Ref.: 2025-02-D-15-en-3
Orig.:EN

European Schools' Mobility Plan

Board of Governors from 9 to 11 April 2025

Working groups: Seconded and Locally Recruited Teachers (Joint WG) and Administrative and Ancillary Staff (AAS WG) Meetings on: • Joint WG 2 October 2024, 22 January and 19 February 2025 • AAS WG 7 October 2024 and 29 January 2025 Proposal: 1. Implementing a Reimbursement Policy for Public Transport and a Bicycle Allowance. 2. Encouraging Schools to Promote Sustainable Commuting Habits Outcome: The members of the working group supported the proposals, except for the European Commission, which expressed concerns about reimbursing amounts that exceed their current policy for their own staff. Specifically, the EC reimburses only 50% of public transport fees and does not provide any reimbursement for cycling to work.	Ref.:2025-02-D-15-en-1
Budgetary Committee Meetings on 11 and 12 March 2025 Proposal: The Budgetary Committee is invited to provide its opinion on the proposed reimbursement policy, which includes full reimbursement for public transport fees and a bicycle allowance for commuting for LRT and AAS staff. Entry into force: 1 January 2026 Outcome: The Budgetary Committee expressed a positive opinion on the European Schools Mobility Report with the reservations of the European Commission, EPO, Netherlands, France and Germany.	Ref.: 2025-02-D-15-en-2

Board of Governors Meeting on: 9-11 April 2025 Proposal: The Board of Governors is invited to provide its opinion on the proposed reimbursement policy, which includes the shared reimbursement for public transport fees and a bicycle allowance for commuting for the European Schools System (ESS) staff. Outcome:	Ref.: 2025-02-D-15-en-3
Final version approved by: at the meeting on:	Ref.:

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Abbreviations used in the text:

AAS	Administrative and Ancillary Staff
LRT	Locally Recruited Teachers
ESS	European Schools System
OSG	Office of the Secretary General
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide

I. Context

In the context of the European Parliament report and the Action Plan "Reflection on the Future of the European Schools' System" the Board of Governors has mandated the Seconded and LRT (Joint) Working Group and the AAS Working Group to develop a mobility plan for all categories of staff for the next Board of Governors meeting in April 2025. This initiative aligns with the European Commission's Green Deal, which targets a 55% reduction in CO_2 emissions by 2030. The plan seeks to improve the efficiency, affordability, accessibility, and environmental sustainability of European Schools System transportation.

During the Joint and AAS working groups on 2 and 7 October 2024 it was decided the first steps to draft the European Schools Mobility plan:

- **The Survey:** From 16 October until the 8 November, it has been launched a survey to the whole system to understand the commuting habits of ESS staff and identify areas for improvement.

- **The report:** The 11 November a info session was conducted to guide the schools on how to complete their own Mobility Report. A "template report" was created to obtain as much as possible harmonised reports across the ESS.

- **Executive Summary:** Document to summarise the results of the received reports.

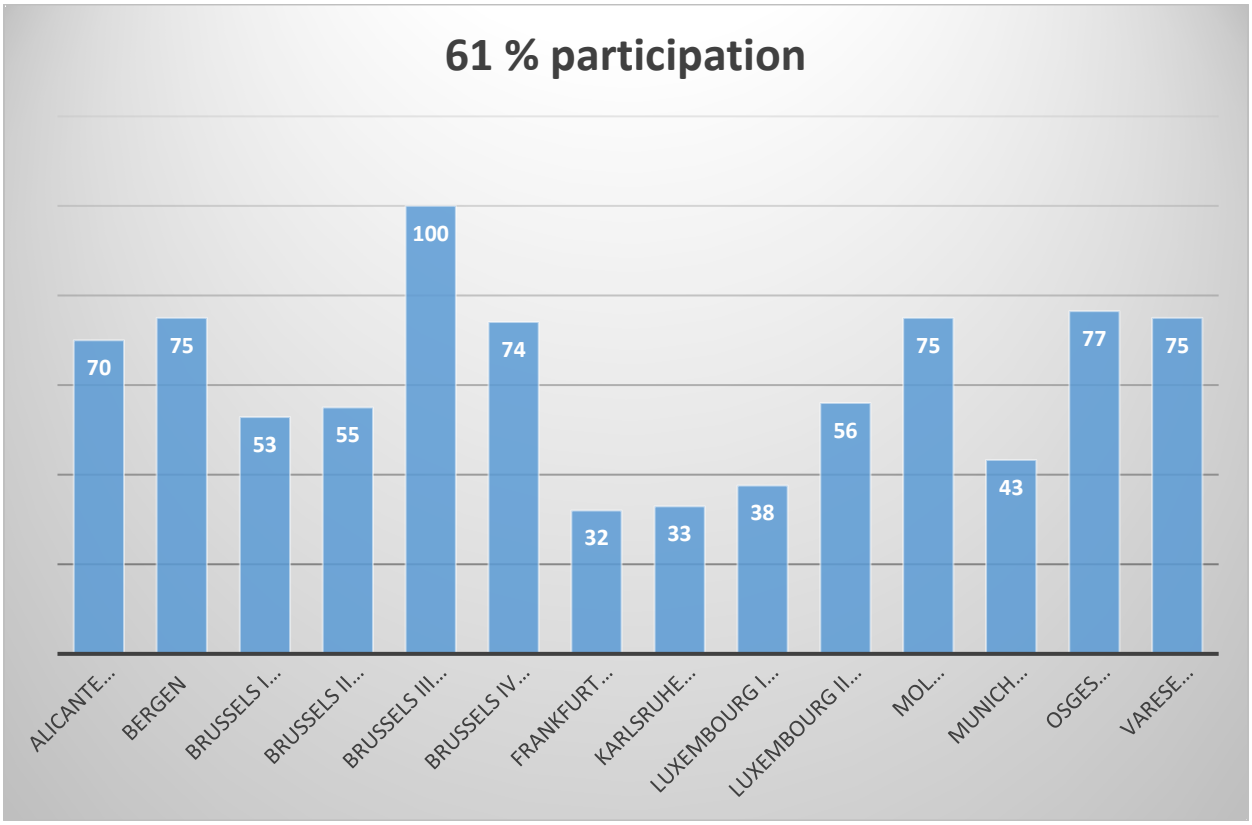
The proposal has been discussed in the Joint Working Group on 22 January and 19 de February and AAS Working Group on 29 January.

The final document will be presented for the Board of Governors' decision on 9 and 11 April 2025.

It is important to highlight that, following the decision made by the Board of Governors, a memorandum will be necessary to address all implications related to specific national legislation in the host countries. This includes considerations regarding potential issues with payroll, limitations on commuting reimbursement amounts, and any other relevant legal matters. The memorandum will provide a detailed framework to ensure compliance with national legislation.

II. Participation to the survey

The average participation rate for the survey is 61%.

