Oslo and arrived in Hong Kong on 23.



General Exchange Information

1) Visa Procedures

As I am a British Passport holder, I am considered to be an EU citizen and there is no need for me to apply for a Visa to Norway. According to my friends who need a Visa, you need to apply for a timeslot to meet with the Norwegian Consulate. They will then share a list of required documents with you, which includes the Admission Letter from BI. The letter will be sent to you via emails.

For EU citizens, I am not required to apply for the Study Permit prior to my arrival. However, I need to register online on UDI. Upon arrival, the university centrally collected all documents for application of Study Permit and submitted them to the Police Office.

For Non-EU citizens, they have to apply for a Residence Card from the Police Office. BI will arrange the appointment and they will receive the card in 1 months' time.

2) Orientation Activities

There is an Orientation Week for exchange students. It is called "Fadderullan", which includes parties, concerts and a lot of outdoor activities. Each group is led by two BI leaders. There are around 7 – 8 exchange students from different universities in the group. They will create a group on Facebook messenger and you can contact them if you would like to buy a ticket for an event or join their parties.

3) International Services & Activities

In BI, the SBIO will organize different activities for exchange students. The university chaplain, Studentprest BI will organize coffee chats, gatherings and dinners for students. They will organize different services at churches and organizations. You may sign up for their gatherings and services on their Facebook page "Studentprest BI".

4) Accommodations

I lived in Bjerke Studenthus, which I applied through SiO housing. It is located quite far away from the T-Bane Stations. However, it is very convenient to get to Oslo Airport and the closest T-Bane Station, Sinsen. There is a bus stop for bus 31, which I can get to Sinsen and the city centre, Rådhuset. There is a Flybussen bus stop within 5-minute walk, which I can get to Oslo Airport directly.

I stayed in a room with private bathroom and shared kitchen. I shared the kitchen with 6 – 7 residents from different universities. We have a duty roster to clean up the kitchen and take out the garbage. The rental is approximately 8,500 NOK per month.

There is a Chinese restaurant downstairs called “Panda Restaurant”. It serves great, tasty and economical local Chinese food. Next to the Chinese restaurant, there is a Kiwi supermarket, where you can buy daily necessities.

The dormitories do not include Wi-Fi and you might want to bring your router. SiO provides the option of Wi-Fi router rental. There is a laundry room in -1 floor, and you need to top up the card and make a booking. It costs 35 NOK for the booking, but the price is not fixed and depends on the fabrics and water temperature you need.

5) Courses Registration

Prior to your arrival, the International Office will send you emails regarding the course registrations. You may check BI Portal’s courses and pick the courses you are interested in. I took ELE 3775 – Product and Price Strategy, EXC 3611 – International Finance, ELE 3744 – Business Dynamics and ELE 3702 – Social Entrepreneurship. If there is a time conflict in the courses, the International Office will send an email to you and request you to check the schedule. You will need to reply by email with the change that you would like to make.

6) Teaching & Assessment Methods

In BI, there is 1 lesson per week for each course. It is a 3-hour class with a 15-minute break in between. The classes are highly interactive, and the professors are approachable. For some courses, there are group discussions and homework. In Fall semester, the final examination period is from late November to mid-December. If there is a time conflict in exams, you may send an email to your professor and exam office. A ticket will be raised, and you will be contacted by a staff from the exam office. From my experience, they will hold the exams on the same day, one after another with a 1-hour break in between. For some courses, you are only allowed to use the BI-certified HP calculator, and other calculators are not accepted.

ELE 3775 – Product and Price Strategy

30% of the course is an individual written school exam and 70% is term paper. The professor is approachable and she has a lot of professional experience with brand management and product launches. The written school exam tests your knowledge on the concepts mentioned in class and you are asked to design and launch a new product in the term paper.

EXC 3611 – International Finance

30% of this course is homework and 70% goes to final exam. There are 3 homework assignments, and each takes 10%. You may complete the homework assignments together with your friends, but you must submit it individually. The questions of the homework assignments

can be quite challenging. This course covers exchange rates, interest rate parity, options and futures.

ELE 3744 – Business Dynamics

40% of the course is individual written exam and 60% goes to group term paper. The written exam consists of 30 MC questions which tests your understanding of the concepts. You are required to work with a group of 3 – 4 students. The term paper involves a business case and you would need to use a software, VENSIM. This course covers Causal loop diagramming, use of VENSIM, delays and decision making. The professor is very helpful and you can contact her if you have questions regarding the concepts mentioned in class and the term paper.

ELE 3702 – Social Entrepreneurship

60% of the course is the term paper, 30% goes to take home exam and 10% is the reflection notes. In the term paper, you are required to work with 5 – 6 group members and focus on a social entrepreneur. You need to work like a consultant to the social entrepreneur, identify the potential issues of scaling, and find out the possible ways of dealing with the problems encountered by the entrepreneur. The take home exam and reflection notes will be submitted together. The exam tests your understanding on the concepts mentioned in class. The note requires you to reflect on the changes on your behaviors and perceptions towards social entrepreneurship, as well as the actions you will take to become a changemaker in your community.

7) Sports & Recreation Facilities

The school campus is located in Nydalen. There is a T-bane station and bus stop nearby. There is a shopping mall, Torgbygget with the COOP supermarket. The school itself has classrooms, lecture halls, canteen, coffee shop, library, study areas and a SBIO area. There is a gym run by SiO Athletica. You can register for a Gym Card during orientation week. The SiO will setup a booth on campus to promote their fitness programs and gym membership. 1-month membership costs 699 NOK, 3-month for 1,050 NOK and 6-month for 1,499 NOK. The gym on campus is well-equipped, clean and tidy. There are HIIT, yoga and cycling courses provided to members which you need to pay a little fee for. There is a Personal Trainer Program which you can apply for.

