

# Learning Beyond Borders: Ana Carolina's Belgian Adventure in Sustainability

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Join us as Ana Carolina de Paula Bussaconi takes us through her enlightening journey in Belgium, where she explored the dynamics of the circular economy through [EPHEC Summer School: Sustainability challenges for small & medium companies](#). This blog post encapsulates her transformative experience abroad, highlighting the unique blend of academic learning and cultural immersion.

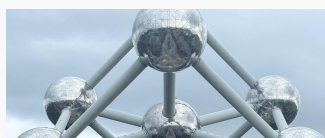
## Why Belgium?



My decision to participate in this program was sparked by my professor, Panos, who described it as an excellent opportunity to expand our knowledge of the circular economy in a region where sustainability efforts are actively evolving. As a student of Sustainable Business Management at Seneca, and with Canada's growing focus on sustainability, I felt this was a perfect chance to gather fresh insights to bring back home.

**The Preparation** Excitement was my companion as I meticulously planned for the trip. I was particularly keen on understanding the Belgian perspective on sustainability efforts and how they viewed the global push towards environmental conservation. This eagerness paid off as it led to engaging discussions with people from diverse backgrounds and viewpoints. Additionally, learning simple French phrases proved invaluable, simplifying daily interactions such as ordering coffee or breakfast.

## Skills Applied Abroad





The project we undertook required us to utilize and enhance several skills:

- Adaptability
- Attention to detail
- Leadership
- Interpersonal skills

These skills were crucial as they not only helped in navigating the new environment but also in connecting with people and embracing the local culture.

**The Experience** Our days were filled with rich experiences, from visiting museums and palaces to exploring local gardens with friends. The classroom sessions were collaborative and were just as enlightening as the excursions.



**The Highlight** The pinnacle of this experience was presenting our ideas on sustainability to the Head of Sustainability at Decathlon in Belgium. This opportunity was a testament to the hard work and teamwork of our group and was undoubtedly the most memorable part of our trip.



## 5 Tips for Global Learning Opportunities

1. Keep an open mind about new cultures and routines—don't shy away from trying new foods.

2. Learn a few phrases in the local language to ease your daily interactions.
3. Familiarize yourself with the local culture and prepare for cultural differences that might be surprising.
4. Pack appropriately for the weather and potential health needs.
5. Embrace the fun; such experiences are not only educational but also great for making lifelong friendships.

**Next Steps** Post-trip, I am eager to apply the valuable lessons and insights I've gained to my studies and daily life in Canada. The knowledge acquired is a treasure that I plan to continuously integrate and build upon.

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Ana's journey through Belgium has been nothing short of inspiring, blending educational growth with personal discovery. Her story is a powerful reminder of the profound impact that international learning experiences can have on our personal and professional lives. We hope her adventures inspire more students at Seneca to reach beyond their boundaries and explore the world's educational opportunities. Thank you, Ana, for sharing your journey.

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