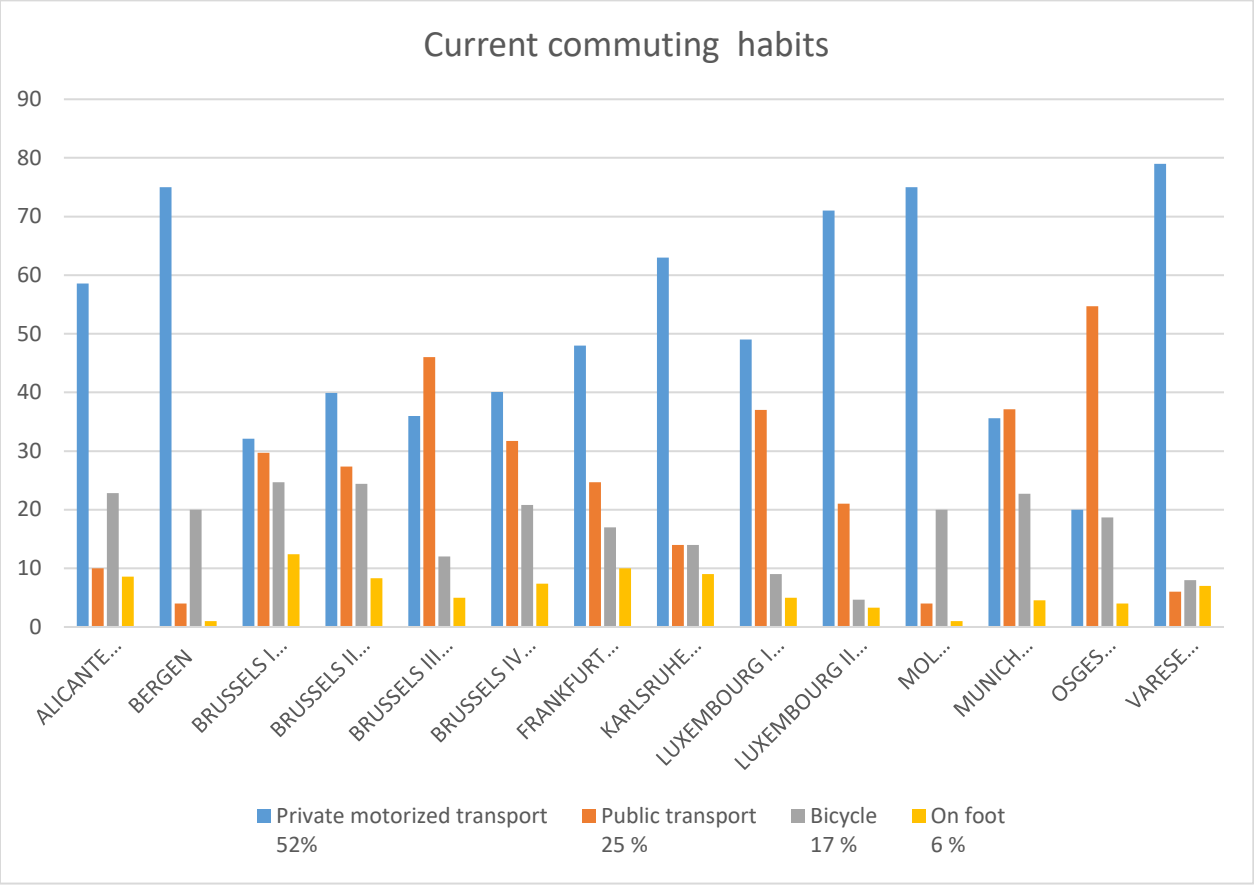


III. Current commuting habits

The most common mode of transportation for commuting is the car, with an average of 52% of employees relying on it. However, this percentage is notably higher in schools located away from urban centers or public transport infrastructure, such as in Varese, Mol, or Karlsruhe, where car usage can reach as high as 79% of staff members. In contrast, schools situated in city centers or well-connected areas, like the OSG and Brussels III, see a greater reliance on public transportation, with 54.7% and 46% of staff using this mode of travel, respectively.

Additionally, it is important to highlight the considerable use of bicycles, which accounts for nearly 25% of commuters in Brussels I and II. This is closely followed by Munich, Alicante, Brussels IV, and Mol, where bicycle usage among commuters exceeds 20%.

Most colleagues, regardless of the country they live in, reside at an average distance of approximately 15,60 km from the school.



IV. Financial impact on reimbursement of environmentally friendly commuting options

The reimbursement of commuting expenses varies significantly among schools. Some schools do not reimburse any commuting costs, while others, as it is the case in Belgium, only provide reimbursements for AAS staff.

Additionally, some schools, such as those in Luxembourg, benefit from free transportation within the country. As a result, public transport fees in Luxembourg are excluded from calculations in this document.

The estimated amounts needed to reimburse commuting costs have been calculated based on survey data and extrapolated to reflect the entire staff population (100%).

The current study has considered three different scenarios to analyse the ESS commuting habits:

- **Current situation:** For this scenario, the current commuting habits and the cost associated to staff who commutes by public transport or cycling are considered. All other means of transport are excluded (car, on foot, motorbike etc.). Theorical cost: 1.040.657,67 €

- **Best-case scenario:** In this case it is considered that 100% of car/motorbike drivers switch to greener commuting options. Theorical cost: 1.853.691,38 €

- **Realistic scenario** A more probable scenario than the ideal one (Best-case scenario) would be to reduce by 25% the distances driven by car and using instead less polluting transportation alternatives. Theorical cost: 1.243.916,10 €

Based on the current situation, an assessment has been conducted to determine the number of potential car drivers who may transition to more sustainable commuting options. This analysis facilitates the development of the scenarios mentioned above by considering the following data:

- Staff members who live less than 10 km from school will come by bike
- Staff members who live between 10-20 km from school will come by bus
- Staff members who live more than 20 km from school will come by train

These amounts have been calculated based on the following reimbursement rates:

- Public Transport: Reimbursement of the public transport subscription in each country.

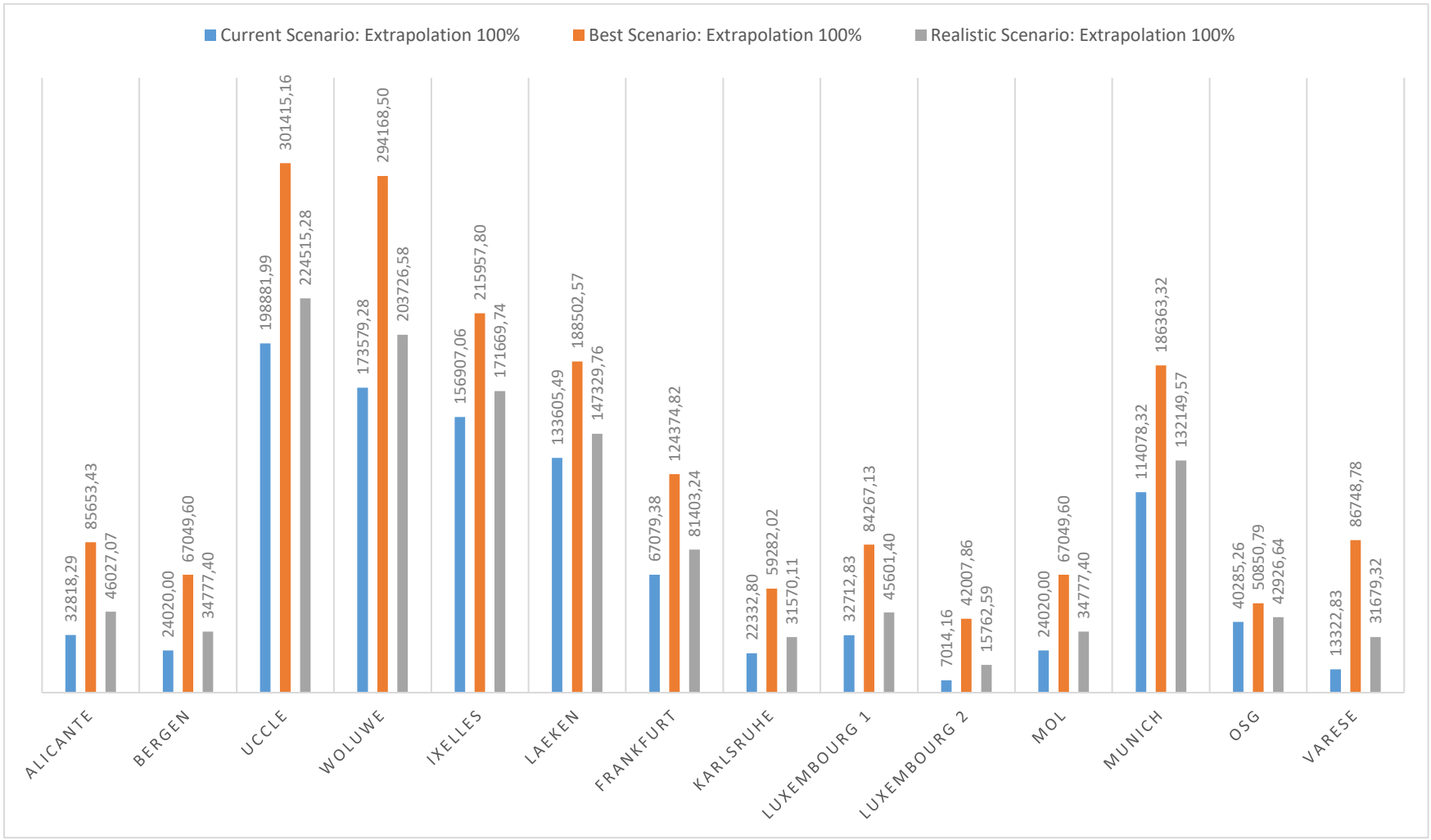
- Cycling: 0,35 € per kilometer (to be aligned with the current legislation in each host country). The bike allowance is limited at the cost of a local public transport pass in Brussels (Brupass), which is set at 66 € per month.

