

# *Exchange Report*

**Ng Ka Yin, Vincy | Year 4 GBUS & FINA**

Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Spring Term 2024-25

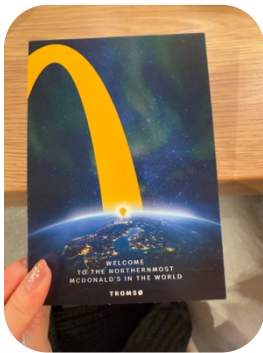


## Monthly Activity Log

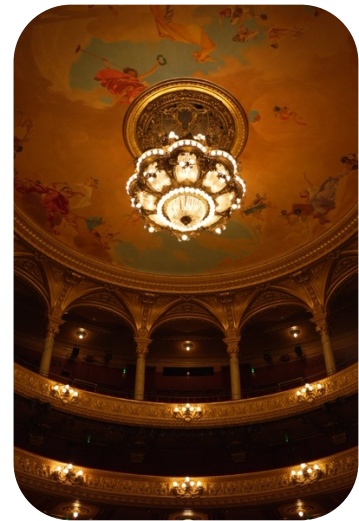
### January

I departed from Hong Kong on January 16th and arrived in Copenhagen the following morning. CBS had kindly paired each exchange student with a buddy, and I was extremely grateful that mine helped me pick up the dorm key in advance and even came to the airport to meet me at 7am. With all the luggage I was carrying, this made my arrival so much smoother. I checked into Nimbuspark Residence at noon on the 17th. The dorm is conveniently surrounded by several grocery stores, so settling in was not too challenging.

After a few days of getting comfortable, I set off for a short trip to Tromsø, Norway with some friends from HKUST. This turned out to be one of the most memorable parts of my exchange. We joined a day tour to Senja, where the views were absolutely breathtaking. Although we tried chasing the northern lights, the aurora was not very active, so I would not call it a successful attempt. Still, taking the cable car up the mountain for a panoramic view of Tromsø was unforgettable. Fun fact --- Tromsø has the world's northernmost McDonald's, where we could not resist buying a postcard as a little souvenir.



From Tromsø, we continued our journey to Stockholm, Sweden. Things did not go entirely as planned. Our flight from Tromsø to Oslo was delayed, which caused us to miss our connection to Stockholm. Fortunately, the airline arranged dinner and accommodation, and we managed to catch the next flight early the following morning. Our schedule was not disrupted much, and we still had plenty of time to explore. One highlight was touring Stockholm's metro stations, each uniquely designed with artistic touches. It felt like a mini underground gallery. We also joined a guided tour of the Royal Swedish Opera, where the guide brought the history of the place to life with fascinating stories.



By late January, I returned to Copenhagen just in time for the Introduction Week Social Package organized by CBS from January 27th to February 1st. The activities were a fantastic way to meet other exchange students, and I also had the chance to celebrate Lunar New Year with friends in Copenhagen. The city itself is perfect for walking, and one of the highlights for me was visiting the Grundtvigs Kirke, an impressive church with strikingly unique interior architecture.



## **February**

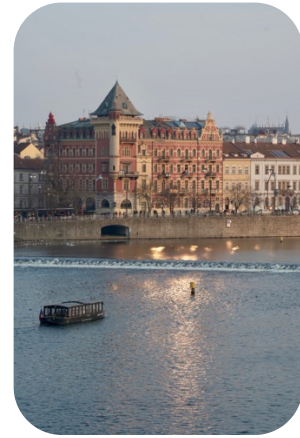
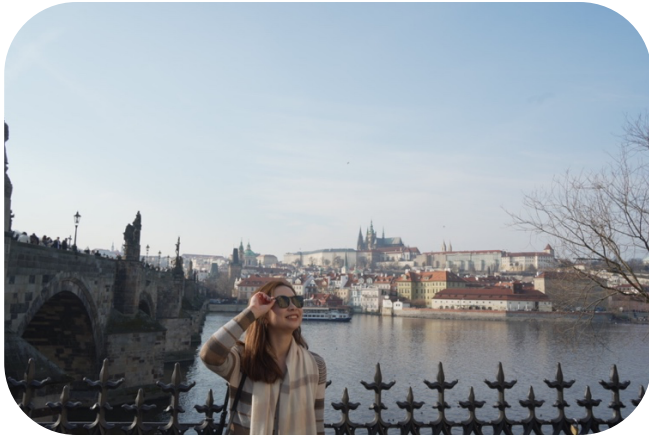
I started February by continuing to explore Copenhagen. The city is full of museums worth visiting, and one of my favorites was The Glyptotek, which even has a serene indoor garden. Outside of sightseeing, we also enjoyed discovering some of Copenhagen's iconic brunch spots. Many restaurants allow you to create your own brunch combo, which made every visit a fun and unique experience.

