DEVELOPMENT OF A CO2 VISUALISATION TOOL TO REDUCE THE ERASMUS+ CARBON FOOTPRINT

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THEODOSSIOU Nicolaos P., KARAKATSANIS Diamandis, STAVRIDIS Charis, FOTOPOULOU Eleni, *Development of a C02 Visualisation Tool to Reduce the Erasmus+ Carbon Footprint*, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), 2021.

Students and staff need to be informed of the impact of their choices regarding the means of transport they use to go on mobility abroad.

The main objective of this second intellectual output, led by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), is to propose a visualisation tool that can be easily used by higher education students going on mobility abroad with the Erasmus programme and by staff taking part in transnational cooperation projects under KA2 and KA3.

This tool can allow them to visualise their transport-related carbon footprint and explore alternatives to minimise it and offset it while preserving their freedom to choose their travel destinations.

It estimates the carbon footprint of the mobility based on the place of origin and the destination and displays it according to the different means of transport available (e.g. plane vs train), making the relevant comparisons and nudging the user to choose the most environmentally-friendly option.

The main steps of this intellectual output are:

» Inventory of existing digital tools: research and testing of available applications in order to weigh their pros and cons, estimate their reliability and identify the best solution. The chosen application (Carbon Footprint Ltd https://www.carbonfootprint.com/) is free and open source.

» Based on this, the development of our own CO2 footprint visualisation tool adapted to the needs of the participants to the Erasmus mobility programme. This tool can allow higher education students and staff to visualise their carbon emissions in order to propose to them means of transport that have a smaller carbon footprint. It is user-friendly, open source and free to download and use. It includes comparisons of the impact of different means of transport and their associated carbon footprints, complemented with suggestions for offsetting CO2 emissions. The tool was tested for its efficiency in lowering the carbon footprint of higher education Erasmus participants at each of the EGG universities. Its impact was assessed through discussions in the form of focus groups including higher education students and staff from partner universities.

» AUTH will also explore possible future synergies between the CO2 footprint visualisation tool and the relevant blocks of the European Student Card Initiative, such as the Erasmus+ Mobile App.