Other commuting methods will be not eligible for reimbursement.

According to the data provided for each European School, the reimbursement amount for each staff member can be calculated considering their representation among the total staff.[1]

- AAS: 21%.
- LRT: 43%.
- Seconded staff: 36%.

[1] Seconded data collected from the document ref: 2024-10-D-1-en-1, Facts and figures at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year in the European Schools (figures on 15 October 2024)
LRT and AAS data collected from Microsoft 365-Outlook lists.

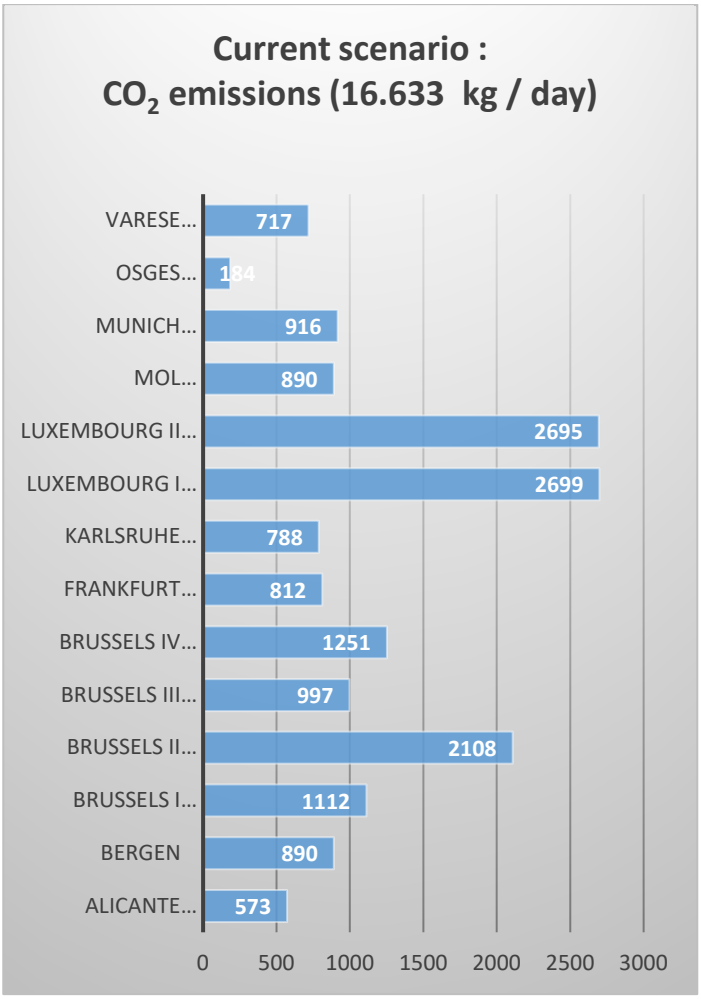

Current Scenario: Extrapolation 100%
Best Scenario: Extrapolation 100%
Realistic Scenario: Extrapolation 100%
32818,29
85653,43
46027,07
24020,00
67049,60
34777,40
198881,99
301415,16
224515,28
173579,28
294168,50
203726,58
156907,06
215957,80
171669,74
133605,49
188502,57
147329,76
67079,38
124374,82
81403,24
22332,80
59282,02
31570,11
32712,83
84267,13
45601,40
7014,16
42007,86
15762,59
24020,00
67049,60
34777,40
114078,32
186363,32
132149,57
40285,26
50850,79
42926,64
13322,83
86748,78
31679,32
ALICANTE
BERGEN
UCCLE
WOLUWE
IXELLES
LAEKEN
FRANKFURT
KARLSRUHE
LUXEMBOURG 1
LUXEMBOURG 2
MOL
MUNICH
OSG
VARESE

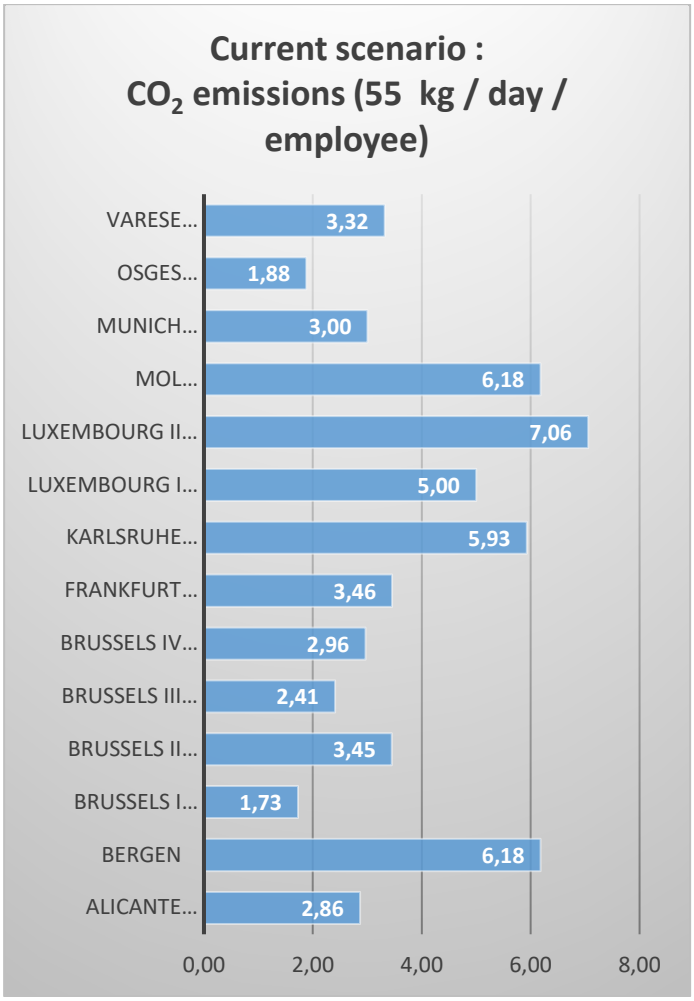
V. CO_2 emissions in different scenarios

The survey clearly indicates that 90% of CO_2 emissions from commuting are attributed to the use of private motorised transport, primarily cars, with motorcycles contributing a significantly smaller share. Even minor changes in car usage for commuting can lead to substantial reductions in CO_2 emissions.

