

EXCHANGE REPORT



BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo

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Year 3 in Information Systems and Marketing

MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

AUGUST

I arrived Oslo on 8th August with two other friends from HKUST. We were very lucky since my friend in Norway was able to drive us to our student hall and we could save time and sweat from travelling with our luggage from the airport on our own. We explored the lake in Sognsvann and some nearby islands in Oslo city before the start of the orientation week (i.e. 16th August). Later, I travelled to Warsaw, Prague, Salzburg, Hallstatt, Budapest and Krakow.



Hallstatt



Budapest

SEPTEMBER

Since the workload of courses I took were light and were manageable, I went to Venice, Santorini, Paros and Athens in Greece and Poznam in Poland in September. Not only the weather in Italy and Greece is different from that in Norway, but also their culture. Italians and Greeks are more outgoing while Norwegians tend to be more introverted when facing with strangers.



Burano



Santorini

OCTOBER

After handing in some assignments and paper plan in October, I went to London, Stockholm and Riga in mid-October. It was a nice and unforgettable experience to spend a night on a cruise when I returned to Sweden from Riga. My friends and I also went to Iceland in late-October before the daytime diminished to 5-6 hours. Although it was only October, Iceland was freezing cold with the wind, so remember to bring clothes that could keep you warm and a pair of mountain shoes to avoid you from slipping.



London



Iceland

NOVEMBER

Before the start of examinations in late November, I travelled to Copenhagen, Brussels, Rotterdam and Amsterdam. I had a lot of fun in the Tivoli Park in Copenhagen, numerous tasty chocolates in Belgium and had seen the splendid scenery in the Netherlands. After that, I stayed in Oslo to revise and finish my papers. The short daytime had decreased my productivity and affected my mood sometimes. I heard from my flatmate that taking vitamins pills would keep you happier, as you can absorb vitamin C (which disappear with the sun) from it.



Copenhagen



Rotterdam

DECEMBER

I had 2 written exams and 2 papers due in December, but I had adequate time for revision as the examination dates were far apart. After the end of the semester, I checked out from my hall and began my 35-day journey in Europe. I went to Manchester for a football match, then to Barcelona, Nice, Vienna, Croatia, Slovenia and Munich in December.



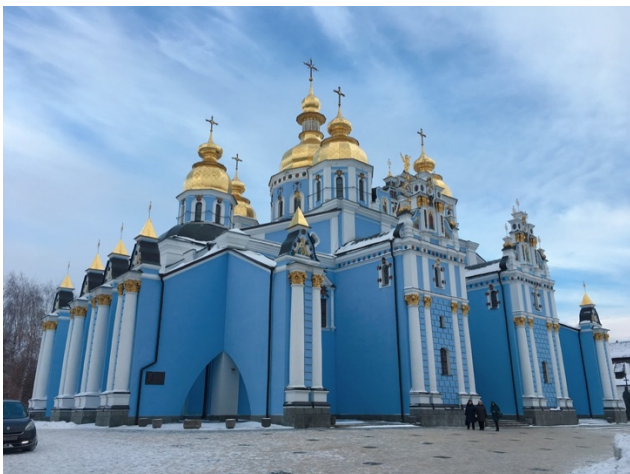
Manchester



Slovenia

JANUARY

I continued my journey to Switzerland, Portugal, Luxemburg, Ukraine and Gdnask in Poland in January. Travelling in different countries in Europe is really eye-opening, I am always amazed by their practices and cultures. To me, I think the weather in January in these countries were not as cold as expected, therefore it is suitable for wander around in Europe.



Kiev



Gdnask

GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

● VISA PROCEDURES

For non-European passport holders, you are required to apply for a residence permit for staying over 90 days which costs nearly HKD\$4,000. You will need to first send your application online, then hand in documents and photos at the centre. Remember to make an appointment and look through the guidelines and requirements of the documents before heading to the centre, it may cause you to visit the centre several times. The link to online visa application can be found under [Useful Links and Contacts](#).

● ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

The Orientation Week is called “Fadderullan” and all student would be divided into groups with 5-6 Norwegian students as buddies. The activities were mostly sight-seeing, bar-hopping and partying, and some required to purchase tickets. Students can opt to join these activities.

● INTERNATIONAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

You can always email the International office at BI when you have any questions or need help. You could join the ERAMUS Facebook Group to meet friends from different parts of the world and get the most updated news about coming up activities.

● ACCOMMODATIONS

BI has a wide variety of choices when it comes to accommodation. You can choose to live in single rooms offered by its housing partners (including SiO, BSN and Diakonhjemmet), and they have a high coverage in the city. I stayed in Kringsja Student Village operated by SiO during my exchange period (there are more student village to choose), as I found it to be the most affordable unit with beautiful natural scenery. The monthly rent of a furnished single room with private bathroom is around HKD\$4,500 per month, which you will also have a shared kitchen with 7 people.

Before going to your dorm, you will first have to check-in at the SiO Office located in Blindern, which is several stations away from Kringsja to choose your block and pick up your keys.

Tip: When you are choosing your dorm, avoid choosing the 1st floor since the interior of the rooms can be easily seen from the outside of the building.

