

RETHYMNO – Shaping a road safety and sustainable mobility culture for the next generation

IN BRIEF

New infrastructure and strategic plans aiming to drive a modal shift towards sustainable transportation and increase road safety for the schools' community, have been implemented in Rethymno. Viable mobility plans for schools and the University were developed based on needs analysis, new infrastructure and public engagement. A two-year holistic plan was designed and launched, to challenge behavioural change towards the use of sustainable mobility modes and to promote safe commuting daily.

For whom is this article intended?

 The article could serve as practical guidance for cities seeking to drive a modal shift towards sustainable and safe commuting for schools' community, serving as a useful tool for municipalities, Directorates of Education and relevant stakeholders involved with schools' communities, i.e. teachers and parents' associations.

 A holistic approach towards sustainable mobility for the new generation, including technical interventions and a targeted plan to challenge the behavioural change of schools' community (pupils, students, teachers and parents) has been followed. The first section of the article, presents the mobility plans developed for 11 school districts and the University, including new infrastructure, redesign of public spaces, improved signage and upgraded public transport services. The second section describes the activities and results towards the schools' engagement in targeted training, awareness and behavioural change activities, based on a two-year integrated plan for behavioural change and motivation towards safe and sustainable commuting, involving so far a network of 16 schools and 2.500+ students.

Overview: Safe and Sustainable Mobility for schools' and university's communities

Mobility plans aiming to improve mobility and enable safe walking and cycling around schools are incorporated to the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), proposing redesign of public spaces, improved signage and new Public Transport routes to improve mobility and road safety for 11 schools' districts (18 primary and secondary education schools) and the University. The redesign of the bus stop serving the University will also be implemented to promote the public transport use. The Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems Lab of Technical University of Crete and the Municipality of Rethymno, supported by all relevant stakeholders, planned, organised and developed a two-year holistic plan, including experiential road safety and behavioural change games, thematic events, interactive workshops for teachers and parents, training materials, schools' competition, first-aid seminars and the "Road Safety Week". A user-friendly app, for children and adults, compares environmental impact and cost of different transportation modes and promotes the benefits of walking, cycling, PT and shared vehicles. More than 2.500 students have already participated to the program and a network of 16 schools has been created.

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address challenges nearby schools: traffic congestion, road accidents To increase sustainable mobility modes used by the schools' community To drive the new generation towards a safer and eco-friendlier behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a concrete and comprehensive strategic plan, to be easily adopted and replicated from a significant number of schools To engage the relevant actors and stakeholders to a common vision for safe and sustainable commuting of the new generation.

Mobility Plans for 11 school districts and the University

At first, the schools which faced major challenges in terms of traffic congestion during rush hour and in safe transportations to/from school were identified. 11 school districts were selected, consisting of 18 primary and secondary education schools. The Mobility Plans developed were incorporated in the upgraded Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the city of Rethymno which is also developed within the framework of the CIVITAS DESTINATIONS project.

The baseline analysis includes the recording of geometric characteristics around the schools, the connection of the school districts to the road network and the access to the available transportation options. Historical data related to road accidents around the schools' area and the university were gathered and analysed. The analysis of the current mobility patterns of students and parents was a critical step for the design phase; questionnaires were distributed to the parents in order to identify their needs, considerations and perceptions. An online survey was also conducted for the University's community to define their needs and transport preferences.

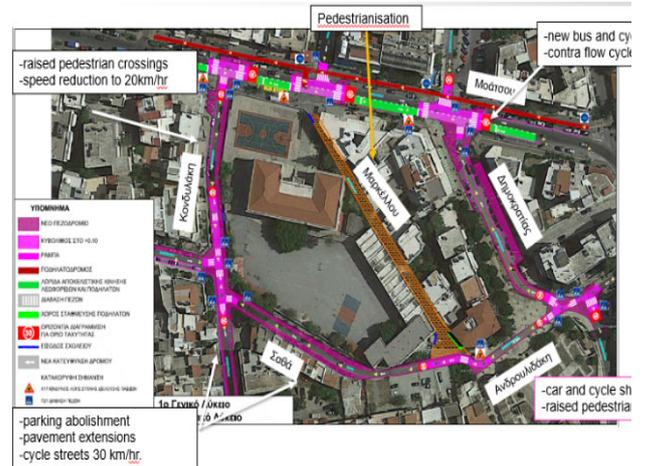
The Mobility Plans for schools included short-term and long-term interventions (0-5 years and 6-15 years respectively) and were included in the overall strategic plan for schools' mobility. The proposed interventions and measures aiming to increase road safety and improve mobility around schools were made available for consultation, together with the SUMP.

Two-year holistic plan to drive behavioural change within schools' communities

A targeted campaign for school communities (pupils, students, teachers and parents) builds the capacity of younger generations to commute safely and use more sustainable modes of transportation (PT, walking, biking and shared routes).

