

Exchange Report

Copenhagen Business School, Denmark



Tsz Hin WAN | Year 4 (GBUS & ECON)

Spring 2022



Part I: Monthly Activity Log

January 2022

I arrived in Copenhagen in mid-January to settle down earlier before the official events kick in. As the semester officially starts at the start of February, there was some time for me to explore and travel while also participating in some of the welcoming events. During the first few days of my arrival, I had the chance to settle down in my dormitory and familiarize myself with the living environment in Copenhagen as it was drastically different from Hong Kong. I also made friends with other exchange students who were living in the same dormitory, and we took the opportunity to explore Copenhagen and visit some of the main attractions including Nuhavn and Freetown Christiania. As the COVID-19 infection rate was quite high at the time, most of our orientation events were rearranged to be held virtually so there were not many interactions with other exchange students, but it was still very informative and gave some useful information on living in Copenhagen as a student.

As there weren't a lot of activities in Copenhagen during winter, I also travelled to Berlin in late January with other exchange students as it was quite accessible from Copenhagen through a coach. It was a new travel experience for me as we did not have a lot of time to plan our travels and the whole trip was quite spontaneous!

February 2022

The semester officially began in the first week of February. However, as the pandemic was still quite serious at the time, our classes were conducted online for the whole month. I took four courses in the semester including Digital Transformation of Business, Sustainable Tourism Supply and Innovation, Danish – Integrated Skills and Industrial Organizational Analysis. In the first week of the add-drop period, most courses will go through some introductory content, and you are allowed to swap courses if you decide the course contents are not for you.

I travelled to several cities in Europe during February, including Budapest in Hungary, Zakopane, Krakow and Warsaw in Poland and Brussels and Antwerp in Belgium. As most of the cities I visited are in Eastern Europe, it was quite different compared to Copenhagen in terms of culture and people. I found the people there to be quite friendly along with beautiful sites and affordable prices. In particular, Budapest gave me a great impression with its impressive architecture and marvellous cuisine. I also enjoyed my skiing trip in Zakopane and learnt a lot about WW2 history by visiting the historic sites in Poland, including the Auschwitz concentration camp, the largest and most infamous German Nazi concentration camp in WW2.

March 2022

The weather was starting to get better as we entered the spring season in March, so I got the opportunity to explore Copenhagen and Denmark more. There were a lot of cafes in Copenhagen with famous pastries and great coffee so it was a great delight to try for myself. I

also tried cold dipping in the river of the port of Copenhagen, which should not be taken lightly as the water was just a few degrees during springtime. This activity which may be considered normal by some locals was a unique and eye-opening experience for me. I also got the chance to visit other parts of Denmark with my friends by renting a car for a road trip to the southern part of Denmark, visiting spots including Faxe and its limestone quarry, the Stevns Klint UNESCO World Heritage Site and Møns Klint.

As for campus life, face-to-face classes were finally resumed, and I finally got to physically meet my classmates. Classes in Denmark were quite different compared to Hong Kong with much more discussions and interactions between the lecturer and students. I also completed my first exam which was an essay-based examination, unlike the examination style we are used to in Hong Kong.

I also got to travel to Iceland in March, just in time to catch a glimpse of the Northern lights. I also got to see the natural marvels Iceland had to offer with unique ice caves, spectacular waterfalls and ginormous cliffs you can never see anywhere else.

April 2022

April was the month for examinations, and I completed all three of my remaining assessments for my courses. Most classes ended at the start of April to reserve some time for students to study and prepare. I had to prepare for two of my written exams and one oral exam for my Danish – Integrated Skills course, which was a conversational-based assessment in a foreign language I learnt for around two months!

I also travelled to Vienna in Austria and Brno, Cesky Krumlov and Prague in the Czech Republic during the study break. It was a vastly different experience compared to my previous travels with beautiful architecture combined with amazing sceneries. We also met a lot of locals along the way and experienced their local nightlife culture.

May 2022

In May, all my coursework and examinations were completed so I mostly travelled around Europe. I mainly travelled in Italy, visiting seven cities and regions including Venice, Milan, Florence, Cinque Terra, Amalfi Coast, Naples and Rome. It was a great experience to travel with my friends, taking in the spectacular views along the coast of Italy and admiring the amazing artwork and historical monuments and sites in the cities.

I also travelled to Portugal including Lisbon, Lagos and Porto on my own, which was a new experience for me as I was travelling on my own. It was a fun experience to explore a new city at my own pace and visit places where I have the strongest interest, which was something I appreciated about sole travelling. However, I also had to be more alert as I did not have anyone to look out for me in an unfamiliar foreign city.

