



STUDY ABROAD REPORT

BI NORWEGIAN BUSINESS SCHOOL
2021-2022 SPRING TERM
KHAIRPURI NEHA KUMAR (Y3 MARK & MGMT)

BI NORWEGIAN
BUSINESS SCHOOL

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1. MONTHLY ACTIVITY LOG

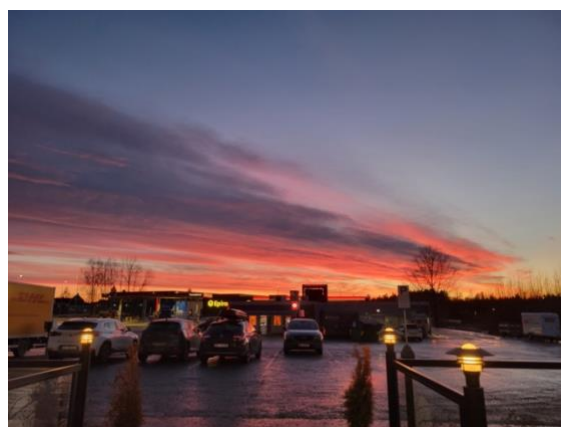
January

I arrived in Oslo on 5th January, a couple days before the semester started. COVID-19 restrictions were still in place in Norway when we arrived. Unfortunately, we had to quarantine in a hotel for a few days. During quarantine, we made a few friends from all around the world, some who would be attending BI and some from other universities around Norway. BI had also arranged some pre-semester digital activities like “Norwegian Crash Course” and “Norway on a Budget” which helped us get through quarantine more easily. We were able to leave quarantine on Day 5, right before Buddy Week started.



BI had organized a full week of orientation activities, also known as “Buddy Week.” It was an amazing way to meet new friends and explore the city! Some buddy groups organized a Bonfire Night in Sognsvann and we got super lucky as we got a glimpse of the Northern Lights, from Oslo itself! The first couple of weeks of classes were mostly online due to COVID restrictions, however, some of my friends would still meet on campus to attend online classes together! I spent most of January in Oslo exploring the city, chilling with friends, and trying out new activities!

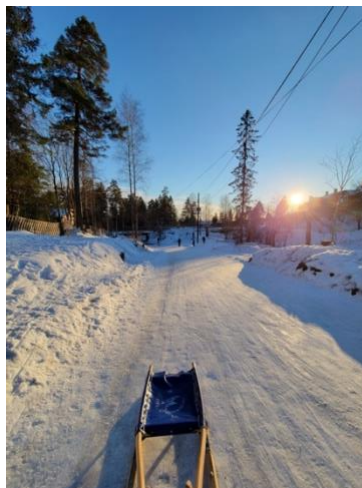
The last week of January was a special one as I got COVID for the first time! Fortunately, my experience was not too bad, it just felt like a really bad cold. I went to get an official PCR test done, and self-isolated for 7 days, until my RAT (Rapid Antigen Test) was negative.



February

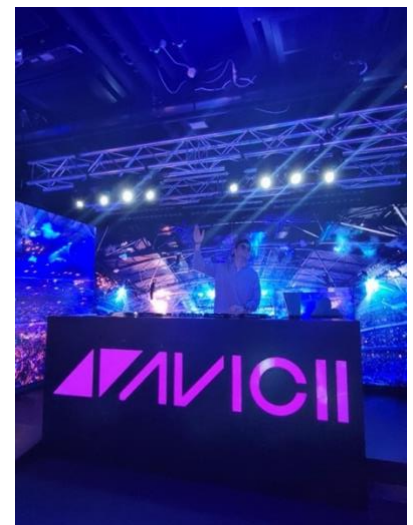
In February, the university resumed Mixed Mode classes. I only had classes on Tuesday and Wednesday, so I was able to travel and explore Europe during the rest of the week. I went to Tromsø with my 4 of my other friends. We had booked an Airbnb a little further away from the city of Tromsø and we even rented a car to go around town. In Tromsø, we did a hike where I got stuck in the snow and almost experienced hypothermia (not very fun). As our AirBnb was close to the Finland border, we decided to do a little road trip to Kilpisjärvi, Finland.

