REVIEW ARTICLE

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The world is facing two important problems such as climate change and environmental pollution. Unconscious consumption and industrialization also increase environmental pollution, making nature unable to renew itself. Everyone has a very important role in the regeneration of nature and the sustainability of resources. It will be possible to obtain a more sustainable and clean environment by separating wastes, by using resources more efficiently and economically. United Nations (UN) members met in 2015 and agreed on 17 Global Goals by 2030 for 3 key issues "eliminating extreme poverty, fighting inequality and injustice, fixing climate change.". It is expected that these global goals for sustainable development will be realized for all people in all countries. It has become a necessity for institutions to place sustainable development and sustainability in their management policies for the future of the world. This study investigates how European Commission has adapted to the sustainability process and UN's 17 Global Goals in Higher Education through examining its corporate sustainability strategies, and its relationship between its stakeholders. The European Green Deal Communication is the new growth strategy of European Union (UN) and recognises the key role of schools, training institutions and universities to engage with pupils, parents, and the wider community on the changes needed for a successful transition to become climate neutral by 2050. European Commission has internalized UN goals, has determined sustainability strategies in line with especially Goal 12 and Goal 13, has followed the European Green Deal missons and ECHE principles, and has implemented practices such as Erasmus Without Paper Network, EWP Dashboard and Green Travel. In this research, it has been revealed that the corporate sustainability strategies of the European Commission are in line with the objectives of the UN's 17 Global Goals, not just on paper, and become widespread with various supported projects.

Keywords: Corporate Sustainability, Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change.

Introduction

We are faced with a new world order in which it is a priority to include environmental and social problems and climate change in strategies. For a more livable and sustainable world, governments, institutions and individuals need to fight together for economic, environmental and social sustainability. The concept of the Triple Bottom Line is "a sustainability framework that examines a company's social, environmental and economic impact." With this term, it is aimed to encourage institutions to follow and manage economic (not just financial), social and environmental added value. The concept, which we encounter as 3P or 3BL, represents social (People), environmental (Planet) and economic (Profit) impact (Elkington, 1997). Institutions are expected to act with a corporate sustainability strategy towards all their stakeholders, including their employees, and the environment.

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria are a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to screen potential investments. Environmental criteria consider how a company performs as a steward of nature. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights (Investopedia, 2021). A successful corporate sustainability practice requires the organization to manage the environmental factors that occur within the framework of its activities, to establish a constructive and two-way communication infrastructure with all its stakeholders, and to establish the corporate governance structure necessary to manage all these issues.

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The Erasmus+ program, coordinated by the European Commission, is a comprehensive program that pursues both cultural and educational exchanges and increasingly involves more individuals and countries. There are some primary requirements to perform Erasmus+ mobility physically, such as travel and paperwork procedure. These requirements are likely to induce some environemental challenges and threat the climate change. How the European Commission is coping with environmental challenges and whether the European Commission is adapting to the sustainability goals of the United Nations are the main questions of this research.

The European Green Deal and Erasmus+ Program Guide were analyzed by content analysis method, and the existence of corporate sustainability strategies of the European Commission was tried to be determined. Content analysis consists of a systematic analysis of oral, written and visual materials. Content analysis in the field of social science provides a systematic methodology for examining and making sense of raw information in archive documents and mass media. The purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data (Demirci & Köseli, 2009: 344; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016: 242). This study also presents qualitative information gathered from the projects supported by the European Commission such as Erasmus Paperless (EWP) and EWP Dashboard that can be associated with sustainability.

Corporate Sustainability

Sustainability is existed as a three-legged table consisting of the environment, the economy, and society, or as a dualistic relationship between human beings and the ecosystem they live (Hardi & Zdan, 1997; Morelli, 2011: 3).

Sustainability is a concept that covers social, environmental and economic policies, concerns humanity and the natural world, and is responsible for all countries in the world.

