



Open your mind. LUT.  
Lappeenranta **University of Technology**

NHH



A Guiding Exchange Report:  
NHH NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS  
Spring 2018

**Addou Babet**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	PREPARATIONS BEFORE THE EXCHANGE .....	3
2	NHH.....	5
2.1	ORIENTATION DAYS.....	6
2.2	LANGUAGE COURSE INFORMATION.....	6
2.3	THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR, HOLIDAY AND EXAM PERIODS.....	6
3	DESCRIPTION OF COMPLETED COURSES.....	7
4	PRACTICAL INFORMATION.....	8
4.1	HOUSING.....	8
4.2	OTHER SERVICES .....	9
5	BERGEN .....	10
6	FREE TIME ACTIVITIES .....	11
	USEFUL LINKS: .....	13

# 1 PREPARATIONS BEFORE THE EXCHANGE

It is fairly easy to do all the necessary preparations before the exchange in Bergen.

## Applying to NHH

Formalities required by NHH consist of filling an application and giving some personal details. NHH will keep you updated by email on all the necessary details including arrival dates and orientation days, course selection deadlines etc. So, it is relatively easy to stay on track of what to do next as long as you make sure that NHH has your email address.

## Luggage – prepare for the weather

Bergen, as you might know, is one of the rainiest cities in Europe. But don't worry! It does not rain ALL the time, and life gets much easier when you're prepared. Pack some warm sweaters, a wind- and waterproof jacket or a raincoat and some boots. Also, some hiking boots if you intend to go hiking.

## Flight tickets and arrival to Bergen and NHH

Traveling to Bergen is easiest via direct flight. Finnair, SAS, and Norwegian are the main airlines that fly to Bergen frequently from Helsinki, and their prices are similar. Another option is to fly to Oslo and take train from Oslo to Bergen. The train ride, lasting approximately 6,5 to 8 hours, is appraised to be one of the most beautiful and scenic train rides in the world. Thus, consider taking the train to Bergen, if you have more time in your hands.

Once you have arrived in Bergen there are several ways you can get to the center and to the student accommodation. You can either take the public transport, Skyss, and then take the bus that goes to Handelshøyskolen bus stop. You can check the schedules from Skyss' website or download the Skyss app to your smartphone which also allows you to buy tickets directly from the app. The price of a ticket, valid for 90 minutes, is around 3.80 €. Another option is to take a Flybuss, which goes directly to the center or to the Handelshøyskolen bus stop. The Flybuss is my preferred option, a faster and more convenient choice but costs around 15 €. On certain arrival dates you can also reserve an airport pick-up organized by NHH, or you can take a taxi which can become quite expensive. Luggage storages can also be found at the central bus station, if you wish to store your luggage and take a walk or just travel lighter when picking up your keys from the Sammen Student Center.

### Other things to consider

Travel insurance – make sure that your travel insurance covers the whole period of your stay abroad.

### Do I need to apply for a visa or residence permit?

Depends where you are from. If you are a citizen of a Nordic country, you do not need to apply for a visa or a residence permit. It is still recommended to make a notification of your move to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so that they are aware of you residing in Norway.

## 2 NHH

The Norwegian School of Economics, NHH (Norges Handelshøyskole), is the leading business school in Norway, only challenged by its “rival” BI Norwegian Business School which has its main campus in Oslo. NHH was founded in 1936 and is the oldest business school in Norway. The university has a very international profile and is a part of CEMS. In 2017, NHH ranked #35 in Financial Times’ European Business Schools ranking and had 483 outgoing and 416 incoming exchange students. The number of incoming exchange students continues to rise as NHH has intensified its efforts to promote a good study and learning environment. Student associations within the university are very active and there are many student-run events, clubs and activities one can take part as a student. The student life in NHH is very lively and vibrant which makes studying at NHH much more fun.



## 2.1 ORIENTATION DAYS

The Welcome Week for spring semester started on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Participation to the Welcome Week is mandatory. If you cannot make it, it is advisable to let them know. Due to having an exam at my home university, LUT, I could participate to the Welcome Week from January 5<sup>th</sup> onwards. The exchange coordinators were kind enough to give me all the necessary information afterwards, and there is a Facebook group called NHH Exchange Students Spring (or Fall) where you can find all the necessary information that you might have missed. The Facebook group also works as a channel for all the necessary future information and is a communication channel among exchange students.

New student? Check out [this page](#).

