



## SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY GUIDE

WP 5 – European Mobility Innovation Center (EMIC)

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SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY GUIDE





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## Introduction

The European Mobility Innovation Centre (EMIC) brings together the international mobility experts of all alliance members. Its mission is to promote, expand, monitor, and evaluate mobility opportunities and raise awareness of EU values across alliance activities.

The main objective of RUN-EMIC is to expand the range of supports and services provided in terms of i) promoting, measuring, and assessing mobility opportunities across RUN-EU and ii) promoting and increasing the awareness of EU values and priorities across our European University and its mission areas of education, research, innovation, and service to society.

Mobility between the regions of RUN-EU is facilitated at all levels of the alliance by combining traditional approaches to mobility with new, innovative, and sustainable forms of mobility allowing for equal and accessible opportunities for all students and staff. RUN-EMIC will continue to execute and further develop the RUN-EU Mobility Strategy created in the first cycle of the alliance, adding an intensified focus on virtual forms of mobility (COILs and MOOCs).

This Sustainable Mobility Guide is part of RUN-EMIC's commitment to promote more sustainable travel solutions, by stimulating partners to significantly lower their CO2 footprint and to take measures that allow them to become more nature-positive universities.



### List of abbreviations

	AEGEE	Association des États Généraux des Étudiants de l'Europe
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- CO2 Carbon dioxide
- COIL Collaborative Online International Learning
- EMIC European Mobility Innovation Center
- ESN Erasmus Student Network
- EV Electric Vehicles
- FHV Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences
- GHG Greenhouse Gases
- HAMK Häme University of Applied Sciences
- Howest Howest University of Applied Sciences
  - IPCA Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave
  - IPL Polytechnic University of Leiria
  - NHL NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences
- RUN-EU Regional University Network European University
  - SDGs Sustainable Development Goals
    - TUS Technological University of the Shannon
  - UBU Universidad de Burgos
  - UN United Nations

# 1. Context, definition and aim of the RUN-EU EMIC Sustainable Mobility Guide

#### 1.1 Context

Sustainable mobility is crucial for addressing several urgent global challenges, including climate change, global warming, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events like floods. The transportation sector is a significant source of greenhouse gases (GHGs), particularly carbon dioxide (CO2). Sustainable mobility solutions, such as electric vehicles (EVs), public transportation, and non-motorized transport (e.g., cycling and walking), can drastically reduce GHG emissions. The increase in global temperatures due to GHG emissions is causing more frequent and severe weather events. Sustainable mobility helps mitigate this by reducing the carbon footprint of transportation.

Sustainable mobility is not just about changing how we move; it's about creating a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future by addressing the root causes of environmental degradation and promoting healthier, more efficient and sustainable ways of living.

RUN-EU is committed to creating awareness about the UN's SDGs in all its activities.

#### 1.2 Definition

The RUN-EU EMIC Sustainable Mobility Guide is a comprehensive resource designed to facilitate environmentally friendly and socially responsible options for the time before, during and after the mobility for the mobility activities of their students and staff within the alliance. This guide includes information, tips, and resources aimed at minimizing and compensating for the ecological footprint associated with travel, while also promoting accessibility and affordability.

#### The key components are:

#### 1. Transportation Options:

Information on sustainable transportation modes such as walking, cycling, public transit, and carpooling, along with guidance on how to utilize these options effectively for the arrival and departure and within the destination city or region.

#### 2. Eco-Friendly Travel Tips:

Practical advice on reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption while travelling, including guidance on packing lightly, choosing eco-friendly accommodations, and offsetting carbon emissions when necessary.

3. Local Mobility Resources:



Maps, apps, and other tools to help students and staff navigate public transportation systems, find bike-sharing stations, and access other sustainable mobility resources available at their destination.

#### 4. Cultural and Social Considerations:

Insights into local customs, etiquette, and regulations related to transportation and mobility, as well as tips for engaging respectfully with host communities while travelling sustainably.