June 2022

In June, I continued travelling in Europe and went on two trips. On my first trip, I went to Croatia to visit its beautiful coastline and amazing natural scenery in various cities, including Zagreb, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik as well as the famous Plitvice Lakes National Park.

After the first trip, I had to return to Copenhagen to check out from my dormitory and store my luggage in mid-June. Then I headed to Turkey to experience the Turkish culture and cuisine in Istanbul while admiring its natural beauties in Antalya, Kas and Cappadocia. It was a very different experience compared to other countries in Europe as Turkey is a Muslim-led country with diverse architecture styles from various influences and a different culture among its people. Afterwards, I also visited Sofia in Bulgaria and went on my first skydiving experience.



Part II: General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

As we were still undergoing the COVID-19 pandemic during my exchange, there were some extraordinary measures in place for the visa application. In normal circumstances, exchange students to Denmark will have to visit one of the embassies of the Nordic region in Hong Kong to apply for a student visa. As Denmark does not have an official embassy situated in Hong Kong, the process usually will be carried out in the embassy of another Nordic country. However, due to the pandemic, the embassy of the Nordic country in Hong Kong has stopped processing Denmark student visas. Therefore, to apply for a visa you would need to visit the Denmark embassy in Mainland China, which is not feasible during the pandemic due to the entry restrictions and quarantine requirements. We arranged to enter Denmark with the 90-day visa-free arrangement for Hong Kong passports and other foreign passports and apply for a student visa once we arrived in Denmark. Therefore, we had to schedule an appointment at the SIRI office to apply for the visa once we paid the fee online. We received the visa permit after a month through the mail and applied for the CPR number and card through the municipal office.

Orientation Activities

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the start of the semester, most of the orientation activities were either cancelled or moved online, so there were not a lot of interactions between exchange students. There were briefings from the school on courses and academic issues as well as some tips for international students living in Copenhagen. There was also a

campus tour which familiarized us with the campus as there are multiple campuses in Copenhagen.

International Services & Activities

CBS will pair you with an exchange buddy and you can contact him or her to pick you up from the airport. The exchange buddy will also bring you your dormitory key if you arrive after the check-in date and bring you to your dormitory and also a Lebara SIM card provided by CBS. During the semester, there are also activities such as buddy dinners and parties organized to let you get to know your buddy better and network to meet new friends.

Accommodations

The accommodation arrangement will be sent to your CBS email one to two months in advance. There is an online school system to allocate the dormitories and it is allocated based on a first-come-first-served basis. Therefore, it is important to research beforehand which dormitory you want to live in and organize your priority in terms of your preferred dormitory, room size and roommate arrangement and mark down the scheduled date and time for submitting your accommodation application as it is quite competitive and you have to submit your application right when applications are open. You can also send an email to the housing department if you want to share a shared room with a friend and they will allocate it according to your preferences if available.

I stayed in Kathrine Kollegiet and it was quite close to the CBS campus with 10 mins walking distance to the nearest campus. It is also quite well equipped with your kitchenette and bathroom as well as a common basement and kitchen alongside shared washers and dryers and free WiFi. It is situated in a quiet and comfortable residential neighbourhood which is also quite secure so there are not many security concerns.

Courses Registration

The university will send you a link to your CBS email on the courses available as well as your application portal. It is important to take note of what courses are offered and the available course mapping from the HKUST database. If the course is not mapped, you will have to apply for ARO to conduct the credit transfer which is recommended to be carried out at least one month before your course registration. During the application, you can submit four courses you want to take and four courses as your backup choices. You can also submit a letter of priority written by the HKUST exchange department for specific courses if you need it to fulfil your graduation requirement. You should also note that the course schedules may not be fixed for each week and overlap on lecture timeslots are allowed but not recommended. Therefore, when the results are released, you should go through your schedule and see if any re-application on course choices is needed. You can add or drop courses freely before the add-drop period ends as long as there are vacancies.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

The teaching method implemented may vary greatly across different courses. For example, one of the courses I took Industrial Organizational Analysis carried out large class lectures with weekly exercises which were explained during each lecture. However, another course I took Sustainable Tourism Supply and Innovation and Danish – Integrated Skills took a more case-based teaching approach with frequent interactions between the lecturer and students. Another course, Digital Transformation of Business, was conducted online with fully pre-recorded lectures alongside workshops with discussions among students.