In Oslo, I tried Sledding for the first time, it was quite scary at first, but it was a thrilling experience! Highly recommend you guys to try it before the snow starts to melt. My flatmates and I also visited The Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology as it was free entry for students during a special promotion. My friends and I organized our first international potluck where everyone brought a dish from their country. It was an amazing way to get to know each other and introduce our culture and tradition to others.



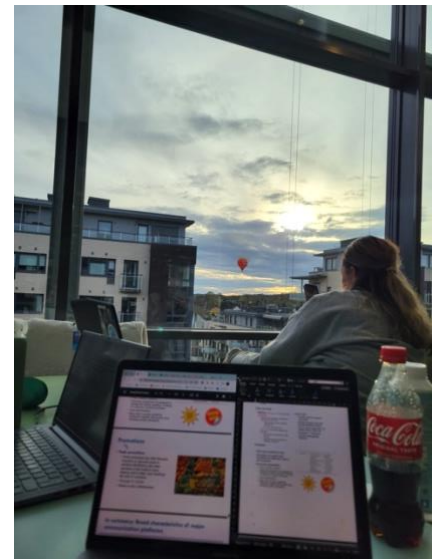
March

I spent most of March exploring new places in Oslo. I went on my first hike up to the Vetakollen Viewpoint with a few friends. Despite the snowy conditions, the sunset and views were so worth it! We continued our meal gathering tradition by having a pancake brunch at my place. These happy faces were definitely worth the effort of making pancakes from scratch early in the morning. I also had my first sauna experience. Plunging into below zero temperature waters was quite intimidating but weirdly refreshing. In March, I travelled to Stockholm, Sweden via the train, which took 10 hours! In Stockholm, we got to visit the famous ABBA museum and also visit the Avicii Experience.



April

In April, most classes were coming to an end and most assignments were due. Regardless, during our long easter break, I went to Paris and Milan with my friends. In Paris, we stayed at my friend's place as he's from France, so we got to experience Paris to the fullest with his guided tour. Meanwhile, it was amazing to get away from cold Oslo for a bit and visit warm Italy. Italy was beautiful and super cheap, compared to Oslo, which was a great change for a bit. My favorite part of Milan was our day trip to Lake Como and the delicious gelatos we had every day. When back in Oslo, my friend ran a 10km marathon around the city, which was quite exciting! I also spent quite some time studying at the Deichmann library and BI library with my friends.



May

Most of my assignments and exams were over by the first week of May, so I spent the rest of my time travelling! In May, we had a couple trips planned around the big day, May 17th, which is the Constitution Day in Norway.

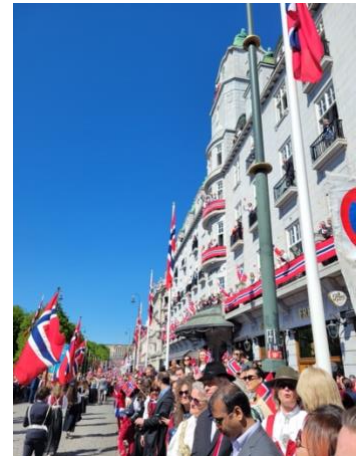
I went to Amsterdam to visit my friend for a couple days. Whilst I was there, I managed to catch the Tulip Festival in Keukenhof. It was so beautiful! I would also highly recommend eating Poffertjes, which are baby Dutch pancakes, a slab of butter and sprinkle of powdered sugar is the perfect topping for these. After Amsterdam, I went to Copenhagen to watch my friends run their first full marathon! Prior to the big run, my friends Jacob and Sophia also ran a charity run for the Children's Cancer Foundation. It was such a meaningful purpose 😊