As classes began, I quickly realized how convenient it was to live in Nimbuspark. Since CBS's campuses are scattered across the city, some students have to bike between classes, but I was lucky enough to be able to walk to most of mine. While this saved time, it also encouraged me to explore different neighborhoods in Copenhagen along the way.

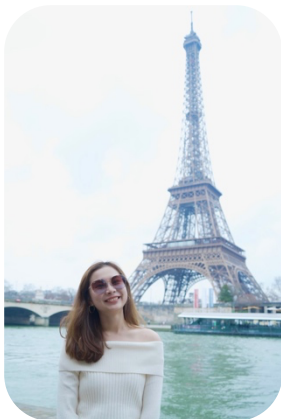
Mid-month, my travels took me to Budapest, Hungary, where even though the weather was not the best, the trip was filled with memorable moments. The highlight was definitely the night river cruise, where we admired Budapest's golden-lit architecture along the Danube while sipping champagne. The Fisherman's Bastion offered breathtaking views of the city, and the famous thermal baths were also an unforgettable experience in the cold, though you had to run quickly for your clothes after stepping out of the warm water. The food in Budapest also left a strong impression on me, with unique flavors and very affordable prices compared to Copenhagen.



From Budapest, we continued our journey to Prague, Czech Republic, by train. The weather there was perfect, and the colorful buildings made the whole city look like a storybook. Walking across the Charles Bridge was especially magical. I loved stumbling upon quirky spots like the "Man Hanging Out" sculpture and the Dancing House. I also tried riding an electric scooter for the first time in Prague, which turned out to be a fun and efficient way to see the city.



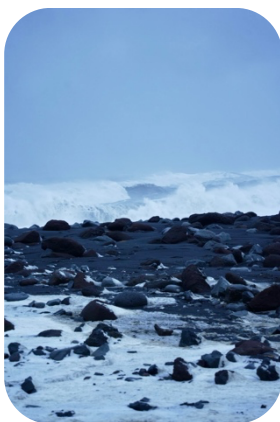
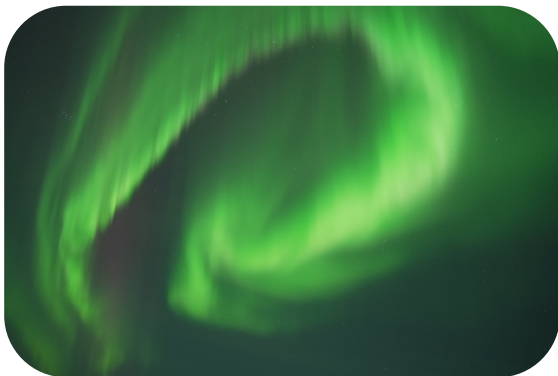
After a short return to Copenhagen, I set off again to France with friends. We visited four very different cities: Paris, Bordeaux, Strasbourg, and Colmar. In Paris, we hit all the iconic spots, including the Louvre Museum, Palace of Versailles, and even Disneyland Paris. The park was much larger than the one in Hong Kong, and the firework and drone show at night was spectacular. In Bordeaux, we joined a combined bike and wine tasting tour, biking for six hours through the vineyards while sampling some of the region's best wines. Strasbourg and Colmar, on the other hand, offered a completely different side of France, with their charming half-timbered houses and fairy-tale village atmosphere.



