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# Fall Exchange Report 2019

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IS & MGMT Year 3



## Part I - Monthly Activity Log

### August 2019

I went to visit one of my secondary school friends in Rotterdam before arriving at Tilburg on the Registration day. I took the NS train in Rotterdam and arrived at Tilburg University station in the afternoon. It is very convenient to travel around the Netherlands as they have a mature train system. On the registration day, students there will guide you to register for the Dutch bank account, housing, and TOP week. I rent a bike on that day as well. TOP week is the orientation week for exchange students to get to know everyone from around the world. I met students from Australia, Argentina, Italy, Spain etc. I had a lot of fun with my group during the TOP week. We discovered Tilburg through pub crawling, enjoyed an outdoor cinema at a stadium, chilled by the pool and joined the beer cantus!! The experience was super fun and memorable!



### September 2019

The semester started on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August. All the courses that I took have only one lecture per week. The workload was not heavy at all, so I got a lot of chances to travel. During the weekends, I traveled to **Breda** (city near Tilburg) and **Belgium** with the other HK exchange students I met there. I also traveled to **The Hague** with a Korean exchange student. We lived on the same floor. We visited Mauritshuis (Art museum) to see the “*Girl with a Pearl Earring*” by painter Johannes Vermeer.







## October 2019

There was an International Study Abroad Fair that students in Tilburg can seek exchange advice from us. It was fun to meet Dutch students who are interested in going on exchange in Hong Kong. During that day, I also met some exchange students from Taiwan and Singapore. In the middle of October, there was a mid-term exam week that we did not have to go to school. Since I did not have any mid-term exam, I traveled to **Czechia**, **Hungary**, and **Austria**. During weekends, I traveled to **Utrecht** and visited the syrup waffle factory in **Gouda**.

Since field hockey is very popular in the Netherlands, I was lucky enough to watch the Men's Hockey Olympic Qualifiers between the Netherlands and Pakistan at the **Wagener Hockey Stadium**. I bought the ticket two weeks before the competition. The atmosphere was so surreal. Watching a live match is a hundred times better than on TV!!





## November 2019

I traveled to **Spain** and **Portugal** with my friend after I finished most of the presentations and assignments at the beginning of the month.



Most of the assignments and presentations deadline took place in November. During weekends, we traveled to **Amsterdam**, **Dordrecht**, **Leiden** and **Delft**, and **Poland** at the end of the month. In Amsterdam, we visited Heineken Experience (The beer museum), Anne Frank House, A'DAM Lookout and joined the one-hour cruise trip. For Anne Frank House, you have to purchase your tickets online before your visit. Tickets are released two months in advance. I could not buy the tickets for the first time I visited, so I purchased the tickets for a date after I finished the final exam.







Other than travelling around Europe, I joined the field hockey team there with the Tilburg University students. Although all of the members of the team were Dutch, they were very kind to invite me to their parties and matches. They hosted team dinner every Sunday and played games for the night. At the end of November, the team celebrated **Sinterklaas** (a traditional mythical holiday figure of Santa Claus in Dutch-speaking Europe) with a cantus in their own hockey club. We were having so much fun, the only thing I wanted for that night was to understand Dutch, so I could sing along with them during the cantus!



## December 2019

All of the exams took place before Christmas. If you need to take the re-sit exams, they took place in January. I spent most of the time studying at the library before the exams. Before the exams, a Gala is hosted by I\*ESN Tilburg at **De Heuvel Gallery**. That night, guys suited up and girls got the dresses and heels out!



Towards the end of the exam period, exchange students from Hong Kong gathered to have a farewell dinner before we parted. My floormates also threw a farewell party. We binge-watched one of the latest Netflix series for the entire night after the party! After the exam, I visited **Kinderdijk** and **Maastricht** in the Netherlands. I spent Christmas in **London** before going back to Hong Kong.





## **Part II – General Exchange Information**

### **Visa Procedures**

The Study Abroad and Exchange coordinator from Tilburg University contacted me via email in late-May. The email guides us through the application of the Dutch entry visa (MVV) and residence permit. For exchange students, we have to apply for the Dutch visa as we are staying for more than 90 days. Tilburg University must apply for these documents on our behalf. The university required us to send the original documents to their office in the Netherlands. I used DHL to deliver my documents. Once the documents are processed (usually takes up to 2-4 weeks), you will receive an email that asks you to book an appointment with the Netherlands Consulate General of Hong Kong. They will collect your passport and send it to their office in Malaysia for verification. It took them 5 working days to complete my application.

### **Orientation Activities**

TOP week took place a week before the semester starts. I think it is the best way to meet exchange students from different parts of the world. We explored Tilburg in that week and party A LOT. Of course, you can choose to skip some of their parties if you think it's too much for you. The TOP week Cantus is a MUST-JOIN event for me! You will get a songbook and more than 500 students will sing along and drink beer after every song! Don't miss it!