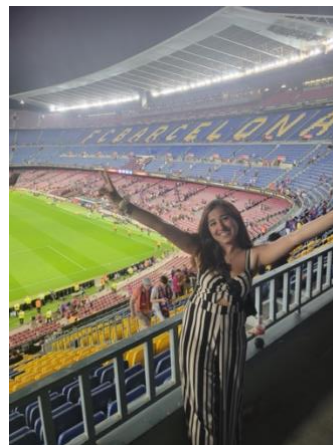
After Copenhagen, we returned to Oslo to celebrate May 17. My flat mates and I started the day at 10am with a champagne breakfast, followed by a visit



to the Children's parade at Karl Johans gate. There are several activities, parades and picnics happening around town that day. The best way to spend it is with some Norwegians, so you get the full experience!



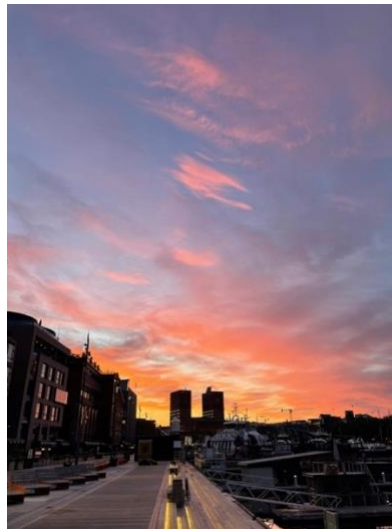
Right after celebrating May 17th, I headed to Barcelona to watch the Formula 1 race! I had recently gotten into the racing sport, so it was very exciting to be able to watch it in person! We also managed to catch the Barcelona FC vs Villarreal at Camp Nou. Although Barcelona lost, it was an amazing seeing the supportive spirit from fans.



June

My last trip of exchange was to London, UK. London has been on my list of places to visit for a very long time, so it was the one I was most excited for. I have several friends studying in UK at the moment, so it was lovely to visit them after such a long time.

June was my last month in Oslo so my friends and I spent a lot of time exploring Oslo and enjoying the nice weather. June is also a month filled with farewells and tears. As an emotional person, this was the worst month as goodbyes are always really hard, but regardless I tried to enjoy and live in the moment as much as I could. On June 20th, I made my way back to HK.



2. GENERAL STUDY ABROAD INFORMATION

VISA PROCEDURES

Once you receive your BI admission letter, I would suggest processing the visa ASAP, as it takes around 4 weeks to process since the passport will be sent to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beijing. As a holder of HK passport, it was really easy to process the visa documents from start to finish. Keep in mind the documents you require may vary from passport to passport, but this can easily be checked on <https://selfservice.udi.no/>. The visa fee is \$4900 and an additional \$756 for the service fee and mailing fee.



ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

BI offered a variety of orientation activities during the first week of semester. Our first activity on Day 1 was meeting our buddy group and campus tour. The school even provided free coffee, hot chocolate, and buns! On day 2, we had a scavenger hunt around Oslo with our buddy group. We were given certain tasks to complete while exploring some popular spots in Oslo. Day 4 was a digital activity. We were told to submit 1 video of someone in the buddy group doing the "Shoe Challenge", the team who can complete the shoe challenge within the shortest time won some souvenirs. Our buddy group did it in 6 seconds but didn't win. ☹️ On day 6 and 7, there were optional activities. BI offered free tickets to the Roseslottet Museum and Norwegian Museum for Cultural History.



INTERNATIONAL SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

Prior to the start of the semester, the international office will set up a Facebook page for incoming exchange students. Most activities and other information is frequently updated there. They also organize a special welcome dinner for exchange students, known as BI-nner. It's a great way to meet new friends and try some traditional meals. The BI-nner takes place every month and is open to all BI students so registration happens on a first come-first serve basis, be sure to stay updated with the BI portal and Facebook page.



ACCOMMODATIONS

There are 4 types of housing providers students can pick from- SiO, BSN, Diakonhjemmet and Anker. SiO is the most popular housing provider as they have several housing options and is located all across Oslo. While BSN is BI's own student housing and located close to campus.