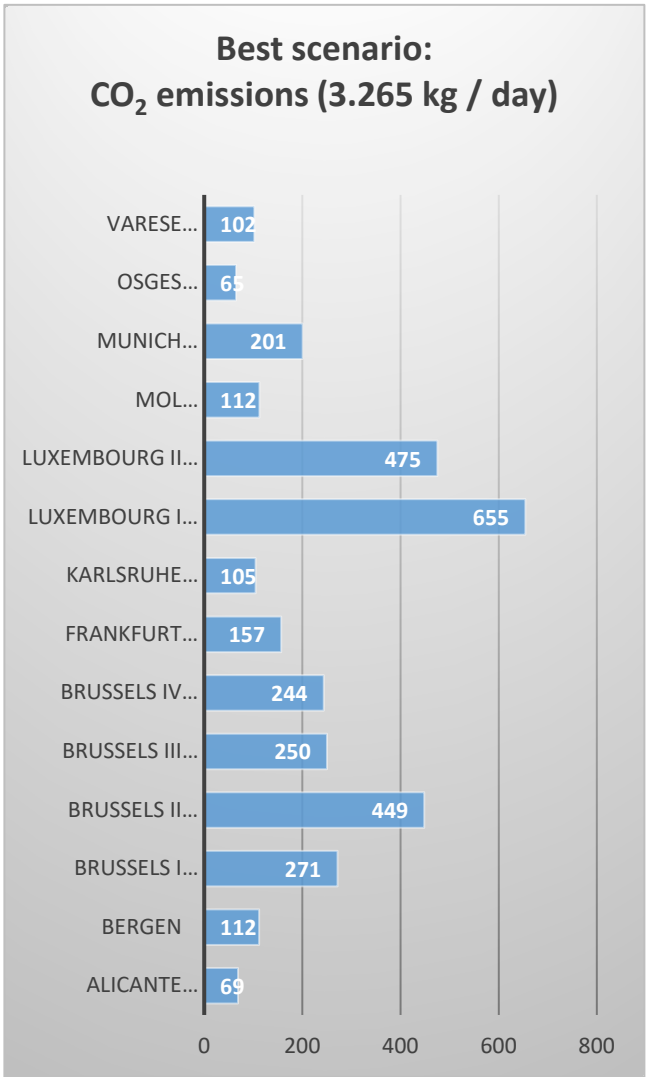
The tables below illustrate the daily CO_2 emissions in kilograms for three different scenarios.

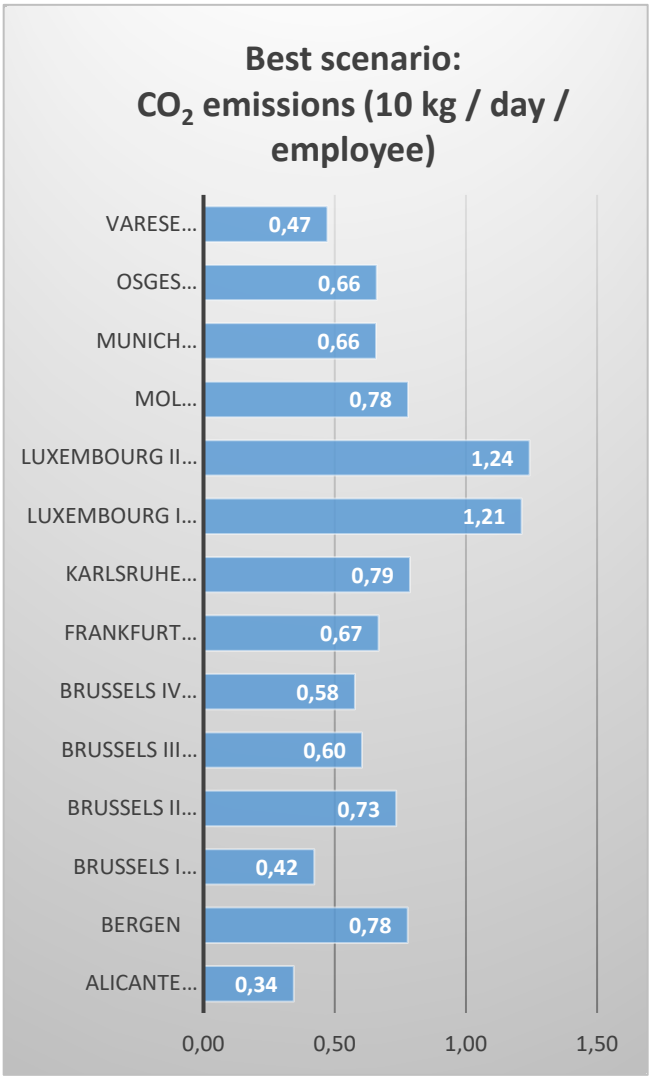
In the **"CURRENT SITUATION"**, the ESS' staff emits **16.633 kg of CO_2 per day** only from commuting, which amounts to an average of **55 kg per employee each day.**