#### 5. Budget-Friendly Suggestions:

Strategies for minimizing transportation costs and making sustainable mobility options financially accessible to students and staff members of diverse backgrounds and means.

#### 6. Environmental Impact Awareness:

Educational materials and resources to raise awareness about the environmental impacts of transportation and empower students and staff to make informed choices that contribute to a more sustainable future in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the UN in 2015

#### 7. Community Engagement Opportunities:

Information on volunteer opportunities, community-led initiatives, and advocacy efforts related to sustainable transportation and mobility, encouraging students and staff to actively participate in local sustainability efforts during their exchange experience.

#### 8. Feedback and Evaluation Mechanisms:

Channels for students to provide feedback on their transportation experiences and suggestions for improving sustainability initiatives within the exchange program, fostering ongoing dialogue and continuous improvement.

#### 1.3 Aim

In RUN-EU's mission, the sustainability goals are described as follows: "We aim to secure the sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental progress of our regions and stakeholders by providing our students, researchers and academics with green, digital and inclusive skills that will help them increase the competitiveness of their regions and reduce existing regional development disparities in the EU."

The EMIC sustainable mobility guide shall endorse awareness of alternative approaches to mobility which are more sustainable and focus on reducing the environmental impact of RUN-EU mobility activities across the Alliance members.

By equipping students and staff with the knowledge and resources needed to prioritize sustainability in their mobility choices, a sustainable mobility guide for student exchange programmes plays a crucial role in fostering environmentally conscious behaviours and promoting global citizenship among the next generation of leaders and travellers.



## 2. What's in it for you (and the planet)?

To behave sustainably while travelling and staying locally is not only advantageous for the environment and local communities but also offers travellers a rewarding and fulfilling experience.

- 1. **Reducing your ecological footprint:** Through the use of eco-friendly transportation, responsible resource consumption, and choosing accommodations with environmentally friendly practices, travellers can minimize their ecological footprint.
- 2. Protection of the natural environment: Sustainable travel helps preserve delicate ecosystems and natural habitats by reducing the burden of waste, pollution, and overuse which allows you to enjoy nature yourself, for example, pollution in the sea makes snorkelling less pleasant. The selection of sustainable modes of transportation has the potential to reduce traffic congestion. As an increasing number of individuals adopt environmentally friendly transportation options, the volume of traffic on roadways is likely to decline. This can facilitate the timely completion of journeys, while simultaneously safeguarding the natural ecosystem.
- 3. **Improvement of quality of life:** Sustainable mobility can contribute to improving the quality of life for local populations by creating a cleaner environment, better health conditions, and stronger community cohesion.

The health benefits of sustainable mobility are:

- a. Reduced pollution: By using sustainable modes of transport, such as bicycles, public transport or walking, the emission of polluting gases is reduced. This contributes to cleaner air, which in turn reduces respiratory problems and cardiovascular diseases.
- b. Increased physical activity: Choosing to walk or cycle encourages a more active lifestyle. This helps combat sedentary lifestyles, reduces the risk of obesity and improves overall health.
- c. Mental benefits: Sustainable mobility can also have a positive impact on mental health. Spending time outdoors, whether walking or cycling, can reduce stress and improve mood.
- d. Fewer accidents: Encouraging the use of sustainable transport can lead to a decrease in the number of road accidents, which means fewer injuries and fatalities.
- e. Closer community: Sustainable mobility promotes social interaction, as people tend to be more connected in environments where they walk or use public transport. This can improve emotional well-being and social cohesion.



- 4. Long-term availability of resources: Implementing sustainable practices and measures ensures that natural and cultural resources remain available and usable for future generations.
- 5. **Cultural exchange:** Sustainable travel enables authentic cultural experiences and exchange between travellers and local communities, fostering better understanding and respect for different cultures. Travelling sustainably often takes more time to reach your destination. This extra time creates more opportunities to relax, to get some work done, and to encounter new people.
- 6. **Promotion of environmental awareness:** Sustainable travel raises awareness among travellers about environmental issues and promotes environmentally conscious behaviour that can also impact their lives at home.
- 7. **Boosting local economies:** By purchasing local products and supporting small businesses, sustainable travel contributes to strengthening local economies and promoting economic development in rural and remote areas.

