

Tilburg University

Exchange Report

FALL 2022



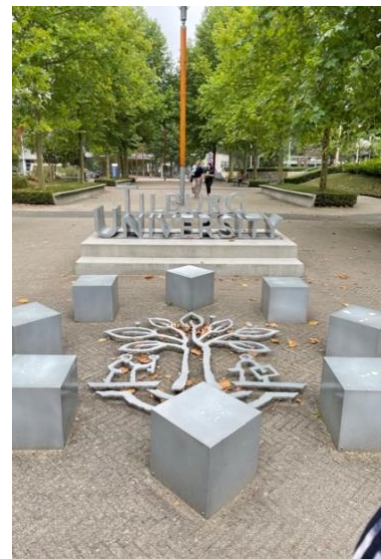
Lee Yiu Hang, Milton (FINA & IS)



Part I - Monthly Activity Log

August 2022

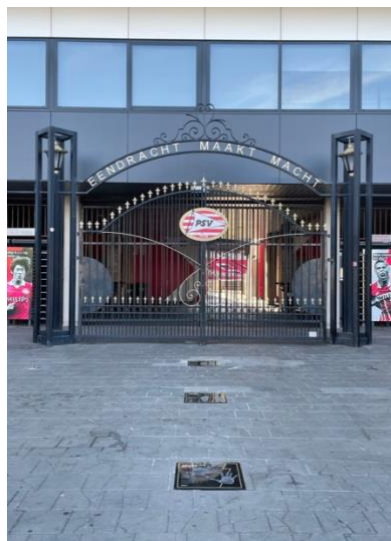
We arrived in the Netherlands two weeks earlier to enjoy a trip to Amsterdam and Rotterdam before school begins. We then went to Tilburg to join the University Registration day. It is a good opportunity for us to meet local students as well as our fellow exchange mates for the coming semester! We also participated in the university tour and pizza party organized by ESN. We had a lot of fun and made friends with many people. We also visited Belgium during the weekend as it is near Tilburg. 3 cities in three days – Gent, Brussels, and Bruges.



September 2022

In September, our semester officially started. I can feel that students here are more active and involved in class, and the class atmosphere was much better than at HKUST. However, in terms of teaching methods TiU and HKUST are generally similar.

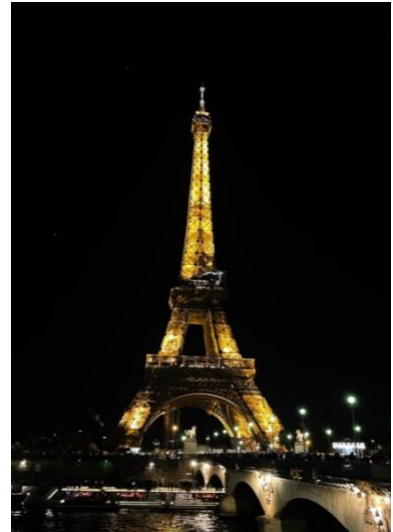
Apart from studying, we also took our free time to explore around Netherlands and Europe. We visited Eindhoven, Utrecht, Kinderdijk, The Hague and Delft in Netherlands. We also visited France and Germany with other fellow Hong Kong exchange mates. We had a lot of fun there!



September 2022 (Continued)

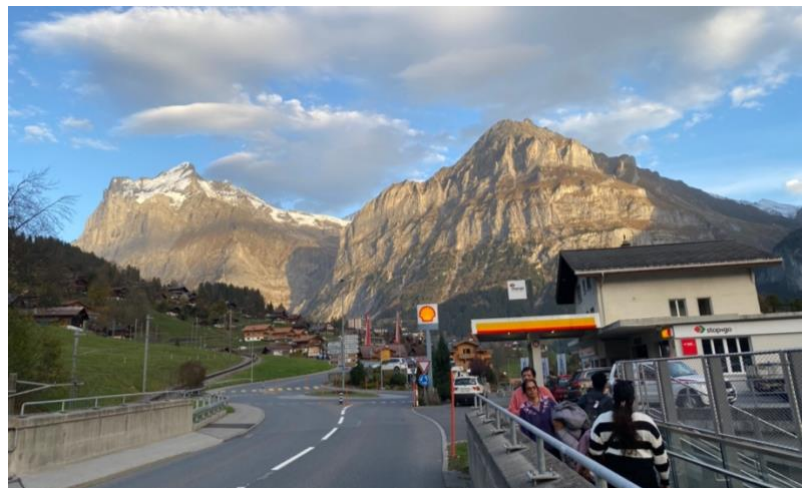
In the middle of September, we spent our Mid-Autumn Festival in Tilburg. We gathered with other Asian exchange students from Singapore, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea to celebrate it. We even invited exchange mates from western countries to make paper lanterns together to celebrate the one-of-the-most important festivals for us Asians.

During my leisure time, I played different sports like football, snooker, bowling and table tennis with schoolmates too!



October 2022

October is the month for mid-terms. Since I only have one mid-term exam, I got plenty of free time. So, traveled to Croatia and Hungary with my floormates and traveled to Spain and Switzerland with my Hong Kong and Taiwan friends. As a die-hard FC Barcelona, faganI was fortunate enough to watch a live match in Camp Nou, Barcelona – The Home Stadium of FCB. The atmosphere is fantastic and it is an experience that I will never forget.