The concept of sustainability was first used in the book "Bluepirnt for Survival", published in England in 1972, to mean the future of humanity. The concept, which was used to realize the non-growth economy in the USA in 1974, was used by the United Nations (UN) in 1978 within the terminology of "eco-development". Since 1950, six distinct but interrelated types of thinking have emerged prominently in discussing phenomena such as increasing population, resource use, and pressure on the environment. Each of these types of thinking has contributed, in recent years, to "sustainability" concepts. All of them were developed before the term sustainable was used. Long before the concept of sustainability was used in the context of the interrelationship between humans and nature, it was used by ecologists to describe human activities – particularly those related to 'development' (Kidd, 1992).

The United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Today, there are almost 140 developing countries in the world seeking ways of meeting their development needs, but with the increasing threat of climate change, concrete efforts must be made to ensure development today does not negatively affect future generations, in 1987 (United Nations, 1987). The high-participation UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Conference), organized by the United Nations in 1992 and consisting of representatives of 178 governments, a large number of heads of state and more than 1000 NGOs, civil society and campaign groups, has been an important step in sustainability and sustainable development. The Rio Conference has been an important conference where sustainability has come to the top of the global political agenda and the way development is achieved in both the North and the South has become permanent. The Rio conference initiated a series of high-level conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification in line with sustainable development goals (Scoones, 2007: 591).

There are also some opinions questioning whether the United Nations' Sustainability studies are valuable or not. These views are critical of the Sustainability of the United Nations on issues such as the importance of individual freedoms, belief in the effectiveness of the free market, great distrust of governments, the concern of sacrificing national sovereignty to international governance (Portney, 2015: 65).

The World Bank's global program on sustainability promotes the use of high-quality data and analytics on natural capital, ecosystem services and sustainability to better inform decisions made by governments, the private sector and financial institutions. The World Bank’s Global Program on Sustainability (GPS) aims to integrate environmental and other sustainability considerations into public and private decisions, with providing policy makers and the financial sector by the necessary metrics and tools. This approach involves looking beyond GDP and traditional financial metrics for including accounting on environmental risks and opportunities and valuing natural capital and ecosystem services (World Bank).

Sustainable development, similar to the concept of sustainability, is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. 17 Goals within the scope of 3 key issues “Eliminating extreme poverty, Combating inequality and injustice, Correcting climate change” were adopted in 2015 by UN Member States for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 17 Goals of the United Nations “No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Good Health and Well-Being; Quality Education; Gender Equality; Clean Water and Sanitation; Affordable and Clean Energy; Decent Work and Economic Growth; Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; Reduced Inequalities; Sustainable Cities and Communities; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Climate Action, Life Below Water; Life on Land; Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; Partnerships for the Goals” draws attention to many important problems of the World. Worldwide consumption and production (a driving force of the global economy) rest on the use of the natural environment and resources in a way that continues to have destructive impacts on the globe. Economic and social progress over the last century has been accompanied by environmental degradation that is endangering the very systems on which our future development (indeed, our very survival) depends. Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns is about doing more and better with less. It is also about decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable lifestyles. Sustainable consumption and production can also contribute substantially to poverty alleviation and the transition towards low-carbon and green economies. And Climate change is affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, and weather events are becoming more extreme. Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change imply saving lives and livelihoods requires urgent action to address both the pandemic and the climate emergency. The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, through appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework (United Nations).

In recent years, many institutions have been operating with a greater awareness of corporate sustainability, not being indifferent to the problems experienced by the society and the universe they live in. Institutions that internalize 17 articles of the United Nations, determine sustainability strategies in line with these goals, implement practices and publish sustainability reports on their websites gain the respect of all their stakeholders. This reality is also clearly revealed in various studies. The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer report found that people expect institutions to make a positive impact on their living conditions. Similarly, it was demonstrated in Accenture Strategy research that consumers gravitate towards organizations with good practices for humans and the universe. The Zeno Strength of Porpuse Study revealed that consumers will reward strong institutions that have a positive impact on people's lives and act accordingly (Edelman, 2021; Accenture, 2019; Zeno Group 2020).

A successful corporate sustainability practice requires the organization to manage the environmental factors that occur within the framework of its activities, to establish a constructive and two-way communication infrastructure with all its stakeholders, and to establish the corporate governance structure necessary to manage all these issues.