Although travel can be made a little bit more difficult when trying to be sustainable, as outlined above, it can offer unexpected pleasures to your mobility through meeting likeminded people and community groups creating new connections along the way.

Each choice impacts our environment and each individual has a choice balancing multiple interests. By considering sustainability when travelling, you can reflect on your values and choose accordingly: this contributes to personal growth.

Travelling sustainably nowadays is something we choose wholeheartedly. Sustainable travel is not about giving something up, it is about gaining something more: new experiences and conscious decisions.

Another bonus for choosing to travel sustainably comes in a **green travel top-up grant**. This is a bonus added to your Erasmus grant if you use environmentally friendly, sustainable means of transport to your host country (and back). For example, if you can prove that you have travelled by train, bus or carpooling to your destination you can receive a considerable top-up in addition to your grant (please contact your international office for the exact amount).



## 3. Sustainable and affordable ways to travel in Europe

#### 3.1 List of sustainable/affordable travel options

While you choose the means of transport for your trip, consult the CO2 calculator and make the best option: <u>https://co2.myclimate.org/en/calculate\_emissions</u>

#### a. Trains and buses:

- i. <u>Trains</u>:
  - 1. High-speed trains: list of high-speed trains
  - 2. Night trains: interactive map: <a href="https://nachtzugkarte.de/en/">https://nachtzugkarte.de/en/</a>
  - 3. <u>ChronoTrains</u>: where can you go by train in max 8 hours
  - 4. InterRail: tour Europe by rail with one pass
  - 5. <u>Rail.cc</u>: where and how to buy the best train tickets and rail passes
  - 6. <u>Rail Europe</u>: explore Europe by train
  - 7. <u>Seat61.com</u>: train travel through Europe and beyond
  - 8. Erasmus By Train: how to go on Erasmus by train
  - 9. <u>Cheap train tickets Thalys, Eurostar, SNCF, ICE, ... OnlyTrain:</u> The booking platform for cheap European train tickets

#### ii. International bus lines:

- 1. <u>Flixbus</u>
- 2. <u>Eurolines</u>
- 3. BlaBlaBus (buses by BlaBlaCar)
- 4. <u>ComparaBus</u>: compare bus tickets and book cheap tickets in Europe
- 5. <u>Busbud</u>: find cheap bus tickets

#### iii. Intermodal public transportation over land (trains and buses):

- 1. <u>Omio</u>: search and compare buses, trains and cheap flights (GoEuro)
- 2. The TrainLine: explore Europe effortlessly by train and bus

#### b. Boats

- i. Ferries:
  - 1. <u>Seat61.com overview of ferry lines</u>
  - 2. Irish Ferries
  - 3. <u>DirectFerries.com</u>
  - 4. <u>DFDS</u>
  - 5. Brittany Ferries: Ireland-UK-France-Spain
- ii. <u>Cruises</u>:
  - 1. The Real Cruise People



#### c. Carsharing and carpooling

- i. BlaBlaCar: https://www.blablacar.com/
- ii. CarPool-EuroStop: https://eurostop.carpool.be/en

#### d. Cycling

- i. EuroVelo: the European cycle route network (19 routes)
- ii. 7 cycling routes through Europe North to South
- iii. CyclingEurope.org: 15 European cycle routes

#### e. Travelling with carbon offsetting (carbon emissions compensation)

- i. FlyGreen: https://flygrn.com/?sub\_locale=en
- ii. AtmosFair: <u>https://www.atmosfair.de/en/</u>
- iii. Fair Climate Fund: <u>https://fairclimatefund.nl/en/co2-calculator/</u>
- iv. Go Forest: <u>https://goforest.be/</u>

#### f. Other useful info and links:

- i. <u>www.footprintcalculator.org</u>
- ii. <u>Top 10 Tips on How to Reduce your Carbon Footprint in Travel</u>
- iii. Infographic 'How to reduce your carbon footprint while travelling'
- iv. <u>Green Erasmus Portal</u>: developed by the <u>Green Erasmus project</u> to provide students with concrete information on how to be sustainable before, during and after their Erasmus experience.
- v. <u>Use this CO2 calculator</u> to choose the best option.