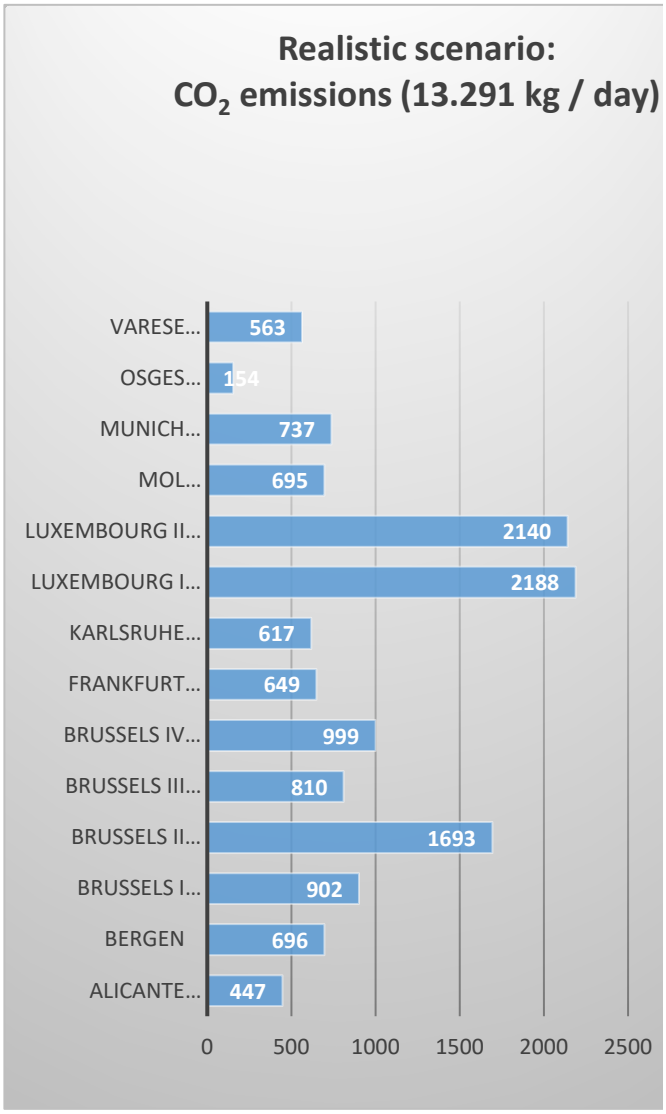


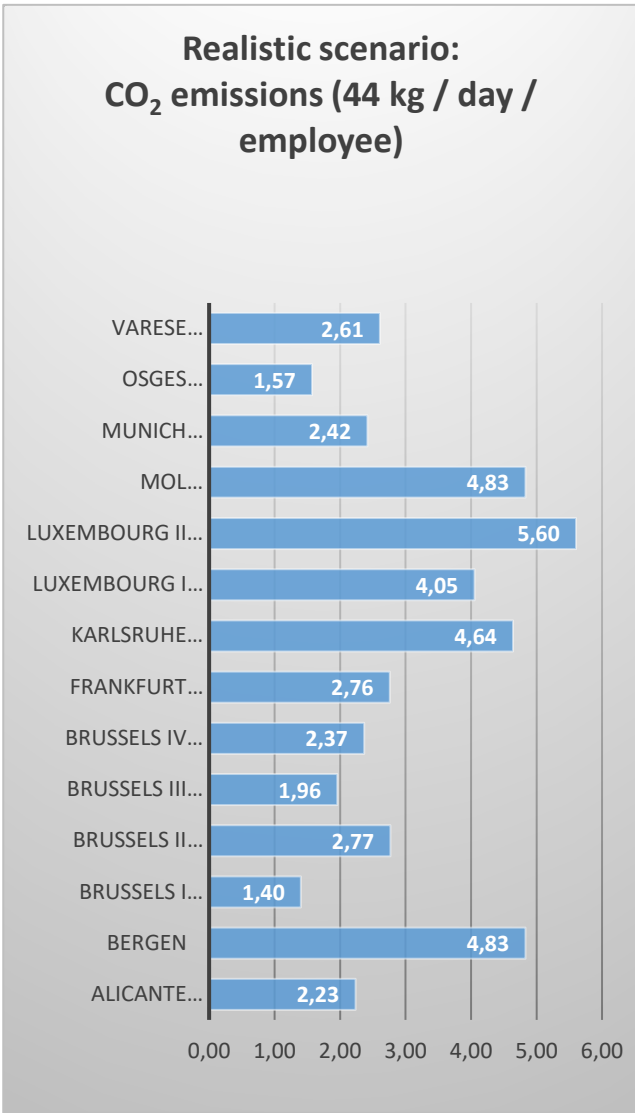
In the **"BEST SCENARIO",** where all staff members transition to more environmentally friendly commuting options, the ESS' staff could drastically reduce their CO_2 emissions to **3.265 kg per day.**





In a more **"REALISTIC SCENARIO",** it is considered that 25% of the distances driven by car are instead covered using less polluting transportation alternatives. ESS staff would therefore achieve a significant reduction in CO_2 emissions, lowering them to **13.291 kg per day.**





VI. Deductions from the collected data

From the data collected, it is evident that some entities are performing better than others in terms of commuting to work. This variation is often attributed to the availability of alternatives to travel by car and the quality of public transport connections. However, other factors also contribute to these differences.

The examples of Brussels IV and the OSG are highlighted below, as both entities have collected data for their Mobility Plan from the "Bruxelles Environnement" platform. This application provides a valuable comparison point with other organisations in Brussels.

- **Brussels IV** is located in the northern part of the city, offering good access to the motorway. While public transport options in the area are adequate, most employees need to walk approximately 12 minutes to reach the school. The graphic below illustrates that organisations with similar accessibility to Brussels IV have a car commuting rate of 60.4%. In contrast, only 37.5% of employees at Brussels IV commute by car.

  Several reasons can be identified for this difference. First, Brussels IV reimburses public transport costs for AAS staff, which encourages them to choose public transport. They also promote sustainable commuting options, such as leasing electric bikes. Additionally, Brussels IV makes significant efforts to communicate the benefits of using public transport and bicycles, actively participating in mobility initiatives organised by the public administration, such as Mobility Week. These actions contribute to promoting an organisational culture that values sustainability and environmental responsibility.

	ECOLE EUROPEENNE DE BRUXELLES IV	Zone d'accessibilité similaire *	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale *
Voiture	37,5%	60,4%	35,4%
Covoiturage	1,0%	2,3%	1,2%
Moto	1,3%	1,3%	1,2%
Train	9,0%	12,9%	36,0%
STIB	18,9%	13,3%	17,3%
De Lijn	3,8%	0,9%	1,2%
TEC	0,0%	0,9%	0,3%
Navette	0,0%	0,3%	0,3%
Vélo	20,8%	3,5%	3,2%
Micro-mobilité	0,3%	0,0%	0,0%
Marche	7,4%	4,2%	3,9%
Aucun	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%

- The **OSG** has also demonstrated very good performance in the environmentally friendly commuting habits.

  The findings indicate that OSG staff members are adopting more sustainable commuting habits compared to those in surrounding organisations. This trend is illustrated in the graphic below:

	BUREAU DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL DU CONSEIL SUPERIEUR DES ECOLES EUROPEENNES	Zone d'accessibilité similaire *	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale *
Voiture	**18,7%**	48,9%	35,4%
Covoiturage	**0,0%**	2,1%	1,2%
Moto	**1,3%**	1,5%	1,2%
Train	**22,7%**	21,0%	36,0%
STIB	**30,7%**	17,0%	17,3%
De Lijn	**1,3%**	1,0%	1,2%
TEC	**0,0%**	0,2%	0,3%
Navette	**0,0%**	0,9%	0,3%
Vélo	**16,0%**	3,3%	3,2%
Micro-mobilité	**2,7%**	0,0%	0,0%
Marche	**4,0%**	4,1%	3,9%

  This success can be attributed, in part, to the full reimbursement of public transportation costs for approximately 85% of OSG staff, who are the AAS members. Despite having the option to use the building's garage free of charge (with ample parking available), OSG staff have opted for environmentally friendly commuting habits.

VII. Perspectives

Employees have expressed though the survey a willingness to shift to more sustainable commuting options if provided with financial incentives, such as reimbursements for public transport and cycling allowances. The lack of current reimbursement for most staff members is a barrier to adopting eco-friendly transportation methods.

It has also been highlighted very often that the staff would be willing to switch cycle to work if they can benefit from favorable conditions for buying or renting a bicycle through the school (cost neutral for the schools in Belgium – No budgetary impact).

Below it is a summary of the main ideas from all the individual Mobility Plans received from the schools:

Willingness to Change Commuting Habits: A significant portion of employees are open to changing their commuting habits and reducing car usage if provided with appropriate incentives, such as reimbursement for public transportation fees or financial incentives for cycling.

Incentives and Financial Support: Many employees express a greater inclination to switch their transportation preferences if they receive compensation for commuting costs. Current practices in various governmental and private sectors include allowances for bicycle commuting, which have proven effectiveness.

Barriers to Sustainable Commuting: Other than the lack of reimbursement for transport costs it has also been mentioned the difficulty to reach some schools that are not directly served by public transport or cycling infrastructure.

Infrastructure Challenges: Concerns about inadequate infrastructure for cycling, such as safe bike routes and facilities, are prevalent. Many employees feel that cycling in urban areas is dangerous. Additionally, public transport reliability issues, such as delays and overcrowding, further complicate commuting choices.