Environmental Sustainability

Protecting the environment, which is one of the 3 dimensions of sustainability (environment, economy and society), is a responsibility shared by all nations. World economies and organizations are transforming to minimize their environmental impact and adapt to environmental sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability is defined by Morelli as meeting the resource and services needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the ecosystems that provide them, and more specifically, as a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity. (2011: 6)

Healthy ecosystems and the natural environment are essential for the survival of humans and other organisms. It is possible to reduce negative human impact and ensure environmental sustainability through methods such as environmentally friendly chemical engineering, environmental resource management and environmental protection.

Climate Change

Scientists have developed an understanding of the Earth's climate system through years of observations, theory development and model building. It is known with high confidence that climate change is happening today and is the result of greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity. Impacts from climate change are already being felt today and will continue to increase in the future. Action to limit future global greenhouse gas emissions will help restrict future changes in the climate system. Geological records stretching back millions of years indicate a number of large variations in Earth's past climate. These have been caused by many natural factors, including changes in the sun, volcanoes, Earth's orbit and CO2 levels. But comprehensive assessment by scientists shows that it is extremely likely that human activity has been the dominant cause of warming since the mid-20th Century, with best estimates indicating the humans have contributed 100% of the observed warming between today's climate conditions and those of the 1850-1900 period, an approximation of pre-industrial levels. The bulk of emissions derive from our demand for energy. The largest contributor is carbon dioxide (CO2), emitted when fossil fuels are burnt to meet those demands. There are also other emissions attached to industrial processes and agriculture (Climate Change Committee).

Climate change is taking place in ways such as global warming, rising sea levels, floods, heat waves, stronger and more frequent storms and droughts. According to Butt et al., one of the most important factors in climate change is carbon emissions. Carbon emissions need to be controlled in environmentally sustainable ways (2012: 642).

European Perspective

The EU and the United Nations are natural partners in the efforts to shape a safer and better world for all countries. The United Nations 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) intended to apply universally to all countries. World leaders committed to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Sustainability is also a core principle of the Treaty on European Union and a priority objective for the Union's internal and external policies. EU interests to play a leading role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda globally through its external action. The 2030 Agenda, together Paris Agreement on Climate Change, are the roadmap to a better world and the global framework for international cooperation on sustainable development and its economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions. The importance of consistently progressing towards the SDGs and engaging with partner countries and civil society as well as the Union's representation at high-level international fora, including the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, is crucial to advance the EU's commitment to and leadership in sustainable development, as well as addressing the impact of COVID-19 globally (European Commission, 2022).

On 30 January 2019, the European Commission presented the Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030" which takes stock of the progress made in Europe and identifies the necessary priorities when moving forward: developing a fully circular economy, creating a sustainable food system, greening energy, mobility and the built environment, and gearing all their horizontal policy tools, from education and digitisation to finance and taxation, towards the sustainability transition. The Reflection Paper highlights that there is no sustainability without social sustainability, which is why it is of fundamental importance to ensure that the sustainability transition is socially fair, for the benefit of all and leaving no one behind. The first Joint Synthesis Report on the implementation of the European Consensus on Development, , shows how the EU and its Member States have advanced sustainable development through their development cooperation with partner countries, whilst strengthening their partnerships with the United Nations and other multilateral organisations, civil society and the private sector. For instance, it reports significant progress in helping reducing extreme poverty through more joint-up EU action, in promoting gender equality, and in improving health services for millions of people across the world. It also highlights that the EU and its Member States contributed over €20 billion in 2017 alone to support developing countries in their efforts to tackle and adapt to climate change. EU support to sustainable energy is on course to achieving energy access for about 40 million people, with annual CO2 emissions savings of around 15 million tons (Gordejuela & Wunder, 2019).

European Green Deal

Climate change and environmental degradation are an existential threat to Europe and the world. The European Commission adopted a set of proposals to make the EU's climate, energy, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. The European Green Deal aims to transform the EU

into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy and to ensure (European Commission, 2019):

- no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050
- economic growth decoupled from resource use
- no person and no place left behind

Making Europe the first climate neutral continent in the world is the EU's goal.