#### g. Other options between RUN-EU partners:

- i. Leiria <-> Barcelos
  - 1. Bus
    - a. FlixBus: Affordable Global Bus Travel 4h around 10€
    - b. <u>Rede Expressos | Coach tickets from €3.95</u>
    - c. Book, search & compare trains, buses, flights & ferries Omio
    - 2. Train 6h30 around 25€ (<u>CP Comboios de Portugal)</u>
  - 3. Carpooling 2h30
- ii. <u>Leiria <-> Burgos</u>
  - 1. Bus: Wherever you want to go Alsa
- iii. <u>Barcelos <-> Burgos</u>
  - Flix Bus not operating every day and the journey takes 22 hours with a long (4H) waiting time in Lisbon – around 35/40€ (one way)
  - Train from Barcelos to Vigo (3h30) (leaves early morning) Vigo to Burgos (7h30) (leaves early morning, so it would have to be the next day) – total duration of the journey 32h
  - 3. Carpooling 5h30
- iv. <u>Barcelos <-> Bruges</u>
  - 1. Flix Bus not operating every day and the journey takes 44h (4h wait in Lisbon + 5h wait in Paris) around 75€ one way



- v. <u>Kortrijk or Bruges <-> Leeuwarden</u>
  - 1. SNCB International | Train travel in Europe (b-europe.com)
  - 2. <u>Train tickets for international trips by train Fast & comfortable | NS</u> <u>International | NS International</u>
- vi. <u>Dorbirn <-> Leeuwarden</u>
  - 1. <u>Train tickets for international trips by train Fast & comfortable | NS</u> <u>International | NS International – Leeuwarden <-> Bregenz</u>
  - 2. WESTbahn | Tickets & Offers | Timetable Bregenz <-> Dorbirn
- vii. <u>Kortrijk or Bruges <-> Dorbirn</u>
  - <u>SNCB International | Train travel in Europe (b-europe.com)</u> Kortrijk or Bruges <-> Bregenz
  - 2. <u>WESTbahn | Tickets & Offers | Timetable</u> Bregenz <-> Dorbirn
- viii. <u>Limerick or Athlone <-> Burgos</u>
  - 1. <u>Rosslare to Bilbao Ferries | Ferry to Bilbao | Brittany Ferries (brittany-ferries.ie)</u>
  - 2. Bus: Burgos to Bilbao (rome2rio.com)
  - ix. From Barcelos for all the other partners there are no feasible options

#### h. Local Transportation

- i. <u>Leiria</u>
  - 1. Bus https://mobilis.pt/en/home/
  - Bicycles <u>https://biclis.cm-leiria.pt/index.html</u> (Portuguese only) minimum 3 months
- ii. Caldas da Rainha
  - Bus <u>https://rodoviariadooeste.pt/rede-de-transportes/</u> (Portuguese only)
- iii. <u>Peniche</u>
  - Bus <u>https://rodoviariadooeste.pt/wp-</u> <u>content/uploads/Urbana\_PENICHE.pdf</u> (Portuguese only)