November 2022

November is the month for projects and assignments. After working hard to finish all of them, we can have some free time to travel. We went to Italy with my floormates, Denmark and Austria with my Hong Kong exchange mates, and the UK to visit my old friends who are studying in there. Some of my old friends have already migrated to the UK, so I haven't seen them in a while. I missed them so much so I cherished this opportunity to meet them again and had a wonderful time with them.



December 2022

December not only is the month for final exams but also our last month before going back to Hong Kong. So apart from working hard for exams, we also didn't waste any time traveling. We went to Finland, Spain, Lisbon, and Italy. We then headed back to Tilburg to celebrate New Year. We are able to watch fireworks very closely because there are much more spaces between houses and the buildings are also much shorter. Unlike in Hong Kong, we can only watch fireworks beside the sea, it is a very different experience.



Part II – General Exchange Information

Visa Procedures

The Study Abroad and Exchange coordinator from Tilburg University will do everything for you. They contacted me by email. They guided me clearly through the process of application. I followed their instructions and submitted the necessary documents, and when I have any questions I can just email them and ask. In the final stage, you will have to make an appointment with the Netherlands Consulate General of Hong Kong to make the visa. As the appointment time is very full, you should always book in advance. Even if you don't have an IND number yet you can still make an appointment first. If you still haven't received the number on the appointment date you can always cancel the appointment.

Orientation Activities

At Tilburg University, we have an orientation week called TOP (Tilburg Orientation Programme) week. During that week you will have the chance to know other exchange students from all around the world and have fun. If you like to party, it will be the perfect program for you. However, if you are someone who doesn't like to party like us, you may also choose to skip it.

International Services & Activities

ESN Tilburg is the main international student society at the university. They held different events for you to join such as parties and trips around Europe. You can check them out during the registration day.

Accommodations

Professor Verbernelaan, aka Verbs, is the place that most exchange students will live in. It is very close to school. Housing costs are approximately 368 Euros per month, which includes everything. However, the housing is VERY LIMITED so it really depends on luck whether you can get one. There are a lot of exchange students who failed to find accommodations and they ended up living very far away from school or were even forced to cancel the exchange because they don't have somewhere to live. So, the moment you failed to get a room in Verbs, you should IMMEDIATELY start to find alternative housing options or you will end up being homeless. The housing demand for international students in Tilburg is very high. When applying to this school for exchange, you should take your own risk of becoming homeless.



Courses Registration

OSIRIS is the platform for course registration. The school will give clear instructions. Just follow them.

Sports and Recreation Facilities

You can subscribe to the sports center, which is just a minute away from Verbs. It costs about 20 Euros a month but you can play all kinds of sports like Gym, Football, Squash, Yoga, and Dancing, to name but a few.

Finance and Banking

The currency in the Netherlands is the Euro. Exchange students are required to deposit around 3000 Euros before arriving in the Netherlands to prove that they can financially support themselves during the semester. After arriving in the Netherlands you need to obtain your MVV to open a local bank account. You can get that on the registration day. Or there is another solution: to open a virtual banking account like Revolut. Virtual banks do not require you to have MVV.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

Although many of the students in TiU are Dutch-speaking people exclusive, there are still many clubs that are international-students friendly like different sports clubs – Football, Basketball etc. You can learn more about student clubs during registration day, so you should definitely not miss it!

Health and Safety

There is no university clinic but if you have small sickness, you can go to a pharmacy and consult pharmacists. If you have any big problem you can go to the school office and seek help.

Food

In the campus area there are not many restaurants (Subway, Taco Mundo, School Canteen) so you should always consider cooking at Verbs pantry. You can buy food at a supermarket called Albert Heijn located on the campus, or go to Westermarkt, which is 5 minutes bike away from Verbs, where there are different Supermarkets (i.e. another Albert Heijn, Jumbo and Asian market) and fresh meat shops. If you really don't want to cook/eat-in around the university, you can go to the city center by bike/bus/train where there are much more food choices.

Transportation

Most people in Tilburg ride a bicycle around the city. It can be easily rented for about 20 Euro a month in a bicycle shop located on campus. You can also consider commuting by bus/ train but it is quite expensive. A 15 minutes ride from the university to the city center costs about 1.4 Euro.

Climate

In the Netherlands, the weather is very unpredictable. So always have clothes for different weather ready in your wardrobe. Also please prepare a raincoat because you won't have a

hand to hold an umbrella while riding the bike. In the Netherlands I almost never saw anyone holding an umbrella haha 😊

Communication

The mother tongue of Dutch people is Dutch, but they are also very fluent in English. They are one of the most English-fluent countries in Europe, so no worries you almost will not encounter any language barriers. The only thing to be concerned about is that in the supermarket, goods will only be displayed in Dutch so please get Google Translate ready on your phone so that you can always take pictures to translate them. Make sure you always translate them or else you may miss some great deals like buy two get one free! For SIM cards, you can use Lebara. My subscription plan is 20 euros for 20 GB of data. It is stable and fast. You can apply online.

Cautionary measures

Don't use your phone while cycling. You have to turn on both the front light and the backlight of your bike at night. If you got caught by the police you will be fined. If you take NS trains in the Netherlands, avoid taking the last train of the day because train issues like cancellations and delays are quite often in the Netherlands.

Part III - Items to Bring (Referenced from previous exchange report)

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 (Referenced from previous exchange report)

1. Top-week Information
<https://www.top-week.nl/>
2. Lebara Mobile service
<https://mobile.lebara.com/nl/en>
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_insti



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Thanks for reading 😊