The European Green Deal aim to improve the well-being and health of citizens and future generations by (European Commission):

Transforming economy and societies

Climate change is the biggest challenge of our times. And it is an opportunity to build a new economic model. The European Green Deal set the blueprint for this transformational change. All 27 EU Member States committed to turning the EU into the first climate neutral continent by 2050. To get there, they pledged to reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. This can create new opportunities for innovation and investment and jobs, as well as reduce emissions, create jobs and growth, address energy poverty, reduce external energy dependency, improve health and wellbeing. At the same time, it can ensure there are opportunities for everyone, supporting vulnerable citizens by tackling inequality and energy poverty, and strengthening the competitiveness of European companies.

Making transport sustainable for all

EU transition to greener mobility can offer clean, accessible and affordable transport even in the most remote areas. The Commission also promotes the growth of the market for zero- and low- emissions vehicles. In particular, it seeks to ensure that citizens have the infrastructure they need to charge these vehicles, for short and long journeys. In addition, from 2026, road transport can be covered by emissions trading, putting a price on pollution, stimulating cleaner fuel use, and re-investing in clean technologies. The Commission is also proposing carbon pricing for the aviation sector, which benefited from an exception until now. It is also proposing to promote sustainable aviation fuels – with an obligation for planes to take on sustainable blended fuels for all departures from EU airports. To ensure a fair contribution from the maritime sector to the effort to decarbonise our economy, the Commission proposes to extend carbon pricing to this sector. The Commission can also set targets for major ports to serve vessels with onshore power, reducing the use of polluting fuels that also harm local air quality.

Leading the third industrial revolution

The green transition presents a major opportunity for European industry by creating markets for clean technologies and products. These new proposals can have an impact across entire value chains in sectors such as energy and transport, and construction and renovation, helping create sustainable, local and well-paid jobs across Europe. The electrification of the economy and the greater use of renewable energy are expected to generate higher employment in these sectors. Increasing the energy efficiency of buildings can also create jobs in construction, with local labour in higher demand. EU want to preserve our climate ambition by avoiding that efforts by their industry to cut emissions are undermined by unfair competition from abroad. Therefore, the Commission proposes a mechanism to ensure that, even when they are from countries with less strict climate rules, companies importing into the EU have to pay a carbon price as well.

Cleaning our energy system

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 requires higher shares of renewable energy and greater energy efficiency. The Commission proposes to increase the binding target of renewable sources in the EU's energy mix to 40%. The proposals promote the uptake of renewable fuels, such as hydrogen in industry and transport, with additional targets. In addition, reducing energy consumption is essential to bring down both emissions and energy costs for consumers and industry. The Commission proposes to increase energy efficiency targets at EU level and make them binding, to achieve by 2030 an overall reduction of 36-39% for final and primary energy consumption. The tax system for energy products must also support the green transition by giving the right incentives. The Commission proposes to align the minimum tax rates for heating and transport with the climate objectives, while mitigating the social impact and supporting vulnerable citizens.

Renovating buildings for greener lifestyles

Renovating homes and buildings can save energy, protect against extremes of heat or cold and tackle energy poverty. The new Social Climate Fund can support EU citizens most affected or at risk of energy or mobility poverty. It can help mitigate the costs for those most

exposed to changes, to ensure that the transition is fair and leaves no one behind. It can provide EUR 72.2 billion over 7 years in funding for renovation of buildings, access to zero and low emission mobility, or even income support. In addition to homes, public buildings must also be renovated to use more renewable energy, and to be more energy efficient. The Commission proposes to:

- require Member States to renovate at least 3% of the total floor area of all public buildings annually
- set a benchmark of 49% of renewables in buildings by 2030
- require Member States to increase the use of renewable energy in heating and cooling by +1.1 percentage points each year, until 2030

Working with nature to protect our planet and health

Nature is an important ally in the fight against climate change. Restoring nature and enabling biodiversity to thrive again offers a quick and cheap solution to absorb and store carbon. The Commission proposes therefore to restore Europe's forests, soils, wetlands and peatlands. This can increase absorption of CO2 and can make our environment more resilient to climate change. A circular and sustainable management of these resources can improve our living conditions, maintain a healthy environment, create quality jobs, provide sustainable energy resources. Bioenergy contributes to the phase-out of fossil fuels and the decarbonisation of the EU economy. But it must be used sustainably. The Commission proposes strict new criteria to avoid unsustainable forest harvesting and to protect areas of high-biodiversity value.