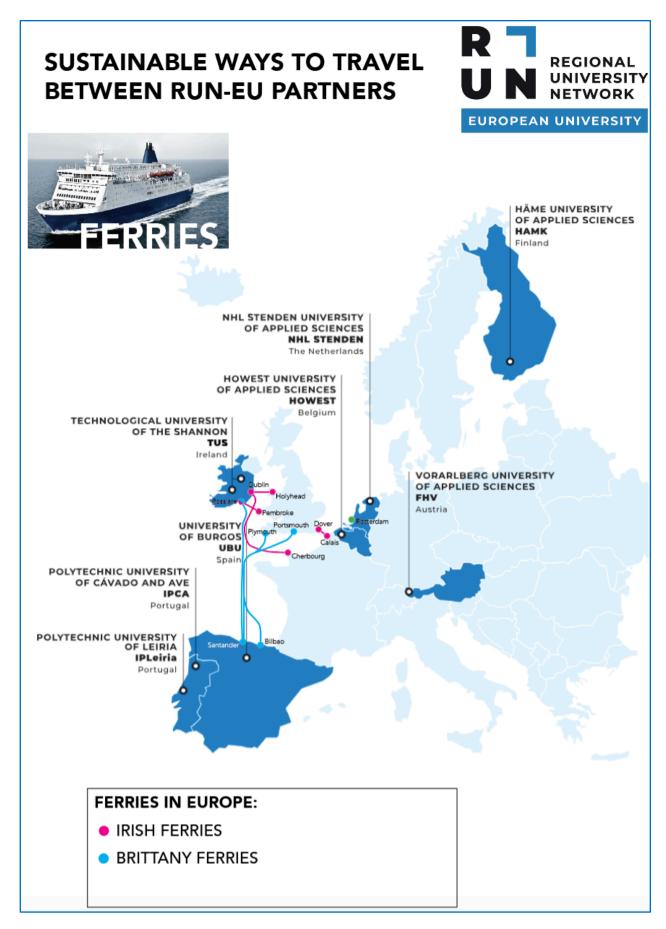
#### 3.2 Maps and flowcharts that can help you decide (in development)

• With static and interactive maps, you can see at a glance which connections exist via sea and overland between two RUN-EU partners, cities, regions or countries. Ideally, when you click a connection, it shows you more info about that line and links to the transport company's website.

Below, you can see an (unfinished) example of such a map. In a future version of this guide, we will include maps for ferry lines, high-speed trains, international bus lines and maybe more.



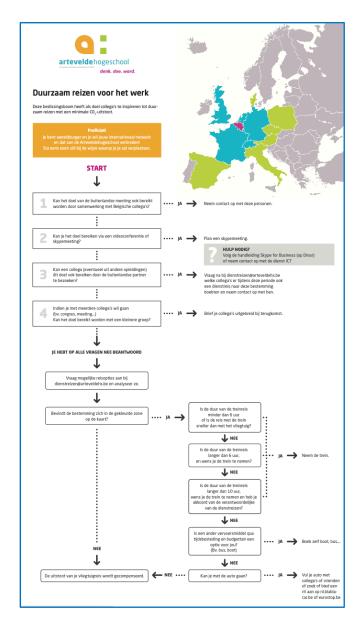
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• **Decision trees and flowcharts** can help you decide which travel options are sustainable/affordable/feasible for your mobility.

Below, you can see an example of such a decision tree from another university of applied sciences. In a future version of the guide, we will include such flowcharts for students and staff.



• An online platform/community on which students and staff members can share tips, experiences and travel reports, would be a nice way to inspire and facilitate others, interested in making their mobility more sustainable.



## 4. Daily life & more

#### 4.1 Before the mobility

- If available in your home institution, follow **workshops** on sustainable mobility.
- Different modes of mobility should be prioritised based on their sustainability, perhaps by recommendations based on journey time, e.g. for short journeys, always walking. Prioritising different modes of transport for their sustainability involves assessing their environmental impact, energy efficiency and social benefits. Here are some guidelines on how to do this effectively:
  - Active transport: Walking and cycling are the most sustainable modes. Not only are they emission-free, but they also promote physical health. Promoting infrastructure such as cycle paths and safe pavements is key.
  - 2. **Public transport:** Buses, trains and trams are more sustainable than private vehicles, especially if they use clean energy. Investing in efficient and accessible public transport can reduce car dependency.
  - 3. **Electric vehicles:** Although they still have an environmental impact, electric vehicles are more sustainable than internal combustion vehicles, especially if the electricity comes from renewable sources. Promoting their use and the installation of charging stations is important.
  - 4. **Carpooling and car sharing:** Carpooling reduces the number of cars on the road, which reduces congestion and emissions. Encouraging carpooling platforms can be a good strategy.
  - 5. **CO2 compensation**: if you must use another transportation option not listed above, you can compensate for your CO2 emissions. See 3.1.e on how to do this compensation.