### **International Services & Activities**

I\*ESN Tilburg organizes activities and events for all foreign and Dutch students. It is the major international student association in Tilburg. They organize parties in their very own bar -- Carpe Noctem, which is in the center of Tilburg. Every week, they host parties with different themes, such as Tequila Party, Nerdy Party, etc. Other than having parties, they also have dinners, pub quizzes and karaoke nights a couple of times a month. They also organize trips to other European cities such as Prague and Germany. You will have to pay for the membership to join their events at a lower price.

### **Accommodations**

I live in Professor Verbernelaan, as most exchange students did. It is a 10-minute walk from the University which located next to the sports center. You will receive an email from [yourrommintilburg.com](mailto:yourrommintilburg.com). As the number of rooms available is limited, you should make sure you make the reservation on time. The reservation system opened in mid-June. Accommodation costs are approximately 368 Euros per month, which includes all bills and all rooms are fully furnished. Students can also look for other apartments using the system.



## **Courses Registration**

Tilburg University uses Osiris for courses registration. You need to submit a proposed study plan to the university and then they will release the schedule afterward. Some courses require prior knowledge on certain topics. The university will evaluate if you are eligible to take the courses after your submission.

## **Teaching & Assessment Methods**

All of the courses I took have only one class per week. I studied 3 IS courses and 2 MGMT courses, which allow me to transfer 17 credits. All of the courses I took have final exams and assignments. The workload was not heavy, but you should study hard for the final exams as well. The passing grade is 6 out of 10.

## **Sports and Recreation Facilities**

I joined the membership of the sports center next to my dorm. By paying around 22 euros a month, you can work out in the gym and join the classes offered there. They offer a wide range of classes, such as yoga, pilates, cross-fit, boxing fitness, aerobics, and dances. I enjoyed yoga and jumping fitness the most.

## **Finance and Banking**

The currency in the Netherlands is the Euro. Exchange students are required to transfer around 3000 Euros before arriving in the Netherlands. The university will open a Dutch bank account for us. You will receive a debit card with the transferred money after your arrival. Bring some cash with you in case of an emergency. I withdrew all the money from the account on my last day and closed my bank account using e-banking.

## **Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities**

There are many sports teams at Tilburg University. You can try different sports during the TOP week. Take field hockey as an example, they have a student club – SHOT, which has 10 women's teams and 5 men's teams. I went to their open training after contacting one of the members during TOP week. We had outdoor matches until late-November and indoor matches in the winter. I am so glad to be part of the team and met some Dutch friends during the exchange.

Joining I\*ESN is a good idea to meet students through parties and social events.





**Health and Safety**

There is no campus-clinic. If you feel unwell, you have to make an appointment before going to the doctor. You can buy medicine from a pharmacy as well. Tilburg is very safe, but you should be alert in crowded areas.

**Food**

There are supermarkets near the campus (Albert Heijn, Jumbo). On Saturdays, there will be markets selling fresh food in the city center. There are many choices of restaurants in the city center such as Five Guys, Xu's noodles, all-you-can-eat sushi, etc.

**Transportation**

Almost everyone in Tilburg owns at least one bike. It is very convenient and safe to ride a bike in Tilburg. Cars will give way for the bikes and there are bike lanes almost everywhere. I rent a bike from Booglebike for 13 Euros a month. It is more like a subscription plan, if the bike is broken, the company will fix it for you.

**Climate**

Dutch people talk about the weather all the time. The weather changes so fast you can't even predict it. Since it rains quite often, they use a weather app to check the weather before heading out. Using the app, they can avoid cycling in the rain.

**Communication**

Most of the Dutch people can speak very good English. They are also very kind to help you. For the SIM card, I bought prepaid SIM cards in Hong Kong. The card can cover most parts of Europe and it is a 4G card. You can also join a plan there. Lebara is one of the mobile service providers in the Netherlands that offers 5GB data with unlimited calls and texts for 10 Euros per month.

**Cautionary measures**

You will be fined if you use your phone while cycling. You have to turn on both the front light and the back light of your bike at night.

### **Part III - Items to Bring**

1. Clothes
2. Flip Flops
3. Sunglasses
4. Toothbrush
5. Medicine
6. Towel
7. Shampoo, Conditioner, Shower Gel
8. Hairdryer
9. Sunscreen
10. Travel Adaptor
11. Laptop
12. Tissue
13. Money
14. Umbrella

### **Part IV - Useful links and Contacts**

1. Top-week Information  
<https://www.top-week.nl/>
2. Lebara Mobile service  
[https://mobile.lebara.com/nl/en/?utm\\_expid=.CdiTWsviQGeAAUxn7mLjgA.0&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F](https://mobile.lebara.com/nl/en/?utm_expid=.CdiTWsviQGeAAUxn7mLjgA.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F)
3. NS (train service)  
<https://www.ns.nl/en>
4. Tilburg University Sports Center  
<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/campus/sports-center>
5. I\*ESN Tilburg Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/iesntilburg/about/>
6. Credit Transfer Course Equivalence Database  
[https://crtran.ust.hk/credit\\_instit](https://crtran.ust.hk/credit_instit)