Boosting global climate action

The European Green Deal has already set a positive example and led major international partners to set their own target dates for climate neutrality. With investment in renewable energy technologies, EU is developing expertise and products that can also benefit the rest of the world. With the shift to green transport, EU can create world leading companies which can serve a growing global market. By working with their international partners, EU can reduce emissions together in maritime transport and aviation around the world.

European Commission

Environment and climate action are key priorities for the EU now and in the future. The European Green Deal Communication is the European new growth strategy and recognises the key role of schools, training institutions and universities to engage with pupils, parents, and the wider community on the changes needed for a successful transition to become climate neutral by 2050.

The Programme therefore be a key instrument for the building of knowledge, skills and attitudes on climate change and sustainable development both within the European Union and beyond. The Erasmus+ programme can increase the number of mobility opportunities in green forward-looking fields, which foster the development of competences, enhance career prospects and engage participants in subject areas, which are strategic for the sustainable growth of the planet, with special attention to rural development (sustainable farming, management of natural resources, soil protection, bio-agriculture). Moreover, Erasmus+, with mobility at its core, should strive for carbon-neutrality by promoting sustainable transport modes and more responsible behavior.

Since environment and fight against global warming will become a horizontal priority for the selection of projects, priority will be given to projects aimed at developing competences in various environmental sustainability-relevant sectors, including those in the framework of the contribution from education and culture to sustainable development goals, developing green sectorial skills strategies and methodologies, future-oriented curricula that better meet the needs of individuals, as well as initiatives that support the planned approaches of the participating organisations regarding environmental sustainability. The Programme supports the use of innovative practices to make learners, staff and youth workers true factors of change (e.g. save resources, reduce energy use and waste, compensate carbon footprint emissions, opt for sustainable food and mobility choices, etc.). Priority will also be given to projects that – through education, training, youth and sport activities - enable behavioural changes for individual preferences, cultural values and awareness for sustainable development, consumption habits, and lifestyles.

Therefore, organisations and participants involved should strive to incorporate green practices in all projects through an environmental-friendly approach when designing the activity, which will encourage them to discuss and learn about environmental issues, to reflect about local actions and to come up with alternative greener ways of implementing their activities.

Platforms such as eTwinning and EPALE will continue to produce support materials and facilitate the exchange of effective educational practices and policies on environmental and

sustainability matters. Erasmus+ is also a powerful instrument to reach out to and engage with a wide spectrum of players in the society (schools, universities, VET providers, youth and sport organisations, NGOs, local and regional authorities, civil society organisations, etc.).

Erasmus for Higher Education

The objective of the “Mobility Project For Higher Education Students And Staff” is to contribute to establishing a european education area as well as strengthen the link between education and research, to foster the critical thinking skills of students from all disciplines, and at all levels (including bachelor, master and doctoral levels). The objective is also to foster employability, social inclusion, civic engagement, innovation and environmental sustainability in Europe and beyond by enabling any student to have the opportunity to study or train abroad as part of their studies in order to:

- expose students to different views, knowledge, teaching and research methods as well as work practices in their study field;
- develop their transversal skills such as communication, language, problem solving, inter-cultural skills and research skills;
- develop their forward looking skills, such as digital skills, that will enable them to tackle the challenges of today and tomorrow;
- facilitate personal development such as the ability to adapt to new situations and self-confidence.

The objective is also to enable any staff, including staff from enterprises, to teach or train abroad as part of their professional development in order to:

- share their expertise;
- experience new teaching environments;
- acquire new innovative pedagogical and curriculum design skills and digital skills;
- connect with their peers abroad to develop common activities to achieve the programme’s objectives;
- exchange good practices and enhance cooperation between higher education institutions;
- better prepare students for the world of work by involving staff from enterprises in courses.

