

ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL

2019 Spring Exchange Report



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MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

February

I arrived at Paris, 🇫🇷France in the early morning on 28 Feb since I had to collect my residence key between 9 am to 6 pm on that day. I lived in Cergy Le Haut to the northeast of the city center. I lived in the double studio with my Italian roommate. Unlike double rooms in UST, everyone had his own room in the double studio here and we only shared the kitchen. After checking in the residence, I took an Uber with my friends to IKEA. Later we spent some time walking around the community and we had a French lunch in a café.



French Lunch



The Eiffel Tower, France

March

On the first day of March we had an orientation and we collected our student id cards. Like most exchange students, I enrolled in 4 courses and only had 2 days' classes per week. There was a negotiation skills seminar from 4 Mar to 6 Mar which I didn't apply for. Classes started on 11 Mar, and the first week of the whole semester was add-drop period. Therefore, I traveled to Scandinavia from 2 Mar to 17 Mar. I went to 🇫🇮Finland, 🇸🇪Sweden, 🇳🇴Norway and 🇮🇸Iceland with my friends and for the first in forever we saw the aurora. At the end of March, I went to my Neverland Disneyland which is composed of two theme parks, Walt

Disney Studios and Disneyland Paris. I spent only 1 day in two parks with my friends and the park closed at 8 pm at that time which was quite early. Honestly speaking, it's better to two days here, focusing on only one park per day.



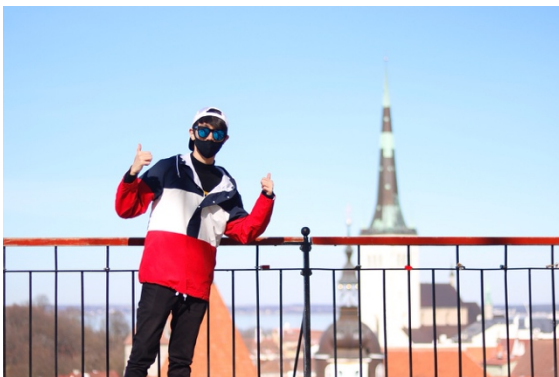
Inari, Finland



Airplane wreckage, Iceland

April

In the middle of April, I had only one quiz for my French course. Then the expecting spring break started. I didn't apply for the intensive courses which were designed to be taught during the spring break as I wanted to travel with my friends. Therefore, I paid a visit to 🇪🇺Estonia, 🇱🇻Latvia and 🇵🇱Poland from 18 Apr to 28 Apr. I visited some old towns and got to know more history about the Second World War. In addition, the price in these places was affordable compared to that in Paris. Besides, a sad story happened this month. Notre-Dame de Paris was tragically burnt down on 15 Apr.





Tallinn, Estonia



Malbork, Poland

May

In the first week of May, I spent a few days in the  Netherlands. It took me 7 hours by bus from Paris to Amsterdam. However, the smells in the city were not so pleasant. At the end of the journey I went to Rotterdam which is a modern city I preferred than Amsterdam. In the middle of May there was a light show on the Eiffel Tower lasting for 3 nights celebrating its 130th birthday. Many citizens and tourists gathered by the Seine River drinking wines and chatting with friends until midnight. At the end of May I flew to Berlin,  Germany for my friend and we went to  Denmark together later. I encountered a pickpocket in a street in Copenhagen. Luckily and timely I noticed his reflection in the window of the shop and thus I didn't lose anything. So be careful. In this month, I finished Innovative Merchandising, one of my courses, with a group presentation.



Amsterdam, the Netherlands



Copenhagen, Denmark

June

In the beginning of June, I ended another course called Financial Markets with a stock pitch presentation. The next day I went to my Neverland again since it was definitely not enough to spend only one day there. Classes ended on 5 June followed by the exam period. I only got two exams for Cash Management and Lower Intermediate French separately. Fortunately, both of them were scheduled on 6 June, the first day of the exam period. Thus, once I finished my exams, I took a

plane to Prague, 🇨🇪Czech and in the following day, I traveled to 🇦🇹Austria, 🇸🇰Slovakia, 🇭🇺Hungary, 🇮🇹Italy, 🇻🇦Vatican, 🇬🇷Greece, 🇪🇸Spain as well as 🇵🇹Portugal. I was glad that I got the chance to visit twenty countries during my exchange program, but it was a pity that I didn't spend so much time in France.