#### 4.2 During the mobility

#### • How to move around

- Public transportation in town:
  - Bus/train cards: cheaper than buying single tickets. Affordable.
  - Bike renting/bike sharing: points in town where to pick and leave bikes.
  - Electric devices: e-scooters.
  - Sharing cars: to do grocery shopping, i.e.
  - Shopping delivery by the supermarkets.
  - Nice walks 😂
- Moving to other places outside the town:
  - Public transportation: bus and train.



- Sharing cars when no other more sustainable options are available:
  - Advertise trips on social media or public boards at the university to share cars and expenses.
  - Platforms like Bla-Bla Car app, etc...
  - Fun and social benefits.
- Daily Life:
  - Share accommodation helps you to share energy and make savings
  - **Eat local vegetarian or vegan food** to lower your environmental impact and avoid animal exploitation.
  - Refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle:
    - Using other students' utensils, giving a second life to everyday objects.
      - Bed-linen
      - Kitchen utensils
      - Small appliances (blender, iron, tv...)
      - Furniture

- Buy second-hand articles.
- Wallapop / Vinted apps to buy and sell.
- Refurbishing furniture and clothes. "Do it yourself" concept (DIY).
  - Buying at second-hand shops.
    - Getting objects from the "Street market".
  - Repair cafés: for advice on how to repair, reduce waste, maintain repair skills and strengthen social cohesion.
  - Workshops also for training on how to repair household devices, computers, bicycles, clothes...
- ESN/ <u>AEGEE</u>/ international students associations:
  - Share the information in their social media accounts of available used/second-hand utensils for interested future incoming students.
- "Buy less, choose well, make it last":
  - Avoid 'junk clothes' and fast fashion:
    - made from synthetic fibres,
    - dyed with toxic substances,
    - made with excessive water use,
    - that are difficult to recycle.
- If possible, buy local, regional, organic, and fair trade products. Remember transporting food also generates emissions so we recommend selecting regional products when you are doing your shopping. This is also a good way to get to know the culinary side of your destination!



- Reduce consumption: don't stream a movie at night, rather go outside for a walk to explore de surroundings! Remember streaming videos takes lots of energy.
- Use no or minimal packaging.
- Ecosystem: environmental awareness
  - Protect and respect green spaces.
  - Litter pick: collect rubbish from our campuses, rivers and green spaces of our towns. Commit to green initiatives like tree planting or rubbish collection campaigns, or get involved in charitable gardening projects.
  - Reduce waste production by using no or limited packaging.
  - Learn how to reuse and/or recycle that waste which you can't avoid.
  - Participate in **workshops** and activities programmed by the **"Green Offices"** of host universities.
- **Green Offices and SDG Hubs**: refer to them for information and workshops, if there is one at your institution.

#### 4.3 After the mobility

- Give a second life to the things you leave behind:
  - Bus/train cards: for example, handing your permanent train, bus or bike card to the International Office so that they can give it to the new incoming students when arriving.
  - Daily life items (see "daily life" section in 4.2)
- <u>Students' reports:</u>
  - Students will make a report on their mobility that will help new incoming students/staff members by providing information on how to make their mobilities sustainable and giving ideas and tips for the university/town where they went on mobility.
- <u>Sustainability awards</u>
  - Contests: e.g., FHV has a contest for green travel for students and staff.
  - Ambassadors: e.g., share your green travel story on social media, on the intranet, on the students' reports...



