Loreno’s Testimonial

I love the Scandinavian way of thinking and working. They put efficiency and functionality first. I also chose Norway for its hiking culture and breathtaking landscapes. If you like being out in nature, the Northern Lights, hiking and the mountains, this is THE place to be.

When I decided I wanted to study abroad, I got a lot of help and information from the VUB when they presented the exchange programme. They did a good job promoting it, and the professors encouraged it as well.

The biggest differences with Belgium and VUB? There is more emphasis on critical thinking and independent work. The classes give you a framework, but you need to do the actual topic research and study. This was a huge difference and challenge. Our professors were international which enlarges your perspective even more. The administrative process was also very smooth, which helped a lot!
What were the three key decision-makers that meant ‘Yes, I’m doing this’?

*Academically speaking:*
1. Wanting to study in Scandinavia
2. Close interaction with students in small classes, improved critical thinking and better connections with the professors
3. It worked well in combination with my VUB study programme - perfect fit!

*Personally:*
1. Getting used to a different way of teaching
2. Studying in English and improving my vocabulary
3. Getting to know yourself better.

What were the top 5 things you learned while being abroad?
1. My English is very good!
2. Teaching at VUB is more theory-oriented and doesn’t promote critical thinking as much.
3. Sharing your point of view matters. Going on exchange makes you think more critically and be more assertive academically.
4. Think beyond books and notes! Talk to classmates, read newspapers, check official documents. This is the only way to pass exams in Bergen - by going beyond the course material.
5. It was important for me to be assertive and take the initiative - get out of my comfort zone, take time to relax with new friends and enjoy where you are. Never give up on ambitions and know that hard work really does pay off!

*Will you remain active internationally?* Yes. I’m currently doing an internship abroad.

*Will you interact more/differently with international students on campus after this experience?* Yes, I would be more approachable and try to help them feel comfortable on campus. For them it might feel like a huge and sometimes difficult change in their lives.

Would you recommend students to go and venture out into the world?
“YES! Do it as soon as possible You might regret NOT doing it one day.”