School Initiatives: Some schools have launched initiatives, such as bike leasing programs, to promote eco-friendly commuting alternatives, like Brussels IV. Another example is the "Velo Challenge" organised in Alicante, which involves children and police officers teaching road safety rules related to bike use. This program includes route practice with the support of police and sports teachers. However, these initiatives alone may not be enough to change commuting habits without also addressing financial barriers.

Government Support: For instance, in Luxembourg the public transport is free of charges, in Brussels, public administration covers 20% of public transport costs, while employers are responsible for the remaining 80%. Existing advantages in other countries may be investigated.

The feedback from employees highlights the need for improved infrastructure, better financial incentives, and expanded transportation services to support and promote eco-friendly commuting options. By addressing these areas, the organisation can cultivate a culture of sustainability while encouraging healthier lifestyles among employees.

VIII. Proposal to the European Schools System

To promote a more sustainable commuting culture, the following initiatives are proposed, the aim is encouraging eco-friendly transportation options among the ES employees:

Encouraging Schools to Promote Sustainable Commuting Habits: Schools can play a primordial role in promoting a culture of sustainability by:

- **Participating in European Mobility Week:** Engaging in this initiative to raise awareness about sustainable transport options and encourage community participation.
- **Collaborating to Lease or Purchase Electric or Regular Bikes:** Establishing partnerships with local businesses or organizations to provide access to bicycles for the staff, making cycling a viable commuting option.
- **Highlighting the Environmental Impact:** Educating the school community about the positive effects of reducing carbon footprints through sustainable commuting practices, including workshops, seminars, and informational campaigns.
- **Organising Car-Free Days or Events:** Hosting events that encourage walking, cycling, or using public transport, thereby demonstrating the benefits of reduced car usage.
- **Creating Incentives for Sustainable Commuting:** Offering rewards or recognition for individuals or teams that consistently choose eco-friendly commuting options, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility.
- **Setting an Example for Students:** European School staff will lead by example, actively engaging in sustainable commuting practices. By demonstrating their commitment to eco-friendly transportation, staff will inspire students to adopt similar habits, encouraging a generation of environmentally conscious individuals who are prepared to contribute positively to society and the planet.

By adopting these initiatives, the European Schools not only support sustainability but also create a **more attractive, efficient, and eco-conscious work environment**. These efforts will contribute to a healthier planet, increase the quality of life for employees and position the schools as leaders in promoting sustainable practices within the community.

IX. Proposal to the Board of Governors

Implementation of a minimum standard reimbursement policy for public transport and bicycle allowance

In light of current budget constraints, it is proposed a gradual implementation of reimbursement for eco-friendly commuting options for the LRT and AAS. The Board of Governors is invited to decide on the reimbursement policy, which would start in January 2026.

Option 1:

LRT and AAS, who make 64% of ESS total workforce, will receive full reimbursement for public transport expenses.

Additionally, cyclists will be reimbursed 0,35 € per kilometer they ride. However, the total reimbursement for cyclists will be limited at the cost of a local public transport pass (for example, 66 € per month in Brussels – "Brupass").

Estimated annual extra cost: 728.087,17 €

This figure is calculated as follows:

AAS (currently reimbursed)	369.445,86 €
AAS (additional reimbursement)	209.366,74 €
LRT	518.720,43 €
TOTAL Additional reimbursement	**728.087,17 €**
TOTAL	**1.097.533,03 €**

- This estimation assumes that 25% of car trips will be replaced by more environmentally friendly transportation options.

- The first row of the table above outlines the current reimbursement for transport fees for AAS staff in Belgium. This benefit should remain in effect for those who are already receiving it.

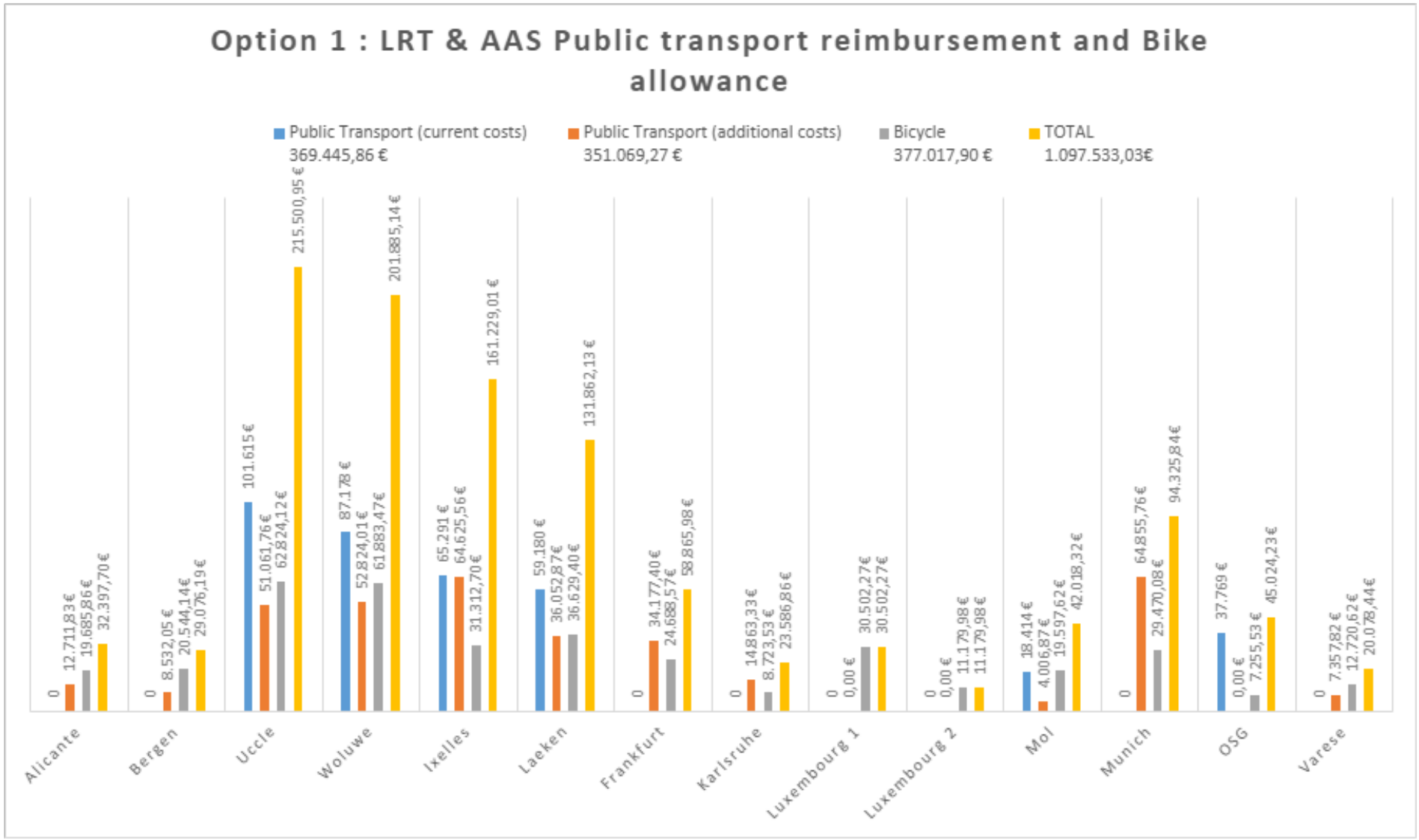
This option has the support of the Working Group and is aligned with the standards in Belgium (in both public and private sector). It is a great value option as it aims and encourage the use of the bicycle and public transport. Specially the bike which has zero CO2 impact and large benefits for bike user:

- **Environmental Impact:** Cycling generates zero emissions, playing a crucial role in reducing air pollution and combating climate change. This contributes to a healthier planet while supporting the European Green Deal's sustainability goals.