## 5. Connect and Inspire

#### 5.1 For organizations

- Design a sustainability pledge for students and staff to commit to nature-positive measures.
- Incorporate nature-positive measures into orientation programmes. New students joining our university campuses may be more receptive to changing their habits and engaging in recycling/reuse habits. It should be clearly communicated to students that embracing nature-positive measures is welcomed across all RUN-EU campuses.
- Launch a Nature Positive / Green Week across all RUN-EU campuses with a recognition ceremony for excellent Nature Positive Measures.
- Introduce Nature Positive Measures into class talks, workshops, and webinars.
- Link Nature Positive Measures to student ambassadors/champions and promote student testimonials.
- Brief Students Union and Students Council of RUN-EU members.
- Social media campaigns to promote awareness but keep all RUN-EU partners informed of developments of nature-positive measures. It's not a once-off campaign.
- Design digital signage to promote Nature Positive Measures across RUN-EU campuses.
- Create workshops on sustainable mobility (MOOCs) to prepare students and staff before their departure.
- Establish green campus committees / SDG Hubs across RUN-EU campuses to share best practices.
- Create an online platform/community on which students and staff members can share tips, experiences etc.

#### 5.2 For students

As you continue your efforts towards sustainability, it's important to remember that while your contributions are valuable, there are limits to what you can achieve on your own. It's essential to recognize that systemic changes often require collective action and policy support. Focus on what you can control, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and advocating for sustainable practices within your community. Every small action counts, but it's also okay to acknowledge that some challenges are beyond your capacity, sustainability is a shared responsibility.



#### 5.3 Some best practices from RUN-EU partners to share/adopt

- Inspirational podcasts for students.
  - At HAMK three students from the degree programme in Sustainable Development have created a podcast focusing on inspiring students to think, discuss and debate on topics related to sustainability (e.g., overconsumption, sustainable diet, greenwashing, future world). They also have HAMK experts from different fields as visitors in the podcast.
- RUN-EU reusable mugs at student restaurants/cafés.
  - At NHL Stenden and TUS, students and staff must either have their reusable mugs with them or have their coffee/tea on location. To those who bring their reusable mug, coffee/tea is offered at a reduced price.
- At Howest, NHL Stenden, and TUS, new students receive a reusable water bottle or coffee cup.
- Hospitality/ Culinary/ Tourism programmes to incorporate growing vegetables/herbs in designated areas on campus into to curriculum.
  - TUS has designated spaces on campus for raised beds, outdoor greenhouses, herb gardens, grow bags, and hydroponics growing systems for indoor herbs.
- Polytechnic Institute of Leiria:
  - As part of this partnership between the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria and the Municipal Water and Sanitation Services of Leiria, five drinking fountains were also made available for placement on the Leiria campuses, to encourage the consumption of quality tap water and canteens for all students.
  - Promotion of a Marine Pollution recycling workshop by the School of Tourism and Maritime Technology of Polytechnic of Leiria and the Marés group, in collaboration with Ocean Patrol.
  - To requalify the Polytechnic of Leiria Campi, actions on sustainability, energy efficiency and circular economy were promoted, aimed at academia and the regional business fabric.
  - A partnership was established by the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria and the Municipal Water and Sanitation Services of Leiria, within the scope of the organization of the Final Stages of the 2022 National University Championships, an event framed by environmental sustainability for sporting events, as it has removed from all venues used in the event, for example, plastic bottles, and canteens were made available reusable to all participants and accessible water points (tap water) being placed in each infrastructure used.



## Conclusion

We are still in the early stage of making mobilities greener and implementing sustainability measures. A lot of work still needs to be done by our institutions, starting with the establishment of green offices and SDG hubs. A commitment to the UN's SDGs needs to be incorporated into the curriculum and our RUN-EU campuses are well-placed to champion this commitment.

This guide is a starting point to create greater awareness towards a greener and more sustainable future, and we hope it will inspire our students and staff to embrace nature-positive measures in their daily lives.

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