● COURSES REGISTRATION

The maximum semester workload is 30 ECTS credits, which is equivalent to 4 courses per semester (each course constitutes to 7.5ECTS credits). A Google Form link will be sent by BI before the start of course registration and you will need to select courses you would like to take and submit the form. Changes are allowed as long as it is before the registration deadline.

● TEACHING & ASSESSMENT METHODS

I took 4 courses during my exchange study:

1. **ELE3701: Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship**

[Equivalent to ISOM4020: Innovation Management and Technology Entrepreneurship]

This course is quite extensive as it includes various topics, including the innovation process and intellectual property protection. The lecturer encourages students to engage in the class through asking questions and opinions. The course is weighted 100% on the Project Paper of a group of 3. The group is allowed to pick any topic related to innovation and there were a few consultation periods.

2. **ELE3702: Social Entrepreneurship**

[Equivalent to MGMT2130: Business Ethics and Social Responsibility]

The course is weighted based on the Term Paper (60%), a Take-Home Exam (30%) and Reflection (10%). For the term paper, students have to form a group of 5-6 and select a social enterprise. The group may have to contact the company and do a research on it, then suggest recommendations or new insights. The take-home examination includes 2 essay questions about concepts of social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship in reality. This course is interesting, especially the sharing of views of lecturer and students.

3. **ELE3705: Reputation**

[Equivalent to MARK4000LEVEL: 4000-level Course in Marketing]

Some concepts and companies were introduced in the course, yet I found that the content of the lecture might not be useful. The course is weighed 100% based on the Project Paper. The group will have to examine the current situation and reputation of a selected company and thus, propose a marketing strategy to improve the situation. You are not allowed to form a group with the same nationality (I have heard that even Chinese and Singaporean were not allowed to form a group as they have similar background).

4. **EXC2901: Norwegian Culture and History**

[Equivalent to HMCCUCORE: Common Core Course in Humanities]

The course describes how the culture and history of Norway and the whole of Scandinavia have shaped the country. Since there are two professors for the course, the PowerPoint notes are not very organised and up-to-date. The teaching style is quite boring comparing to other lecturers in BI. The Final Exam weights 100% towards the final grading. It includes two essay questions which have to be completed in 3 hours, and the topic of the essays are similar to that of past papers.

● SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES

There are gym rooms in the student village and at BI, however you will have to join a membership before using the facilities and it costs around HKD\$400 per month. There is a nice lake near Kringsja Student Village and is very suitable for running or walking.

● FINANCE & BANKING (INCLUDING CURRENCY / EXPENSES)

NOK is the currency used in Norway and its exchange rate to HKD is around 1:1. You can use credit card almost everywhere in Norway and I would suggest you to have a BOC credit card, since the exchange rate is lower than other banks. If you are planning to travel around, remember to bring enough euros, as credit cards are not as widely accepted in other countries as in Norway.

** MAKE SURE TO **SET UP PIN PASSWORD** FOR YOUR CREDIT CARDS BEFORE YOU DEPART, or you may not be able to use them in some countries or machines.

● SOCIAL CLUBS & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

BI-nner is a networking activity held by BI, which offers students free dinner and opportunities to chat with people from all around the world. You could also follow some Facebook Pages, companies and organizations often post their coming activities.

● HEALTH & SAFETY

Once you have registered and make an appointment, you can enjoy health, counselling and dentist services at both BI and SiO. You are asked to perform a free body check before you collect your residence card. Norway is safe comparing to other European countries and even if you have any problem, most Norwegians are willing to help.

● FOOD

The price level of Norway is more expensive than that in Hong Kong, especially in beverages and meat. The average cost of a meal is around 170NOK, so I usually cook by myself. Although there is a supermarket (Kiwi) inside the student village, I would go to the market at Grønland where you can get the same product at a lower price.

● TRANSPORTATION

Metro is the most commonly used and convenient way of transportation. The single ticket costs 30NOK and a monthly pass costs around 450NOK. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND you to get a monthly ticket and do not be a fare evader. You will be fined 1500NOK if you are caught!!!

● CLIMATE

The weather in Norway during August and September is like Autumn in Hong Kong, the average temperature is around 17- 19 degrees and the sun would not set until 10pm at night. Things change quickly when it comes to October, as you can observe the sunlight time is shorter every day and the temperature drops to 5 – 10 degrees. The first snow in 2018 came in late October. In December, the sunset time is around 3pm. Do not be scared by the low temperature, it is not that cold as expected, as Norway has a relatively low humidity.

● COMMUNICATION

Most Norwegians can communicate with English fluently, therefore need not to worry about the communication problem in Norway. But I would recommend you to learn some phrases like “Hello” (Hei) and “Thank you” (Takk) in Norwegian when you have such a great chance to be in Norway.

ITEMS TO BRING

- ☐ Travel Documents (Residence card, HKID Card, Passport, Admission Letter)
- ☐ Wifi Router, LAN cable, Electronic Devices' Chargers
- ☐ Gloves, Scarf, Hats, Boots (VERY USEFUL IN WINTER)
- ☐ Small Locks for backpack/luggage
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Adapter

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

Online Visa Application Website

<https://www.vfsglobal.com/norway/hongkong/>

Housing Choices Offered by BI

<https://www.bi.edu/study-at-bi/housing/>

Course List at BI

<https://www.bi.edu/programmes-and-individual-courses/exchange-programme/bachelor-course-list-autumn/>