- **Health Benefits:** Regular cycling promotes physical fitness, which can improve staff well-being and energy levels.

- **Lead by Example:** When teachers to school, they set a strong example for students, inspiring them to adopt sustainable practices and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. By promoting eco-friendly commuting, teachers can influence students to be more conscious of their environmental footprint, shaping a generation committed to sustainability.

The graph below shows the budgetary impact by school for implementing Option 1:


Option 1 : LRT & AAS Public transport reimbursement and Bike allowance
Public Transport (current costs)
369.445,86 €
Public Transport (additional costs)
351.069,27 €
Bicycle
377.017,90 €
TOTAL
1.097.533,03€
Alicante
0
12.711,83 €
19.685,86 €
32.397,70 €
Bergen
0
8.532,05 €
20.544,14€
29.076,19€
Uccle
101.615 €
51.061,76€
62.824,12 €
215.500,95 €
Woluwe
87.178 €
52.824,01 €
61.883,47€
201.885,14 €
Ixelles
65.291 €
64.625,56 €
31.312,70 €
161.229,01 €
Laeken
59.180 €
36.052,87€
36.629,40 €
131.862,13 €
Frankfurt
0
34.177,40 €
24.688,57€
58.865,98 €
Karlsruhe
0
14.863,33€
8.723,53 €
23.586,86 €
Luxembourg 1
0
0,00 €
30.502,27€
30.502,27€
Luxembourg 2
0
0,00 €
11.179,98 €
11.179,98 €
Mol
18.414 €
4.006,87 €
19.597,62 €
42.018,32 €
Munich
0
64.855,76 €
29.470,08 €
94.325,84 €
OSG
37.769 €
0,00 €
7.255,53 €
45.024,23 €
Varese
0
7.357,82 €
12.720,62 €
20.078,44€

Option 2:

LRT and AAS, who make 64% of ESS total workforce, will receive 50% reimbursement for public transport expenses.

Additionally, cyclists will be reimbursed half of the proposed ratio in the "option 1" (0,17 € instead of 0,35 € per kilometer). However, the total reimbursement for cyclists will be limited at the half of the cost of a local public transport pass (for example, 33 € per month in Brussels).

Estimated annual extra cost is: 439.264,52 €

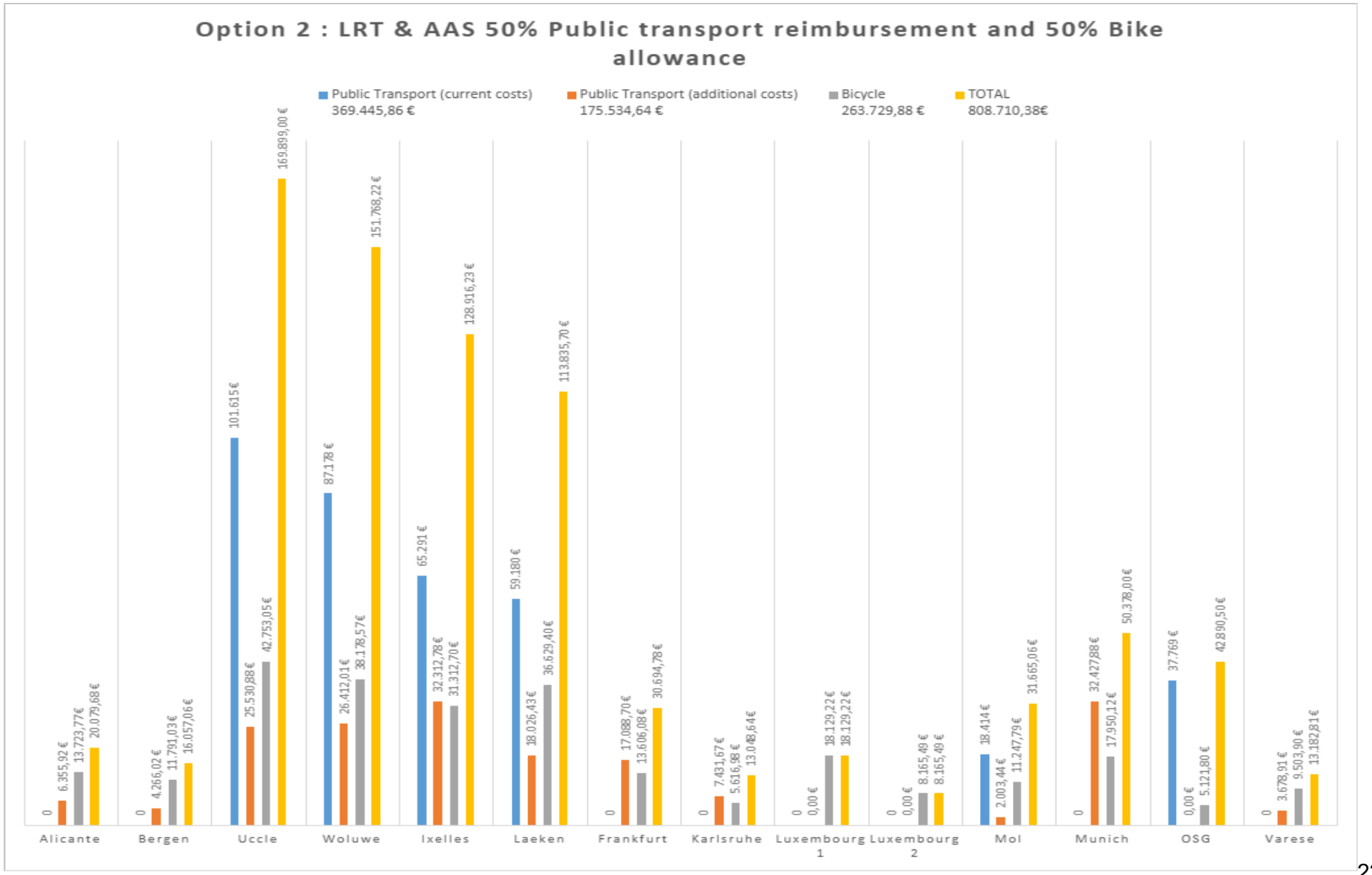
This figure is calculated as follows:

- This estimate assumes that the bike allowance reimbursement will not exceed the half of the cost of a local public transport pass in Brussels (33 € / month).

AAS (currently reimbursed)	369.445,86 €
AAS (additional reimbursement)	135.837,96 €
LRT	303.426,56 €
TOTAL Additional reimbursement	**439.264,52 €**
TOTAL	**808.710,38 €**

- The first row of the table above outlines the current reimbursement for transport fees for AAS staff in Belgium. This benefit should remain in effect for those who are already receiving it.

