

EXCHANGE REPORT

Tilburg University, Netherlands

The School of Economics and Management (TiSEM)



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Management Year 3

Fall 2018



Understanding *International* Society

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Part I – Monthly Activity Log

August 2018

Before the start of the semester, there was an orientation activity lasted for a week which is called the TOP Week (Tilburg Orientation Program). I was in a group with other international students from Hungary, Turkey, Australia, Iceland, etc. During the week, I explored only smart part of the city by bicycle because most of it are residential areas and woodlands. However, most of the activities including the Cantus (Music and drinking festival), TOP off party, etc., are being held in the Koepelhal, which is a dining hall. It is a meaningful place for students in Tilburg because they always like to drink beers and have parties together. It is therefore a place that created the first impression of Tilburg for me.



September 2018

At the first weekend of September, I visited Amsterdam. The main purpose was to visit the Van Gogh Museum. I was so impressed and touched when I finally got a chance to see Van Gogh's paintings because he is my favorite painter. Besides, I visited Belgium at the end of the month. The bus to Belgium has been delayed for more than an hour due to bad weather. However, the bright sky and rainbow appeared after the rain stopped. It marked an unforgettable beginning of my Belgium trip. I also visited the Graffiti Street in Gent, Center of Modern Art-Site Oud Sint-Jan on Brugge and many Catholic Churches in Belgium.





October 2018

October marks the start of Autumn in the Netherlands. In early October, trees turned yellowish orange. All the way from my dorm to school, there were maples on the sides of the road. The weather was comfortable as well. At the weekend, I spent one day visiting Kinderdijk to see the windmills. But I found that the view of river, reeds and lotus leaves were also beautiful under the blue sky. I also went to Aachen and London in late October. There were many museums where I could see different kinds of art pieces. In Europe, I found that there could be many sculptures and paintings on the streets. This is quite different from Hong Kong as compared to its narrow and crowded streets. Moreover, I was so glad that I met a professor in my Entrepreneurship course who were graduated from HKUST. We sometimes had lunch together and talked about our lives in HKUST and TiU. I also participated in the International Study Abroad Fair in TiU to promote HKUST to the students there. It was quite a surprising fact that many students are interested to go on exchange in Hong Kong because of its small area but diverse culture and the favorable location in Asia.

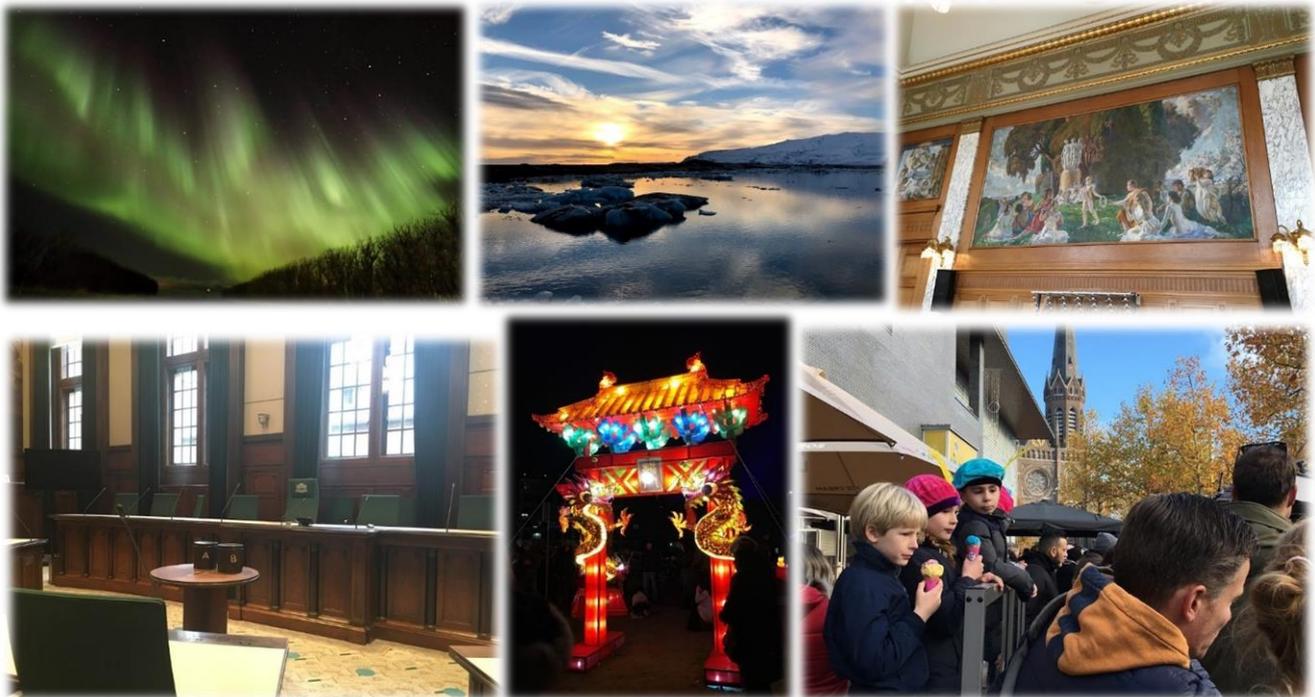


November 2018

In early November, I visited Iceland for 5 days. It was an unforgettable trip because I got the chance to see the Northern light. The sceneries there were astonishing. It



was probably a once in a lifetime experience. It was always not easy to do revision and projects during trips in other places, but it was also the only thing that an exchange student could ever understand and experience. I squeezed a weekend to visit Rotterdam and Eindhoven during the busiest period of the semester. I visited the council hall and went to the GLOW festival respectively. There was also Sinterklaas Intocht Tilburg which is a traditional Christmas event in Tilburg in November. Children dressed up as clowns and asked for chocolates from the Sinterklaas.