### **March**

My first trip in March was to Iceland, which has so far been my favorite country during exchange. Every day there felt surreal, with landscapes that I do not think can be found anywhere else in the world. The most unforgettable highlight was finally witnessing the northern lights. During our bus tour around the island, our guide used his experience to bring us to a location he thought would be perfect that night, and he was right. We saw the aurora clearly dancing across the sky. Even after the tour ended, we stayed one more

day and, using an app to track activity, found ourselves at the harbor under breathtaking green lights again. It was a true once-in-a-lifetime moment, something still vivid in my memory. Beyond the aurora, we also joined a whale-watching tour and were lucky enough to spot one, even though it was not the best season.



Later that month, I made a short two-day trip to London, UK, where I visited some of the classic tourist spots and met friends who were studying there. Right after, I embarked on my first-ever solo trip to Vienna, Austria. Traveling alone was an entirely different experience. I spent my days exploring museums at my own pace, enjoying the perks of

student discounts across Europe. Vienna was an ideal city for solo travel, safe, culturally rich, and full of history.



The second half of March was much quieter, as the exam season had begun. At CBS, I had a total of four exams, one in-person and the rest as take-home assignments. The exam system is quite different from HKUST's, with a streamlined process through a dedicated digital platform where students download the questions and submit answers electronically within the allocated time. While this was initially new to me, I found it efficient and flexible.

Despite the pressure of exams, I still had a wonderful time bonding with other exchange students in my dorm. Since everyone was staying in to study, we would gather after dinner to chat and relax together. These evenings became some of my favorite memories in Copenhagen.

### ***April***

With all my exams completed by early April, I could finally dedicate the rest of the month to traveling. My first stop was Italy, where I visited Rome, Florence, Venice, and Milan. In Rome, we spent a day at the Vatican, which was especially significant as this year was the Jubilee. Visiting St. Peter's Basilica, the largest church in the world, was definitely worth it. Florence felt like a true art capital thanks to its Renaissance heritage, and I am convinced that I found the best gelato of my entire exchange there. In Milan, we reconnected with friends and visited the magnificent Milan Cathedral.



From Milan, we flew to Marrakesh, Morocco, which turned out to be one of the absolute highlights of my exchange. Traveling there felt entirely different from my experiences across Europe. We rode camels, watched the sun set and rise over the desert, and even spent a night under the stars. That starry sky remains the most dazzling I have ever seen. The locals were incredibly warm and welcoming, making the trip even more memorable.



I also visited Switzerland, another favourite destination. The most unforgettable moment was paragliding from First Mountain on a perfectly clear day, gliding above the town and snowy peaks from a completely new perspective. We also made the trip to Jungfrau, though the weather turned against us. It was so cloudy that we could barely see anything, and I even felt a bit of altitude sickness. Despite that, the experience was worthwhile, and I learned the importance of checking weather carefully before booking mountain tickets. Switzerland felt like stepping into a movie, with every train ride offering picture-perfect views of lakes, mountains, and villages.



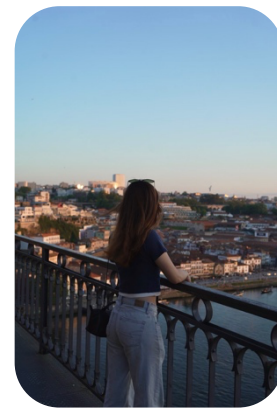
My last stop in April was Barcelona, Spain, which turned into an unexpectedly unique experience. During our stay, the country experienced a power blackout. Suddenly, there were no lights, no transportation, no signal, and most restaurants shut their doors. We managed to find only some bread to eat, and while it was inconvenient, it was also eye-opening. Witnessing how locals adapted calmly to such a situation inspired me.