## 2.2 LANGUAGE COURSE INFORMATION

NHH offered Norwegian language courses of three different levels for incoming exchange students. I did not take part to any of them as I decided to learn on my own, but I heard only good feedback from students who decided to take part to those courses.

## 2.3 THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR, HOLIDAY AND EXAM PERIODS

The academic year for Spring 2018 started in January 3<sup>rd</sup> and ran until June 15<sup>th</sup>. Depending on the exams that you take, you might of course finish earlier than the last date. For further details about the academic year, see the [NHH academic calendar](#).

For holidays, there was a week-long winter holiday in the middle of the semester that started in late March and lasted until early April. The exact duration of the holiday also depends on the courses that you have selected. The course schedules were fairly flexible, and absences could be negotiated with the professors. The examination period took place in the end of the semester, in May. Usually there are no lectures during that time, and the term paper deadlines are also before that, so students are allowed to focus only for the exams. All my exams were held electronically, meaning that I did my examinations with my own laptop. NHH provides all the necessary information on how it works and what you are supposed to do to prepare for the electronical examinations. You are asked to download a software to your computer that blocks access to your desktop and other applications during the exams. The examinations lasted for 3 hours.

For further information about timetables, holiday and exam periods see the [NHH timetables and examination dates](#).

### **3 DESCRIPTION OF COMPLETED COURSES**

I took the following courses, all of which I can recommend.

#### Global Strategy and Management (Term paper + Exam)

The course explored various organizational structures employed by MNCs and focused on the cultural and institutional challenges that they face. Key topics were knowledge transfer, MNC entry strategies and the ethical challenges organizations face when operating internationally. The lectures included in-depth cases, guest lectures and a final term-paper assignment that contributed to half of the grade assessment.

#### The Collaborative Economy (Term Paper only)

The course focused on understanding the interactions between collaborative platforms and sharing economy. We were taught to apply Netnography – a method designed to study online media content. The entire grade of the course came from the term paper which were done in groups of 2-3 people. I found the course relatively easy but rewarding in terms of learning outcomes.

#### Implementation of Strategic Change and Learning in Organizations (Term paper + Exam)

The main focus of this course was to learn the causes and consequences of organizational change. It is widely recognized as one of the most challenging tasks facing leaders in modern organizations. We had cases, guest lectures and readings. The course allowed me to reflect on my past work life experiences and have advanced knowledge of the main topics of the course that can be applied into practice.

#### Corporate Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age (Oral Exam + Exam)

This was a really interesting and rewarding course as it was done in collaboration with Kogod School of Business at American University, Washington, D.C. The course access is restricted, only 26 students are selected to the course based on their applications. One of the largest IT companies in the Nordics, Evry provided us relevant real-life cases with their brand-new strategic business area, Digital Platform Services. Together, in collaboration with AU students we developed a business case and pitched it for Evry. I found the feedback and the whole learning experience really useful career-wise. For the preparation, we made a week-long field trip to Washington, where we did company visits to IBM and Deloitte. We also visited the U.S. Capitol and had some free time for exploring the city of Washington.

## 4 PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Sammen is the student service organization of Bergen and is responsible for the student housing, healthcare and sports facilities provided for students.

### 4.1 HOUSING

Housing was organized by Sammen. All incoming exchange students are guaranteed student housing, provided that you apply within the deadline. You will receive a personal reservation code along with your information letter from NHH which you must then use to apply for the housing. Sammen has quite of a selection in regards of the housing locations in Bergen, but the most popular and recommended one is Hatleberg, which is right next to NHH. It is the place where the majority of incoming exchange students apply and are allocated to. Most of the apartments are studios with a shared bathroom and a shared kitchen. During a busy semester the room might also be shared but this did not happen to any of us during spring.

One can also look for housing in the private market. The average price for a room in student housing is 400 euros whereas in the private market it is 500 euros, including the internet and electricity.

If you arrive to Bergen outside of Sammen opening hours there is a possibility for a key pickup service that you have to arrange for yourself.



## 4.2 OTHER SERVICES

### Health services

Health services are provided by Sammen. I did not use any of the health services that Sammen had to offer but I heard that their services are of good quality and the wait times were not long either.

### International services

If you have any questions regarding your courses or exchange related things, you can visit the exchange coordinators' office at NHH or ask your question through the dedicated Facebook group.

NHH also has a special International Committee, which organizes events for exchange students throughout the semester. It is also possible to join the committee and be a part of hosting various events. The events hosted by the IC were beer pong tournament, hiking trips, curling, world dinner, all-night parties, and farewell dinner.