In addition, the objective is to foster the development of transnational and transdisciplinary curricula as well as innovative ways of learning and teaching, including online collaboration, research-based learning and challenge-based approaches with the objective of tackling societal challenges.

In line with the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), higher education institutions must promote environmentally friendly practices in all activities related to the Programme. Promoting the use of sustainable means of transport for mobility, taking active steps when organising events, conferences and meetings related to Erasmus+ mobility in a more environmentally friendly manner, and replacing paper-based administrative processes with digital processes (in line with the standards of the European Student Card Initiative). Higher education institutions should also raise awareness amongst all participants about various measures they can take while abroad to reduce the carbon and environmental footprints of their mobilities and monitor progress towards achieving more sustainable student and staff mobilities (European Commission, 2021).

Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) and EWP Dashboard

The European Commission has announced that it will make it compulsory to share the movements that will take place within the scope of Erasmus+ through the "Paperless Erasmus Network" (EWP Network) and "EWP Dashboard" as of 2021. By means of the "Paperless Erasmus" network, Erasmus+ movements can be tracked and related data can be shared securely between Higher Education Institutions.

The use of the "Erasmus Without Paper" network by Higher Education Institutions will become mandatory according to the following schedule:

2021: Online management of learning agreements.

2022: Managing interagency agreements.

2023: Sharing of student admissions and transcripts related to student mobility.

The "Paperless Erasmus Project" aims to provide secure data exchange electronically. One of the most important benefits is that it will reduce the paper-based workflow in Higher Education Institutions. The most important benefits of the "Paperless Erasmus Project":

- More inclusive and participatory,
- Less bureaucratic processes,
- Easier access,

- More data security,
- More environmentally friendly.

The Erasmus Without Paper project plays a central role in the European Commission's European Student Card Initiative, a key initiative of the European Education Area. As part of this initiative, the Commission has announced that all higher education institutions participating in the Erasmus+ programme will gradually have to start using the Erasmus Without Paper Network/Dashboard to exchange student mobility data with other higher education institutions participating in the new programme.

Managing Erasmus+ mobility can be a cumbersome, complex and costly process. The Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) initiative uses the latest digital technology to pave the way to manage mobilities more efficiently. This allows Higher Education Institutions to exchange information in the context of student mobility swiftly and securely. In doing so EWP supports replacing paper-based workflows by digital ones.

EWP consists of two chief components:

- the Erasmus Without Paper Network that interconnects a multitude of student information systems (whether individual universities or third-party providers which represent multiple institutions) through the use of APIs (i.e. connectors between the Network and the users)
- the Erasmus Dashboard that provides a web solution for exchanging student data electronically for HEIs lacking the required SIS software.

This Knowledge Base focuses exclusively on the EWP network (component 1) and the connection to it. The Dashboard (component 2) is the subject of a different knowledge base (see the navigation on the left).

The Erasmus Dashboard (also known as the Erasmus Without Paper Dashboard) is available to all Higher Education Institutions in Europe and was designed specifically for institutions that are currently not using any digital solution to manage their Erasmus mobility management. Already, around 3000 Erasmus Charter holders for Higher Education have requested access to the Dashboard and you can register here to explore how it supports your mobility management. It is a free-to-use tool providing you with the basic functionality needed to manage the mobility processes of Erasmus+. It also connects to the European Commission's Erasmus+ Mobile App, allowing you to communicate with the incoming and outgoing students directly via the App, and lets you manage the Online Learning Agreements. The tool has been developed with the support of the European Commission and can be used as the official tool to manage your Erasmus+ mobilities. Since February 2020 the EWP Dashboard also hosts an EWP Inter-Institutional Agreement Manager which allows for the establishment of Inter-Institutional Agreements.

Green Travel Erasmus

Green travelling can be considered as an individual's responsibility to travel by giving back to nature and the local community of the target destination for sustainable future. In the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, having in mind the needs for sustainable goals and greener practices, the European Commission has established a top-up amount for green travel support in different key actions. Meaning that individuals who choose to take transport methods considered to be more sustainable can receive more grant money for their travels and up to 4 days of additional travel days (if the travel days are relevant for the key action). The train is the best option for sustainable way of travelling. In terms of getting around, places can also visited by using an electric car, a bike, a scooter, or even better on foot (ESN, 2021).

