

„Carbon footprint” Lab at Gheorghe Lazăr National College in Bucharest

Our association held a practical lab within „People & Planet: a Common Destiny” project (CSO-LA/2019/416-705) at „Gheorghe Lazăr” National College on May 4th 2023. 28 high school students attended.

Titled „*Carbon footprint – I too want clean air!*” the lab aims to contribute to the training of young people with an emphasis on **sustainability**. These types of actions strive to enhance mobilisation on climate change issues, helping participants to be more active and involved in their communities.

Our visiting professors – Prof. Dr Dana Constantin from The Faculty of Geography of The University of Bucharest and PhD student professor Raul Ilea from Doctoral School "Simion Mehedinti" of The Faculty of Geography (University of Bucharest) – used participatory methodologies to actively and consciously involve students in the process of their own training. The professors gradually immersed participants in the fascinating world of the atmosphere and explained the impact of their daily actions on the environment.

Prof. Dr Dana Constantin and PhD student professor Raul Ilea ingeniously mixed geography, history, chemistry and economics to explain the subtle connections between people’s actions and various meteorological events. One such connection led to the Great Smog of London in 1952 which caused over 4000 deaths. The deadly smog was the result of a combination of industrial pollution and high-pressure weather conditions. Tonnes of sulphur dioxide and other pollutants led to the tragic consequences. The smog prompted Parliament to pass the Clean Air Act four years later, which marked a turning point in the history of environmentalism.

Starting from the carbon footprint definition, the students learned about pollution indicators, the main greenhouse gases and other relevant information. After conquering the realm of theory, the students had fun with an online calculator - economiecircularea.eu/co2, discovering how big their carbon footprint was.

And then came the realm of practice – near the college, in Cismigiu Parc and Queen Elisabeth Blvd and Schitu Magureanu Blvd cross road, the professors helped students make their own air quality measurements. Thus, learning just how big the difference is between heavy traffic areas and green areas air. Upon returning in class, the students reached a few conclusions and ideas for sustainable behaviours, such as:

- Taking showers instead of bath;
- Using less electronic gadgets – phones, tabs, TV etc.;
- Using electric cars;
- Riding bikes, electric or kick scooters more often;



- Using mostly local / seasonal food and reducing the consumption of products with many food miles.

The overall objective of "*People & Planet: a Common Destiny*" project is to promote inclusive sustainable development policies at a *glocal* level and ensure youth citizens active engagement, as change drivers and mobilization for Climate Action and SDGs achievement through the promotion of sustainable lifestyles, behaviours, and practices.

The project is implemented in Romania by Association Assistance and Programs for Sustainable Development – Agenda 21 and Brasov County Council and is co-financed by The European Commission's Development Education and Awareness Raising Programme, DEAR.