ESN Bergen is also a student organization that hosts social events, trips and projects for exchange students. You can also join their Facebook group for more information.

### Local transportation and paying by card

The public transportation in Bergen is very good, as busses and trams run regularly. At night they stop around 2am and continue at 5am. The public transportation is organized by Skyss and it is possible to purchase a monthly card for students. I did not purchase a monthly card but bought usually a weekly ticket, also discounted for students. The most convenient way to purchase tickets is through their app "Skyss billet". Also route information can be found from the Skyss app or through their website.

Having cash is not that necessary as international debit and credit cards are accepted nearly everywhere. However, when ordering online from Norwegian websites, it is good to know that you might need a Norwegian identity number in order to purchase anything. Should you face such issue, your Norwegian friends are more than happy to help you with this.

## 5 BERGEN

Bergen is a city and municipality in Hordaland on the west coast of Norway. It is the second largest city in Norway with a population of approximately 280 300 inhabitants. Bergen is known as the city of seven mountains, as it is surrounded by seven truly beautiful seven mountains, all of worthy a hike as they offer you a different view of the city and its surroundings.

The climate in Bergen is mild, though with a lot of precipitation. During my stay, it did not snow at all in Bergen but it rained a lot, so it is better to be prepared. In the summer, the temperatures can get up to 30 degrees Celsius. It can get quite warm in May which is when you might start to notice happy people on the streets eating ice cream.

The price level is one of the highest in the world, but it is not significantly higher in comparison to Finland. Food is a bit more expensive. Clothes are in the same price range. However, you will notice a real difference when buying alcohol from a grocery store or eating in a restaurant, as the prices can almost double in comparison to Finnish prices.

## 6 FREE TIME ACTIVITIES

### The great outdoors

Hiking and enjoying the great outdoors is perhaps the favorite Norwegian pastime. And after being there I cannot really blame them! Everywhere you go, you are bound to see amazing views especially if you decide to hike on one of the seven mountains that are surrounding Bergen. Go on a hike, see it for yourself and be amazed!

### Skiing and other adventures

If you like outdoor adventures such as skiing or extreme sports, you can travel to Voss. It is one of the top places to visit if you are craving for thrilling adventures in extreme surroundings.

### Sports

Sammen has seven sports centers which offer strength and fitness classes, cycling, swimming, climbing, personal training and more. The membership for the whole semester is 1100 NOK which makes training sports very affordable during your stay in Bergen. The gyms are of good quality and size. The classes are also good and easy to reserve.

### Student life

The student life in Bergen is vibrant as there are several universities and faculties in Bergen. This means that you can participate to various student held events, that are usually informed about in Facebook.

If you wish to party, the nightlife in Bergen is good too. You can find pubs and bars or go to clubs that are more or less favored by students. There are usually no entrance fees but expect to pay a cover, and a minimum of 70 NOK for a drink. NHH also has its own club called Klubben which is one of the biggest venues in Bergen. Some events and parties are also held there.

## Travel

Traveling within Norway and abroad can also be a way to spend your free time. I enjoyed exploring what Norway had to offer by doing road trips with my friends. We went all the way to Northern Norway to see the Lofoten Islands which were absolutely stunning. During the road trip we also saw many other cities that are worth visiting such as Trondheim, Ålesund, Stavanger and Bodo. We also did trips to popular hiking destinations such as Geiranger and Trolltunga where the views are unlike anything you've probably seen before. If you wish to go abroad, Norwegian offers very good flight deals from time to time. For example, I purchased a direct flight round trip to New York with some of my fellow exchange students for 170 €.



*If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me: [addou.babet@gmail.com](mailto:addou.babet@gmail.com)*

## USEFUL LINKS:

### NHH

- Academic calendar: <https://www.nhh.no/en/for-students/academic-calendar/>
- Traveling to Bergen and NHH: <https://www.nhh.no/en/about-nhh/travelling-to-bergen-and-nhh/>
- Timetables: <https://www.nhh.no/en/for-students/timetables/>
- New student: <https://www.nhh.no/en/for-students/new-student/>

### Sammen

- Sammen Bergen <https://www.sammen.no/en/bergen>
- Sammen Housing: <https://www.sammen.no/en/bergen/housing>
- Sammen Sports: <https://www.sammen.no/en/bergen/sports>

Flybussen: <https://www.flybussen.no/>

Skyss: <https://www.skyss.no/>

Voss: <https://www.visitnorway.com/places-to-go/fjord-norway/voss/things-to-do/>