A two-year action plan targeted to the primary, secondary schools' and university's communities was developed, based on extensive research of best practices, including experiential road safety activities, behavioural change activities/games, schools' competition, drawing contests, thematic events, interactive workshops for schools' teachers and students' parents, schools' networking etc.

A teachers' toolkit including guidelines, links to successful schools' initiatives, training materials and



Example of mobility plan for school in the city centre
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Behavioural change experiential activities for road safety and eco-friendly transportation modes
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best practices from EU/national activities towards sustainable mobility was developed and distributed.

Finally, a network of 16 primary schools has been established to facilitate the cooperation, exchange of good practices and materials for sustainable and safe mobility.

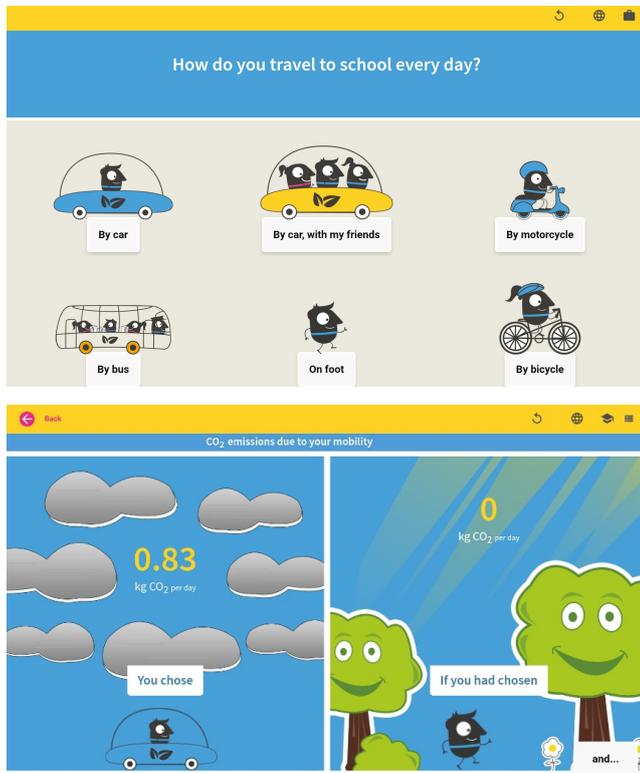
On May 2018, the "Road Safety Week" campaign was organised by the Technical University of Crete, supported by the Municipality of Rethymno. During the week, targeted activities for schools were conducted, in parallel with sustainable mobility workshops, public events and first-aid seminars on road accidents for adults. More than 1200 primary and secondary students participated in:

- Road safety educational activities for primary school students, by the General Regional Police Directorate of Crete.
- Experiential workshops on sustainable mobility modes and the environmental impact of transportation by TUC.

- A behavioural change workshop on decision-making during driving for high school students, by the Laboratory of Health and Road Safety.

A user-friendly application for smartphones/tablets, is designed by the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems Lab, to showcase the potential savings of choosing walking, cycling, PT and shared vehicles.

The app provides calculation of direct CO₂ emissions,



Indicative images/screenshots of app

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giving the opportunity to the user, to compare the environmental impact and financial costs of different transportation modes of his daily routes to/from school or to/from workplace. Thus, the app promotes the environmental and financial benefits of choosing sustainable mobility. It is available in two versions, for children and adults.

During EMW2018, educational activities through interactive games took place in Rethymno, teaching children about the safe way to commute as pedestrians and as cyclists; more than 700 primary school students participated.

Engagement of the schools' communities and local stakeholders

A number of consultation meetings were conducted with the Primary and Secondary Education Directorates and the Department of Education, in order to define the priority

pillars of the strategic plan. On site, one by one meetings with schools' directors and teachers involved in traffic and environmental education for road safety and sustainable mobility campaign took place to present the proposed activities, to exchange views, to record what kind of support they need and to register them to the schools' network. The schools' campaign was designed based also on their consultation.

The working group involved a long list of stakeholders, actively engaged to the campaign:

- Primary and Secondary Education Directorates
- Department of Education of Rethymno Municipality
- Parents and Students Association
- General Regional Police Directorate of Crete
- Road Safety Institute "Panos Mylonas"
- Laboratory of Health and Road Safety (LaHeRS) of the Technological Educational Institute of Crete
- Red Cross - Regional Department; Volunteer Samaritans, Rescuers and Lifeguard Corp.

The key stakeholders' active engagement has been proved fundamental for the campaign's success, enhancing the schools' communities' capacity and motivation towards a safer and environmentally friendly commuting.

Learn more about the CIVITAS Destinations actions in Rethymno:

<http://destinations.rethymno.gr/en/home/>



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Find here more inspiring mobility measures at [CIVITAS DESTINATIOS sites](#).



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