For the assessment, there are mainly sit-in written exams, oral exams and take-home exams. For sit-in exams, each exam is different on what materials you can bring in so you should carefully study the instructions, and most exams require you to store your materials on a USB stick so remember to bring one. For take-home exams, you may be given 24 hours or up to a week to complete your exam and oral exams take place face-to-face with the lecturer along with another examiner.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

There are different sports clubs and teams to join in CBS and also classes available for registration like yoga and you can pay a small fee to join.

Finance & Banking

I would not recommend opening a bank account in Copenhagen as it takes quite a long time to process and is not worth the time. For me, I did not convert any cash currency in DKK and only brought EUR as there were not any available in Hong Kong at the time, which was a correct decision in the end as most if not all transactions in Copenhagen are cashless and cash are rarely used. You can bring some Euros just in case you need it to convert to DKK or to spend during travelling but relying on credit cards are completely fine in Copenhagen. I would recommend bringing a card with good foreign exchange rates and minimal fees and cards which have a PIN code as some machines may require it to process the transaction.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

There are some student societies in CBS but I did not join any as I could not commit the time during my exchange. There was also a career fair in April where you can network with employees from large businesses with a presence in Copenhagen.

Health & Safety

When you have applied for a CPR number and registered yourself in the municipal office, you will receive a CPR card and a hospital card in case you need to visit a doctor. You will have a pre-assigned practitioner if you need medical assistance. As for safety, Copenhagen is considered very safe in Europe and I did not encounter any safety issues even late at night.

Food

Dining out in Copenhagen is quite pricy with average spending of 150 DKK, so most of the time students would cook in their dormitories. There are numerous supermarkets which offer affordable prices for groceries such as Lidl and Netto. For Asian ingredients, you can visit Asia supermarkets near Copenhagen Central Train Station. I also strongly recommend the app Too Good to Go which offers huge discounts for groceries and food at fixed timeslots. This app was where I bought most of my meals and groceries and it is perfect for students.

Transportation

The metro and bus system is very advanced in Copenhagen, but they may be a bit pricier compared to Hong Kong. I would recommend renting a bike through Swapfiets as they will provide a discount to CBS students and cost approximately 150 DKK to rent a bike for a month. Cycling is the most common mode of transportation in Copenhagen and the city has extensive infrastructure. I would recommend cycling to travel around as it is ingrained in the Danish culture and is an affordable and convenient choice for students as long as you are comfortable on a bike and take extra caution during winter times.

Climate

It is quite cold during January when I arrived at approximately 0-5 degrees Celsius and daylight time is quite short with the sun setting at around 3 pm. However, the weather will improve when it gets to spring and summer is the most comfortable in Copenhagen with average temperatures of 15-20 degrees Celsius. I recommend bringing thick winter clothing for the winter as it can get quite windy and also light winter clothes for the spring and summer.

Communication

CBS will provide a Lebara SIM card in the package with a 50 DKK pre-paid amount in it. After activating the SIM card, you can use the Lebara app to purchase monthly plans ranging from 19 DKK to more than 100 DKK per month depending on your data usage needs. Lebara provides coverage in the whole EU and paid usage in other non-EU countries, so it is a convenient choice for travelling as well. For day-to-day communication, most Danes understand and can communicate in English aside from Danish so daily communication should not be a problem.

Cautionary measures

There are not many cautionary measures you need to take note of. Just be aware to lock your bike every time you leave it if you choose to rent one as it may get stolen if you do not.

Part III: Items to bring

- Personal ID and passport
- Cash in EUR (Cash in DKK optional)
- Credit cards
- Travel adapter
- Stationary
- Waterproof/Snowproof winter clothes
- Medicine
- Waist pack (for storage of valuables when travelling)
- Electronic devices
- USB for exams
- Cabin size luggage for travelling in Europe

Part IV: Useful Links

CBS course catalogue: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/international-opportunities/international-students/guestexchange-student/undergraduate-courses>

CBS accommodation catalog: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/international-opportunities/international-students/guestexchange-student/accommodation>

Frederiksberg Municipality information: <https://www.frederiksberg.dk/en/english>

Flixbus: <https://global.flixbus.com/>

Omio: <https://www.omio.com/>

Skyscanner: <https://www.skyscanner.com.hk/?locale=en-GB&market=HK>

ESN card (student card with discounts): <https://esncard.org/>

If you have any additional enquiries, please feel free to contact the SBM office to reach out to me for further questions. Have fun!