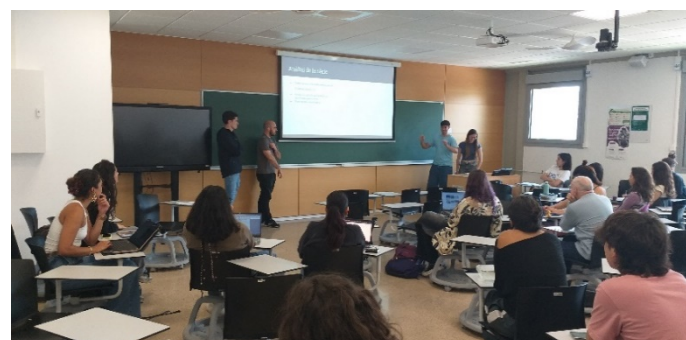



SP-DS03-IN06

IMPROVE THE WASTE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AT FACULTY LEVEL

University

The objective of this activity has been to monitor the evolution of waste generated in the Faculty of Political Science and Sociology, in order to make its volume and typologies visible, with the aim of generating a reflection on the environmental impacts of the Faculty and on how to manage them. It was also intended to contribute to the replacement of the current waste garbage cans by selective collection points, more in line with current legislation and trends, as well as to provoke a debate on the issue of waste. Pilot program for selective waste collection at the faculty to identify challenges and improvements in the collection and sorting process, while encouraging students, teachers, and staff to adopt sustainable habits.



Resources		
Human	Time	Costs
		

- ♦ The purchase of the new waste bins (it was a long and complex bureaucratic process)
- ♦ Getting the Faculty and the technicians to agree on the best time to make the change.
- ♦ Recruiting student volunteers to monitor the waste (in two rounds, before and after the change).

Relevant difficulties

However, the main difficulty has been involving the faculty in the process, as it has not been possible to convince them to attend the deliberative meetings on the topic. Not only that, but many of the faculty members still do not sort waste for recycling (which is why some action is planned in the future to force them to do so).

These were foreseeable difficulties, but they have not prevented the intervention, which has been very successful from the perspective of the students and the Faculty.

Individual Competences	Collective Competences	Technical-material Competences
<p>According to the evidence collected (SCT3, 4, 5, and 6, and the respective brief surveys and observation protocols), individual competences have been strengthened in the following ways:</p> <p>Students report having greater knowledge of what waste separation and recycling entail. On the one hand, the group of student volunteers who separated and weighed waste during the monitoring activity we organised were able to learn about and directly experience the type of waste generated at the Faculty, as well as the process of its management by the cleaning company. On the other hand, the rest of the students who participated in the waste discussions were able to learn and reflect on the different responsibilities of companies and users, as well as on the importance of reducing the amount of things we use. They also reflected on how difficult it is to do so. Furthermore, the intervention has helped change the habits of students and teachers, who, following the changes in the waste management system, are forced to travel to selective collection points and consider where to dispose of each piece of waste (something that is not always easy, as some items can be confused).</p>	<p>The intervention has involved replacing numerous undifferentiated wastebaskets with a few selective collection points (there is one per floor, with a container for each type of waste). This has led to the implementation of new internal regulations, since garbage disposal requires new guidelines, which all students and faculty must follow. The data collected shows that the majority of students already follow the new rules, while a significant portion of the faculty has not yet adopted them.</p> <p>Furthermore, it should be noted that, although the system change was funded with resources from the ECF4CLIM project, after observing its operation, the University has decided to replicate the model in other Faculties. Thus, the pilot test carried out at the Faculty will serve to modify waste management throughout the university. Finally, it is important to highlight that the various workshops held with students to discuss the evolution of waste and its management have provided a very interesting participatory and deliberative space, which has served to involve students and, ultimately, has been key to the rectorate taking the intervention seriously (and deciding to replicate it in other faculties).</p>	<p>This intervention involved replacing the Faculty's wastebaskets with new containers suitable for selective collection. The new containers were installed at the request of students, designed in conjunction with university technicians, and funded through the ECF4CLIM project. In addition, scales were used to weigh the waste during the monitoring process.</p>

Sustainability competences in place in the intervention



Engagement

To involve students in this activity, a call was made among those enrolled in the training course (Ecosocial Crisis Cycle) to see who wanted to participate. We managed to get 6 students to sign up in the first round and 8 in the second. Furthermore, the results were discussed in two forums: first, in the aforementioned training cycle, with the remaining enrolled students (56); and second, within SCT5 and 6, with the students who were part of these SCTs.

However, it was practically impossible to involve teachers in this intervention. It was only possible to discuss its development and results with the teachers participating in SCT5 and 6.

It is observed that this type of intervention can be very interesting for groups of students concerned about sustainability, while it is not so easy to involve teachers, who have different rhythms and agendas and seem to prefer not to mingle with the students.



The intervention allowed students to reflect on the waste cycle. Normally, they only see the waste in the bin, which magically disappears the next day. Participating in waste monitoring allowed them to map the path waste takes

Connections

through the different stages, until its final disposal (learning about the companies involved, recycling criteria, the responsibilities of the different actors, etc.).

The students discovered that most of the Faculty's waste came from vending machines, which prompted a reflection on the university's shortcomings when contracting these vending services (products with less packaging could be required).



Change

The question of "change" has been ambivalent. On the one hand, participants promoted a change in the Faculty's waste management system. Furthermore, they were able to compare the environmental, economic, and social impacts before and after the change (and observed the savings generated). However, on the other hand, in the discussions held, students were made aware of the difficulties in reducing waste volume, as it is something over which users have little influence, as it depends on the industrial and commercial design of a business environment and a global market. This observation has led to a certain disenchantment among students, who perceive that they have little ability to influence the commercial decisions behind waste generation.



Action

The intervention has promoted actions and behaviours among the Faculty (especially students, and to a lesser extent, faculty). The implementation of a new waste management system has forced people to change their waste disposal behaviour.

Furthermore, the students who participated in the monitoring activities, both before and after the change in model, have learned to work in groups. Under the professor's instructions, they have organised themselves to carry out the task of separating and weighing waste for three weeks in each round.