Erasmus+ in line with the European Green Deal;

- encourages participants to travel in lower carbon vehicles as an alternative to airplane
- project activities aim to equip people with the understanding and skills necessary to create sustainable societies, lifestyles and economies

Students, recent graduates and staff who do not receive travel support can opting for green travel. In this case, they receive a single contribution of 50 EUR as a top-up amount to the individual support and up to 4 days of additional individual support to cover travel days for a return trip, if relevant. In Table 1, travel distances, standard travel grants and green travel grants can be seen in detail.

Table 1

Travel grants for students and staff

Travel distances	**In case of standard travel**	**In case of green travel**
Between 10 and 99 KM:	23 EUR per participant	-
Between 100 and 499 KM:	180 EUR per participant	210 EUR per participant
Between 500 and 1999 KM:	275 EUR per participant	320 EUR per participant
Between 2000 and 2999 KM:	360 EUR per participant	410 EUR per participant
Between 3000 and 3999 KM:	530 EUR per participant	610 EUR per participant
Between 4000 and 7999 KM:	820 EUR per participant	-
8000 KM or more	1500 EUR per participant	-

Conclusion

There are some global challenges such as climate change and environmental pollution. Sustainability is usually defined as meeting our needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. The future has to be sustainable. We all are responsible for environmental sustainability. We have to collaborate and act together. Otherwise it is impossible to solve the problem. United Nations met in 2015 and agreed on 17 Global Goals by 2030 for 3 key issues “Eliminating extreme poverty, Fighting inequality and injustice, Fixing climate change.” Many institutions have been operating with a greater awareness of corporate sustainability. Institutions determine sustainability strategies in line with 17 goals of UN, implement practices and publish sustainability reports on their websites gain the respect of all their stakeholders.

In this study, the European Green Deal and the Erasmus+ Program Guide and the Erasmus Paperless Network and EWP Dashboard projects were analyzed in the context of corporate sustainability. It has been seen that environment and climate action is among the current and future priorities of the European Union (EU) and the European Green Deal Communication is the European new growth strategy and recognises the key role of schools, training institutions and universities to engage with pupils, parents, and the wider community on the changes needed for a successful transition to become climate neutral by 2050. European Commission has internalized UN goals, has determined sustainability strategies in line with especially Goal 12 and Goal 13, has followed the European Green Deal missons and ECHE principles, and has implemented practices such as Erasmus Without Paper Network, EWP Dashboard and Green Travel. All this clearly demonstrates that the European Commission has important principles on corporate sustainability to tackle environmental challenges and climate change.In line with the principles of the ECHE, higher education institutions promoting the use of sustainable means of transport for mobility, taking active steps when organising events, conferences and meetings related to Erasmus+ mobility in a more environmentally friendly manner, and replacing paper-based administrative processes with digital processes. Higher education institutions are also raise awareness amongst all participants about various measures they can take while abroad to reduce the carbon and environmental footprints of their mobilities and monitor progress towards achieving more sustainable student and staff mobilities. For these sustainability purposes, European Commission has some significant projects for Higher Institutions which are called Erasmus Without Paper (Paperless Erasmus Project), EWP Dashboard and Green Travel. The Erasmus Without Paper and also EWP Dashboard aims to provide secure data exchange electronically. One of the most important benefits is that it will reduce the paper-based workflow in Higher Education Institutions. EWP offers a software for institutions without student information systems. Higher Education Institutions (HEI) are strongly encouraged to exchange digital Inter Institutional Agreements (IIA) as soon as possible Green Travel aims to encourage participants to travel in lower carbon vehicles as an alternative to airplane, and project activities aim to equip people with the understanding and skills necessary to create sustainable societies, lifestyles and economies.

In this research, it has been revealed that the corporate sustainability strategies of the European Commission are in line with the objectives of the UN’s 17 Global Goals, not just on paper, and become widespread with various supported projects

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