The graph below shows the budgetary impact by school for implementing Option 2:


Option 2 : LRT & AAS 50% Public transport reimbursement and 50% Bike allowance
Public Transport (current costs)
369.445,86 €
Public Transport (additional costs)
175.534,64 €
Bicycle
263.729,88 €
TOTAL
808.710,38€
Alicante
0
6.355,92 €
13.723,77€
20.079,68 €
Bergen
0
4.266,02 €
11.791,03 €
16.057,06 €
Uccle
101.615 €
25.530,88 €
42.753,05 €
169.899,00 €
Woluwe
87.178 €
26.412,01 €
38.178,57€
151.768,22 €
Ixelles
65.291 €
32.312,78 €
31.312,70 €
128.916,23 €
Laeken
59.180 €
18.026,43 €
36.629,40 €
113.835,70 €
Frankfurt
0
17.088,70 €
13.606,08 €
30.694,78 €
Karlsruhe
0
7.431,67 €
5.616,98 €
13.048,64 €
Luxembourg 1
0
0,00 €
18.129,22 €
18.129,22 €
Luxembourg 2
0
0,00 €
8.165,49 €
8.165,49 €
Mol
18.414 €
2.003,44 €
11.247,79 €
31.665,06 €
Munich
0
32.427,88 €
17.950,12 €
50.378,00 €
OSG
37.769 €
0,00 €
5.121,80 €
42.890,50 €
Varese
0
3.678,91 €
9.503,90 €
13.182,81 €

Option 3:

The ESS staff (LRT, AAS) will receive 50% reimbursement for public transport expenses. However, there will be no reimbursement for bicycle commuting.

In this situation, it is estimated that 25% of colleagues currently using bicycles will switch to public transport due to the attractiveness of the public transport partial reimbursement.

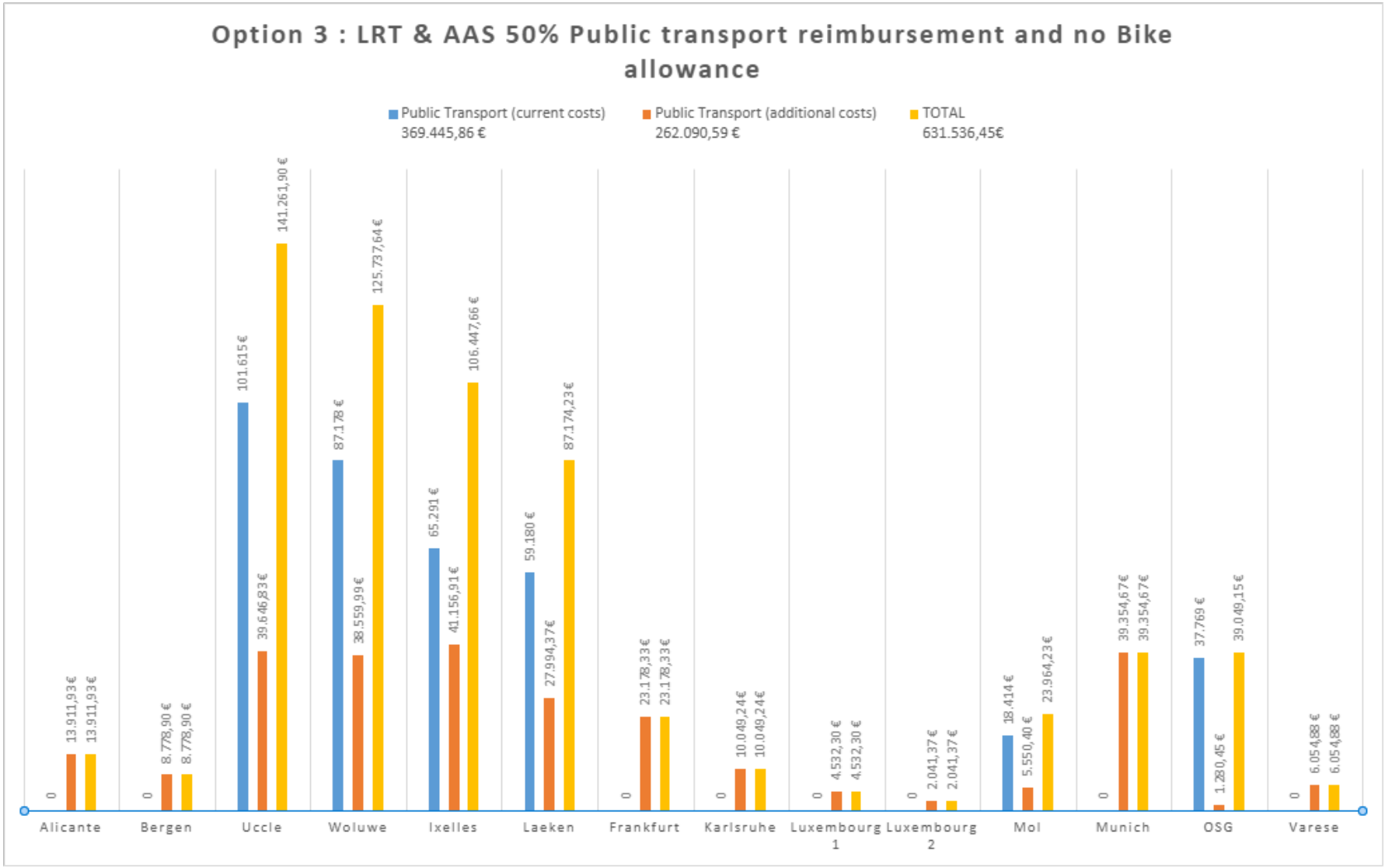
Estimated annual extra cost: 262.090,59 €

This figure is obtained from the following calculations:

AAS (currently reimbursed)	369.445,86 €
AAS (additional reimbursement)	62.268,61 €
LRT	199.821,98 €
TOTAL Additional reimbursement	**262.090,59 €**
TOTAL	**631.536,45 €**

- The first row of the table above outlines the current reimbursement for transport fees for AAS staff in Belgium. This benefit should remain in effect for those who are already receiving it.

The graph below shows the budgetary impact by school for implementing Option 3:


Option 3 : LRT & AAS 50% Public transport reimbursement and no Bike allowance
Public Transport (current costs)
369.445,86 €
Public Transport (additional costs)
262.090,59 €
TOTAL
631.536,45€
0
13.911,93€
13.911,93€
0
8.778,90 €
8.778,90 €
101.615 €
39.646,83 €
141.261,90 €
87.178 €
38.559,99 €
125.737,64 €
65.291 €
41.156,91 €
106.447,66 €
59.180 €
27.994,37€
87.174,23€
0
23.178,33€
23.178,33€
0
10.049,24€
10.049,24€
0
4.532,30 €
4.532,30 €
0
2.041,37 €
2.041,37 €
18.414 €
5.550,40 €
23.964,23€
0
39.354,67€
39.354,67€
37.769 €
1.280,45 €
39.049,15€
0
6.054,88 €
6.054,88 €
Alicante
Bergen
Uccle
Woluwe
Ixelles
Laeken
Frankfurt
Karlsruhe
Luxembourg 1
Luxembourg 2
Mol
Munich
OSG
Varese

The reimbursement policy would offer a variety of benefits, including:

- **Advancing the Goals of the Mobility Plan:** To improve sustainable commuting practices.
- **Reducing CO_2 Emissions:** Contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the objectives of the European Green Deal, which targets a 55% reduction in CO_2 emissions by 2030.
- **Encouraging Eco-Friendly Transportation Options:** Motivating employees to opt for public transport, cycling, or walking instead of private motorised vehicles, thereby fostering a culture of sustainability.
- **Alleviating Parking Deficiencies and Reducing Traffic Congestion:** By decreasing reliance on cars, we can mitigate parking deficiencies and ease traffic congestion around school premises.
- **Increasing Job Attractiveness:** Improving the attractiveness of the workplace for potential employees, thereby strengthening recruitment and retention efforts through a commitment to sustainability.

This plan will be reviewed in 2027, the outcomes from the different schools will be analysed, which may lead to new proposals for a continued implementation and extension of the European School Mobility Plan.