December 2018

It has been four months since I came to Tilburg but there was still something I wanted to accomplish during my exchange. First thing was to visit the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. There was an event which people could get a free entrance ticket by drawing a picture. Participants had to use one hand to touch



and feel the object that was placed in a black box. Meanwhile, they had to draw the object with another hand. I successfully drew one and got a free entrance. Another to-do on my list was to do a still life drawing at Zaanse Schans, the windmills village in Zaandam. I do not enjoy going traveling alone but I wanted to try once. Therefore, I chose to do what I love, drawing, during my own journey. It was a special memory of my exchange. Before the final exams, I visited Munich, Frankfurt and Cologne in Germany. The Cologne Christmas market was similar to the Lunar New Year market in Hong Kong as it was extremely crowded and the whole town was in a festive mood. After the exams, I went to Denmark with a Danish girl I met in Tilburg University. I stayed at her home and visited her family for the Christmas lunch and dinner. We had a gift exchange night with her friends and danced around the Christmas tree at her family's home. I also cooked the steamed minced pork pie as one of the dishes at Christmas. It was so precious to experience a traditional Christmas in a European family.



Part II – General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

Tilburg University has an Immigration Office that guides exchange students through the process to apply for visa. After students are being admitted, the Immigration Office will contact students to provide hard copies and signed documents for visa approval from IND (Immigration and Naturalisation Service in the Netherlands).

Orientation Activities

Tilburg University organizes the TOP Week each semester for new coming students. It lasts for five days with both indoor and outdoor activities. Drinking games are common but it is not an obligation to drink. Students are assigned in group of ten to fifteen with leaders and members of different nationalities.

International Services and Activities

Tilburg University provides international services and activities for exchange students. For example, the student association I*ESN provides support and mentorship for new coming students.

Accommodations

Students could apply for student housings through Tilburg University, but the quota is limited. Students could also rent rental housings outside the campus by themselves. The school would provide a list of trustworthy agencies or websites for students to reserve a room/ apartment/ studio there.

Course Registration

Tilburg University would help exchange student register courses through online application website, Osiris and Blackboard.

Teaching and Assessment Methods

Most courses have lectures and projects as components. Some require a minimum grade of 5.5/6 in each component. The passing grade is 6 out of 10.

Sports and Recreation Facilities

Students could join the fitness classes and subscribe to the yearly/ semester plan to use the gym. Students could also join different sports team e.g. volleyball.

Finance and Banking

Tilburg University would help students to open a Dutch bank account in ABN AMRO by inviting the staff from the bank to school and make appointment for students.

Before departure to the Netherlands, Tilburg University requests exchange students to transfer sufficient amount of money to a temporary account. After the students has opened a bank account in the Netherlands, Tilburg University would transfer the amount back to the student's account.

Social Clubs and Networking Opportunities

Students could join different clubs and associations, e.g. Sports Teams, students' associations. I*ESN Tilburg organises many different kinds of activities mostly for exchange students.

Health and Safety

Tilburg University provides a list of General Practitioners for international students. Students need to make appointment first and pay the GP in cash. Money could be claimed from the insurance company.

Food

There are many supermarkets and stores near the campus. Sometimes there are markets selling fresh food and home products at the weekend in the morning. Food choice in campus are diverse, e.g. café, fast food, sandwiches, tacos, etc. All restaurants are closed at 7pm unless coffee and vending machines.

Transportation

Students usually go to school by bicycle or on foot in winter. We could also take the train from the Tilburg University station to other cities in the Netherlands or nearby countries.

Climate

It is cool and sunny in summer, cloudy and foggy in autumn, and windy in winter. The temperature could go down to -2 °C in late November and December. It seldom snows in December but often rains in November.

Communication

It is fairly easy to communicate with people in the Netherlands as 90% of the population knows English. Students could buy a prepaid SIM card for phone call, text messages and data.

Cautionary Measures

The ground is very slippery on rainy days, so students are not recommended to bike in long distance. Students should always turn on their bicycle's front and back lights when cycling at night.

Part III – Items to Bring

- Clothes for summer and winter
- Down jacket(s)
- Raincoat / Water resistant coat
- Laptop
- USB
- Camera
- Chargers
- Adapters
- Power bank(s)
- Medicine
- (Rice cooker)
- Items could be purchased there
 - Duvet
 - Blanket
 - Pillow
 - Hair dryer
 - Pans
 - Kettle
 - Cutleries
 - Bicycle (secondhand)

Part IV – Useful Links and Contacts

Course Catalog

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/exchange-programs/courses/>

Exchange Program Website

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/exchange-programs/>

Accommodations

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/practicalissues/beforearrival/accommodation/>

Transportation

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/practicalissues/dailylife/transport/bus/>

International Student Support

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/education/bachelors-programs/international-student-support>

Emergency Contact

- International Office: **+31 13 466 89 43** or **+31 13 466 46 57**
(Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
- Contact Number outside office hours: **+31 13 466 3000**
(This is the number of Security of Tilburg University and 24 hours per day available. They will contact a staff member of the International Office if necessary)