International students are guaranteed housing if they complete the Pre-application for Housing before the deadlines for each semester. After they are given a housing provider, they can go on to select their housing of choice. I chose SiO as my provider and then had to shortlist 6 housing options with preference from 1 (First choice) to 6 (Last choice). I was assigned Kansleren Studenthus which is located in Tøyen, very close to the city center. I had a furnished room with a private bathroom and shared the kitchen with 7 other flatmates. All utilities (electricity, water) are covered in the monthly rent, Laundry is separate and cost around . Another benefit of choosing Kansleren is that you get an individual mini fridge in the kitchen, instead of needing to share with others. Tøyen is very convenient, with a variety of grocery stores nearby and it is close to Grønland where you can get cheap produce from.



COURSES REGISTRATION

BI will send you a list of courses offered in the upcoming semester around November. To select your courses, you need to fill out an online form with your top 5 choices. However, you will only be assigned 4 courses, which adds up to 30 ECTS, which is the maximum "credits" you can take. You can look up course information by searching the code online. During the first 2 weeks of semester, if you want to add/drop courses, you need to e-mail info@bi.no .

TEACHING & ASSESSMENT METHODS

Course	HKUST equivalent	Grading	Comments
ELE3710 Business and Professional Ethics	MGMT2130 - Business Ethics and Social Responsibility	15%- Individual Presentation/ Assignment 25%- Group Presentation 60%- Group Term Paper	Quite a bit of self-learning in this course. A lot of presentations from students but didn't learn very valuable. Mostly exchange students in this class.
ELE3766 Social Networks and Communities	MARK4000LEVEL - 4000-level Course in Marketing or SOSC2000LEVEL - 2000-level Course in Social Science	30%- Individual Short Assignments 30%- Group Presentation 30%- Group Term Paper	Interesting concepts and theories taught during class. Assignments allow critical thinking. Mix of Exchange students with a few full-time students.
ELE3777 Branding	MARK4450 - Brand Management	30%- Group project (L'Oréal Brandstorm) 20%- Group Assignment (Case Study) 30%- Final Exam	My favorite course during exchange! Professor is very interesting and engaging. Topics taught are very thought-provoking and attention-grabbing. Mix of Exchange and full-time students.
EXC3632 Corporate Governance	MGMT3170 - Managing CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)	20%- Term paper proposal 80%- Term Paper	Insightful class but very focused on the Norwegian aspect of Corporate Governance. Guest speakers' topics were very fascinating. Mostly full-time students.

FINANCE & BANKING

Norwegian Kroners (NOK) is the currency used in Norway, with an exchange rate of 1 NOK=0.9 HKD, making it easy to convert/approximate your expenses. As for payments, I created a supplementary credit card from my mother's Standard Chartered card, as it had a high credit limit. I also carried my personal Hang Seng Credit Card as a backup in case of emergencies. Norway and many other European countries are pretty cashless and rely on contactless transactions. Additionally, I carried some cash in various currencies such as Norwegians Kroners, Euros and USD.

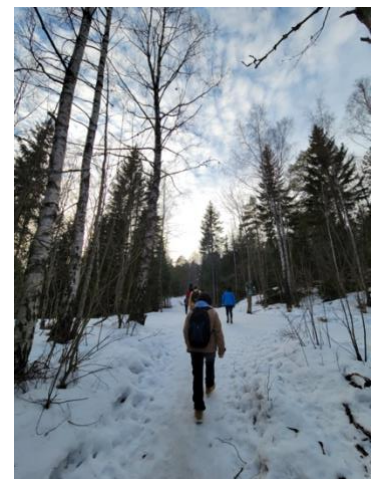


Expenses	Amount (HKD)
Flight	5064
Accommodation	22,400
Transportation	2940
Living Expense	~10,000
Gym (Athletica)	600
Travel (8 countries)	20,000
Telecommunication	1400
Visa Fees	5656
Total	68,060

CLIMATE

The weather in Oslo was cold and dry from January-March. Temperatures often went to below zero and it was snowing quite often. It would also get dark pretty quickly due to the lack of daylight. From April to June, the weather got better with more single digit temperatures and sunlight! It was pretty warm and sunny during the day but it would still get a bit chilly at night. Towards the end of April, daylight would be longer and sun would set at 10pm, however it will rarely ever be pitch dark!