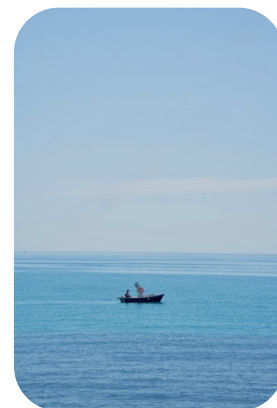
## **May**

After Barcelona, I continued exploring Spain, visiting Seville and Malaga. The food there was simply unforgettable. The paella and tapas were unlike anything I had ever tasted elsewhere.

I then crossed into Portugal, where I explored Lisbon and Porto. From eating countless Portuguese egg tarts to admiring the stunning cliffs of Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point of Europe, every day felt special. The highlight was watching the sunset from the Luís I Bridge in Porto, a scene so breathtaking that it became my favorite sunset of the entire exchange.



Next, I made my way to Southern France. Staying in Nice felt like being on a true vacation, relaxing by the clean blue waters of the Mediterranean. I also took a day trip to Menton and Monaco, where we walked along the famous Formula 1 race circuit.



Later in the month, I visited Berlin, Germany, a city that left a deep impression on me. Unlike other trips, this one was more reflective and educational. We joined tours about Berlin's history, including one on underground tunnels used by people attempting to cross from East to West Germany. Visiting the concentration camp and seeing students on field trips there reminded me of the importance of remembering history so that the same mistakes are not repeated.

My last travel destination was Croatia, where I visited Dubrovnik and Split. One highlight was joining a boat trip for island hopping. I even jumped into the sea for the first time during my exchange. Though I do not know how to swim, I wore a life jacket and braved the freezing water. I could not stop shivering when I got back on the boat, but it was an unforgettable experience.



Towards the end of May, I slowed down and spent more time in Copenhagen. I joined a bike tour to experience the city the way locals do, learning how the government's commitment to green initiatives makes cycling so popular and practical. Back at my dorm, my flatmates organized a farewell dinner for me and another girl who was leaving soon. We made pizzas together, reminisced about all the memories we had built over the months, and promised to keep in touch and visit each other's home cities. It was a warm and meaningful way to close this chapter of my exchange journey.



## **General Study Abroad Information**

### ***1) Visa Procedures***

With a Hong Kong SAR passport, we can have a 90-day visa-free stay in Denmark. However, since exchange lasts longer, a residence permit is required. I booked an appointment at the application centre after arriving in Copenhagen to submit the application and my biometric records. The fee was DKK 2,320. A few weeks later, I received an official approval letter at my dorm address, which was my registered address.

### ***2) Orientation Activities***

CBS organized an official Introduction Week from January 27 (Mon) to February 1 (Sat). The program included a kickoff mingling session to meet fellow exchange students, an introduction talk covering courses, exams, housing, and general living in Copenhagen, a canal tour to have an overview of the city's landmarks, folk dancing session, where we held hands in a big circle and learned traditional Danish dances in which everyone had fun.

### ***3) International Services & Activities***

Each exchange student is paired with a CBS buddy. My buddy not only picked up my dorm key beforehand but also came to the airport at 7 am to meet me. She showed me around the neighborhood and helped me settle in smoothly.

### ***4) Accommodations***

CBS offers six dorms (<https://www.cbs.dk/en/study/internationals/exchange-students/housing/student-residences>). Applications open in late November. At that time, Nimbuspark Residence was reserved for graduate students, so we, as undergraduate students, ranked our preferences for the remaining five. However, because only Nimbuspark had vacancies due to the large amount of applications, I was eventually assigned there.

Nimbuspark features single rooms with private bathrooms, with 10-12 residents sharing a well-equipped kitchen (dishes, cookware, oven, microwave, and even a dishwasher). The dorm also has a laundry room with machines, dryers, and detergent provided. The location is very convenient, with many grocery stores nearby at different price ranges, and several CBS campuses within walking distance. It also just takes about 40 minutes by

metro to the airport, making travelling very easy. The only drawback is limited storage space in the rooms.