Budapest, Hungary



Venice, Italy



Santorini, Greece



Lison, Portugal

GENERAL EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Visa Procedures

Visa can be applied for three months before your departure in Hong Kong. Before submitting all your documents, you need to make an appointment for the academic interview. The interviewer may ask you some basic questions and so don't be nervous. After you pass the academic interview, you can have another reservation for the document submission.

Orientation Activities

The orientation session on the first day is compulsory for the exchange students. You will get your own student id card and have a lunch with all the exchange students on that day. Apart from that, you can opt to join some activities, such as visiting Paris on a riverboat cruise on the Seine River, held by student clubs.

International Services & Activities

There is an international association called MELT at ESSEC. They will organize some events during your stay such as visits of Paris, international dinners, bar crawls and even trips to discover the French cultural heritage, so that you can meet people from all horizons and discover France beyond Paris.

Accommodation

There are four residences for ESSEC students, but as a non-year-one exchange student, you can only choose from Les Linandes, Les Hauts

de Cergy and Le Port. I lived in a double studio in Les Hauts de Cergy which is 10 minutes by RER A, a kind of train in Paris, from the campus. A The rents should be paid on a monthly basis. Housing subsidy (APL) can be applied for based on your visa type. If you have a visa with the wording "dispense temporaire de carte de séjour" you will not get the housing subsidy. In addition, you need to pay for the WIFI in the residence.

Course Registration

There are two rounds of course registration before semester starts. Remember to check your ESSEC email as you will receive all the information from the school. For those who want to take the French language classes, you will have to take an online evaluation to determine which French class is the most suitable for you.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

I took four courses in total: Cash Management, Innovative Merchandising, Lower Intermediate French and Financial Markets.

For Cash Management, we had group homework every week and had one midterm, one final, and a final group project.

For Innovative Merchandising, sometimes we had classes in the central Paris to see how different brands marketed. For example, we've been to les Champs-Elysees and Le Bon Marche for class. We needed to submit a group report after each visit and had one final group presentation for this course.

For Lower Intermediate French, we had two quizzes and one group presentation during class. We had listening, oral and written tests for the final.

For Financial Markets, we had classes every two weeks and the class lasted for 6 hours. We had one midterm and one group presentation for the final.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

There is a gym and an indoor sport hall for playing badminton or soccer on campus. In addition, as far as I know, there's another gym at Les Hauts de Cergy.

Finance & Banking

The currency used here is euro. I only bring 500 euros and I didn't register for the local bank account. Most of the time I paid by credit card since I didn't want to bring so many cash. There's a bank BNP Paribas 5 minutes' walk from campus if you are really in need of cash.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

You can always find networking events from your ESSEC email and some other social media. There's a pub on campus so that you can have a drink with your friends after class.

Health & Safety

Be careful of pickpockets in Paris as well as your journey. I didn't encounter any theft in Paris, but I did in Copenhagen and Barcelona and one of my friends lost her iPhone when taking the elevator in Paris.

Food

I usually cooked for myself when I had classes since there's only one cafeteria on campus. If you have time, it's good to try some French dishes and desserts in Paris.

Transportation

You will take the RER A as well as the metro very frequently in Paris so it's convenient to buy a Navigo transportation card which costs 75.2 euros per month. With the card, you can take most public transports in Paris.

Climate

The climate in Paris is not so bad although it rains sometimes. The weather in February and March is still cold and it is hot after late April. So, remember to bring clothes for both winter and summer.

Communication

People's English is not good in Cergy. Most of them cannot understand and speak English. It's better to take some basic French courses before you come to ESSEC for exchange.

Cautionary Measures

Take care of your personal belongings especially the wallet and the passport. Protect yourself when you go to crowded places.

ITEMS TO BRING

Clothing; Laptop, mobile phones, camera and chargers; Adaptors; Medicines; Necessities and toiletries; Credit card and cash; Documents: HKID, passport and copies of all of the above.

USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS

ESSEC Business School study portal: www.myessec.com

ESSEC Business School housing portal: <https://housing.alessec.fr/maills>

Booking Trains, Buses and Flights in Europe: www.omio.com

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