Be prepared with a few heat-tech undergarments, a variety of long and short sleeved clothing and a couple jacket options (thick, thin, water/wind proof, etc)



HEALTH & SAFETY

Healthcare is relatively accessible in Norway. I was able to get a free COVID PCR test when I suspected myself to have COVID, they even provided a 5-day test kit and would call you to check up on your condition. In February, I visited the GP at SiO Health to verify my COVID-19 vaccination records and receive an EU vaccination certificate, this consultation cost me around 350 NOK. Meanwhile on another occasion, I visited a clinic for an ENT infection, I didn't pay anything for the consultation but paid for the prescribed medicines, around 180 NOK.

In terms of safety, Norway is a relatively safe country. Especially due to the extended periods of daylight after March, it feels even safer to walk around alone. There is a lot of drug consumption in Norway and certain parts are more sketchy than others, eg Grønland, so just be extra careful and aware of your surroundings.

FOOD

Eating out in Oslo can be quite expensive, especially when compared to HK. Each meal can range from 150-200NOK. However, meals at the school canteen is relatively affordable, ranging from 50-75 NOK. Some eateries I went to and would recommend is Sushi Bowl, Oslo Street food, Barcode Street Food, Mathallen, Burger King, Jonk, Kverneriet and all Kebab restaurants!

Most students tend to cook their own meals and I found groceries to be pretty reasonably priced. The popular grocery stores are Rema 1000 and Kiwi. Additionally, I suggest downloading an app called Mattilbud, which displays the weekly promotions of each grocery store, this can also help with meal planning! My friends and I often gathered to cook & eat brunch and dinner together, it felt like a nice lil family gathering.



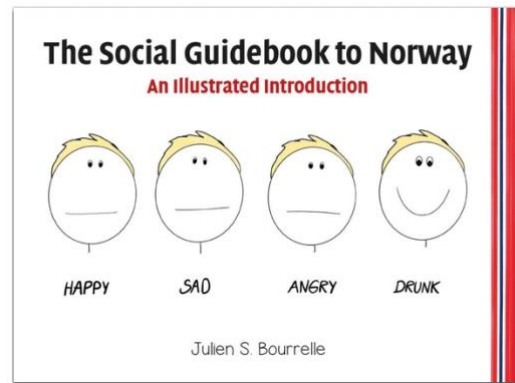
TRANSPORTATION

In Oslo, public transport is very convenient, with the T-bane (train), bus, trikk (tram) and ferry all around Oslo. The transportation pass is available on your phone, or a physical card can be purchased from the convenience store. A 30-day student ticket costs 488 NOK, with no limit on the number of trips, just remember to activate the card every time you top up, or else you may be fined during the random inspections. To go to the city/airport, you can take a VY train or the Flytoget (airport express).



COMMUNICATION

The time difference between Hong Kong and Norway is just 6/7 hours (depending on daylight saving), so it was relatively easy to speak with family and friends back home in the morning or at night. Once you have made friends on exchange, you'll find yourself spending a lot of time with them. In my housing, I had 7 other flat mates, 4 of them spoke Norwegian so I was able to pick up some Norsk from them as well as some words from the grocery store.



I would recommend getting a pre-paid sim card from Hong Kong, prior to arriving in Oslo, just so that you're sorted with a data plan for the first few weeks. Most cellular providers don't offer plans to people staying for less than 6 months. However, I found that Mycall offers pre-paid sim cards to everyone. Just visit their store at Brugata 1, 0186 Oslo, and bring your passport or ID card for registration. They have plenty of top-up options for data and/or calling which are very reasonable, additionally it offers free roaming around EU!

SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES

SiO has its own gym facility called Athletica, one of the gym is located in BI itself, so it is super convenient! Membership costs around \$200 HKD/month. Apart from regular gym facilities, they even have classes like Ultimate Rhythm and Muay Thai that you can sign up for. Another gym location is at the Kringsjå Student Housing.

Other activities you can do are hikes, there are several locations that have great trails, eg Vetakollen, Østmarka Forest, Sognsvann. You can even try outdoor activities like skiing and hammocking by borrowing equipment from BUA, a non-profit organization that encourages recreational activities. You could also try ice skating at the Frogner Ice Skating rink where you can borrow skates and helmets for free!



SOCIAL CLUBS & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

There are various clubs you can join at BI, but I didn't join any. As for networking opportunities, there was an event called "Speedfriending" where you can meet new people and try to make new friends. I tried to check it out but there were only a few people.

Other ways to network would be going to the student bar at BI, Kroa. Kroa often organizes some parties towards the weekend, while during the weekdays, on Tuesday and Thursdays, they offer free coffee, hot chocolate and buns to students during the day and may organize quiz nights in the evening. You can always meet new students from BI over there! Additionally, every month, BI organizes student dinners, known as BI-nner. Registration is on first come first served basis so be sure to always stay updated with their facebook page. BI-nner is another great way to meet local Norwegian students.

The student organization at BI (BISO) often organizes a range of activities for students. During our semester, they organized 2 free movie screenings- Batman and Doctor Strange, as usual, be sure to keep a lookout and sign up for these activities ASAP.

CAUTIONARY MEASURES

Nothing to extremely cautious about. However, I'd recommend reading into the Norwegian culture and personalities prior to going there. For example, on the public transport, people tend to like their personal space so they may not sit next to you and may choose to sit diagonally opposite instead.

While most Norwegians speak English, they may be hesitant to due to their shy nature. Don't be offended and try to be understanding.

On May 17, everyone would dress up in their bunads (Traditional Norwegian outfit for ladies) and suits and it is a special day to celebrate the country. While trying to have fun, remember to respect their culture and traditions.

3. ITEMS TO BRING

- Passport
- HKID
- Wallet
- Documents:
 - o BI Admission letter
 - o Letter from UDI
 - o Tickets
 - o COVID-19 Vaccination record
 - o Copies of documents, ID card and passport
- Cash (NOK + Euro + USD)
- Credit Card
- LAN Cable + Router
- 2 Travel Adapters
- Extension Cord
- Winter Clothing (Thick clothes, Pants, Pyjamas, Heattech, scarf, gloves, thick socks)
- Spring/Summer Clothing (Short sleeved clothes, shorts)
- Swimwear + Undergarments
- Portable charger
- Laptop and/or iPad
- Headphones
- Stationaries
- Bags (Fanny bag/Shoulder bag)
- Medicine
- Food (Instant noodles, ready-made meals, snacks)
- Personal care items (Makeup, Skincare, Sanitary products)
- Hair dryer, straightener, curler (optional)
- Rice cooker + Pan/pot (Optional)

4. USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

Visa

1. Application portal : <https://selfservice.udi.no/>
2. Application Center HK : <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/hkg/en/nor>

University

1. BI student portal: <https://portal.bi.no/>
2. Its Learning (Like Canvas): <https://bi.itslearning.com/>

Housing

1. <https://www.sio.no/en/>

Transportation

1. Public Transport: RuterBillett/Ruter on App Store/Google Playstore
2. Maps: Google maps/Citymapper App
3. Flytoget: <https://flytoget.no/en/>
4. VY: <https://www.vy.no/en>

Travelling

1. Third party sites:
<https://www.skyscanner.com>
<https://www.trip.com/>
2. Norwegian Air: <https://www.norwegian.com/>