8) Finance & Banking

Currency

The currency used in Norway is NOK, which is equivalent to 0.912 HKD. In Norway, I used credit cards and cash for payment. There are “Minibanks” ATM in shopping malls and on the street. You can take out cash from your bank account with these ATMs.

Expenses

	NOK	HKD
Flight Ticket (Finnair)		16,000
Entertainment and daily necessities (Monthly)	10,000	
Accommodation (Monthly)	8,500	
Travel		135,000
Insurance		12,000
Transportation (Monthly)	450	

9) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

During the Orientation Week, clubs and sport teams will setup booths on campus, recruiting new members. Most of them are open to exchange students to join. Some clubs are in a more professional and business setting, which involves mingling sessions with business executives, firm visits, sharing by professionals and dinners.

For Sport teams, there are many of them under BI Athletics, including pole fitness, rowing, skiing, bathing and cross-country skiing. You are welcomed to join the try-out sessions. There will be a casual interview for the committee to know more about you and you will get to know their plans for the semester. There will be a membership fee to BI Athletics and the sports team. Some of them will organize a training camp to nearby countries, for example, BI Pole Fitness went to Budapest for a 4-day training camp.

BI's International Office opens a Facebook Group for exchange students and they will share information through this channel. ESN is another student society that will organize activities including cultural exchanges, trips and gatherings. For example, they organized a trip to St. Petersburg, Russia in October and invited students from Norway, Sweden and Denmark to join.

10) Health and Safety

Oslo is relatively safe when compared to other European cities. There are no significant dangers or hazards, except the snow and moose on the roads in the countryside.

11) Food

Dining out in Oslo can be quite costly. It costs more than 200 NOK for a burger set at Burger King's or McDonald's. For fine dining, it costs over 400 – 500 NOK. Cooking at your dormitory would be a more economical choice, but shopping in supermarkets can be quite costly. In Norway, COOP and Meny belongs to the premium category among supermarkets. For cheaper deals, you may visit Kiwi or Joker supermarkets.

For Asian food and ingredients, you may find them in A Market, Grønland. The Asian supermarket is located in Grønland. You may take the T-Bane and 5-minute walk from the station to the supermarket.

12) Transportation

In Oslo, you may get the Ruter card for transportation. It works like the Octopus card. For students, it costs 450 NOK per month. You may buy the card from Narvesen, Ruter service stations and 7-11. To travel around in the city, you may take the T-Bane and bus. The Ruter.no website is helpful for route planning and checking of bus schedule.

If you would like to travel to Zone 2 and 3, you have to take the NSB and pay for a ticket extension at Oslo S. For Sandvika – the beach town and Vestby – Oslo Fashion Outlet, you would need to take the NSB trains at Nationaltheatret or Oslo S.

13) Climate

From August to mid-October, it is not very cold and the temperature ranges from 12°C to 25°C. In mid-October to late-October, it snows in the night and there will be a thin layer of snow in the morning. It can be quite cold at night and early mornings. In November and December, the temperature can go below 0°C. It ranges from -1°C to 4°C. It is important to bring some clothes to keep you warm. You might also want to bring some moisturizers and lip balm as it could be very dry in the winter. It can be quite warm when there is sunlight. However, when the sun sets, it will get very cold. It snows at night and there is a thick layer of snow in the mornings. As there will be snow on the floor, be careful that it might be quite slippery to walk on. According to my friends from Norway, they mentioned that spring will come in mid-May, which is before the National Day. It is the best time to visit Norway and you can observe nature's transition from winter to spring.

14) Communication

Most of my Norwegian friends can speak English and Norwegian fluently. They can speak English without strong accent. Some locals might not be able to speak fluent English, but they can

understand simple English phrases and words. All in all, I do not see significant issues with communications.

15) Cautionary measures

In case of emergency, do contact the Emergency hotline at 110. Be cautious of the weather in winter, as the thick layer of snow is a hazard for people living in the countryside.

16) Others

Norwegians may seem cold and introverted. However, once you get to know them well, they are easy-going, friendly, cheerful and nice people.

Items to bring

1. Passport and HKID Card
2. Hard copies of Admission Letter
3. Copies of Passport
4. Insurance policy
5. ATM card & some cash (NOK and EUR)
6. Wi-Fi Router with Lan cable
7. Adaptor & Chargers
8. Jacket, boots, gloves & scarf
9. Laptop
10. Skin-care product
11. Notebook
12. Stationery
13. Personal medicine
14. Towel
15. Clothes
16. Slippers
17. Recyclable shopping bags

Useful links and Contacts

BI Portal

<https://portal.bi.no/en>

BI Exam Timetable

<https://portal.bi.no/en/me/my-exams/exam-timetable/>

BI Its Learning

<https://bi.itslearning.com/>

Ruter

<https://ruter.no/>

NSB

<https://www.nsb.no/>

Flybussen

www.flybussen.no/

Flytoget

www.flytoget.no/

UDI – Study Permit

<https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/studies/>

SiO

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

SiO Athletica

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

Posten

<https://www.posten.no/en/>

Min idrett

<https://minidrett.nif.no/>

Treningsdag med Treningsdagen

<https://www.facebook.com/treningsdagen/>

Oslo Dragons/Oslo Dragebåtklubb

<https://www.facebook.com/OsloDragonboat/>

BI Athletics – Pole Fitness

<https://www.facebook.com/SBIOApolefitness/>

Studentprest BI

<https://www.facebook.com/chaplainBI/>