Dorm tour: <https://youtu.be/lxt5LEl4nks>.

### **5) Course Registration**

The course application deadline was in late October. We submitted our preferences online, and CBS assigned courses based on availability. Each student typically takes 30 ECTS credits (4 courses, 7.5 credits each), unless a special request is made. Results were announced in mid-November, with an option to request changes through the office.

Course information: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/study/internationals/exchange-students/undergraduate-courses-exchange-students>

### **6) Courses Taken**

- Global People Management: Human Resource Management & Leadership (BHAAV6021U)
- Financial Derivatives and their Applications (BHAAV4491U)
- Principles of International Marketing (BINBO1160U)
- Behavioral Finance (BHAAV2389U)

At CBS, courses are graded 100% by final assessment, whether an in-class exam, take-home assignment, or oral exam. Of my courses, Financial Derivatives had a sit-in exam, while the others were home assignments (submitted electronically within 24 or 72 hours through CBS's exam portal).

Tip: For finance courses, check carefully if your calculator is approved, programmable calculators are not allowed.

### **7) Finance & Banking**

The local currency is the Danish Krone (DKK). Credit/debit cards and mobile payment (Apple Pay) are widely accepted. I rarely needed cash.

## **8) Climate**

Copenhagen is very cold in January and February, often windy and rainy, with short daylight hours. From March onwards, the weather improves, and by April there are more sunny days. We all rushed outdoors to enjoy the light at that time.

## **9) Health & Safety**

Pharmacies are widely available for basic needs. Copenhagen is generally very safe, though caution is advised in crowded areas or late at night.

## **10) Food**

Dining out is expensive, with most meals costing 150+ DKK per person. Cooking at home is much cheaper. Grocery chains include Netto, Rema 1000, Lidl, and 365discount for more affordable options, while Føtex (there is one next to the CBS main campus) offers wider variety at slightly higher prices.

## **11) Transportation**

Copenhagen is designed for biking, and many exchange students buy or rent bikes for daily commutes (usually under 20 minutes). Public transport is also efficient. Fares are zone-based: for example, a 2-zone ticket costs 24 DKK and allows unlimited travel within 1 hour 15 minutes.

For international travel, Copenhagen Airport is well-connected, though budget flight options are fewer than other European cities.

I flew from Hong Kong via Singapore Airlines with a layover in Singapore.

## **12) Communication**

Before departure, I bought data SIM cards from Sham Shui Po in Hong Kong. It did not include a local number, but WhatsApp was sufficient for my daily communication.

## **13) Sports & Recreation Facilities**

A gym is located near Nimbuspark Residence, and many of my flatmates purchased monthly memberships there.

#### **14) Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities**

Exchange life at CBS is very social. My flatmates often organized parties and dinners in our shared kitchen, and exchange students frequently explored the city together.

#### **15) Cautionary Measures**

Bring a waterproof jacket for rainy days.

Pack enough warm clothes for the first few months (though Uniqlo in Copenhagen sells HeatTech if needed).

English is sufficient for daily life, but grocery labels are in Danish, so prepare your Google Translate when you are going to grocery stores~

#### **Items to Bring**

1. Passport and visa/residence documents
2. Credit or debit card
3. Small amount of cash (Euro)
4. Winter clothes (waterproof jacket, windbreaker, down jacket, heattech, gloves, scarf)
5. Adapter
6. Power bank
7. Personal medication (e.g. Sensa Cools 清熱酷 as I could not find it anywhere in Europe)
8. Lotion/moisturizer
9. Big backpack for travelling
10. Locks for luggage/backpacks

## Useful Links

### 1. Undergraduate Courses for Exchange Students

<https://www.cbs.dk/en/study/internationals/exchange-students/undergraduate-courses-exchange-students>

### 2. Student Housing

<https://www.cbs.dk/en/study/internationals/exchange-students/housing>