



## A6.1, O2: A student-centred travel website



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## Beneficiaries

- Aalborg University, Denmark
- Dublin City University, Ireland
- Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
- Linköping University, Sweden
- Tampereen Korkeakoulusäätiö sr, Finland
- Hamburg University of Technology, Germany
- Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal
- Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
- University of Stavanger, Norway
- Università degli Studi di Trento, Italy
- Institut National des Sciences Appliquées de Toulouse, France
- University of Twente, The Netherlands

## Abstract

The aim of this activity was to develop a concept and development plan for a student-centered travel website generated by an open online community offering updated information on affordable temporary accommodation and practical information on working in the region. ECIU University experimented with a prototype of a Erasmus Student App but took the decision not to advance with investments in that option, opting instead to create contents for the ECIU website that would complement the students' social media accounts by providing institutional information on mobility.

## First approach: a prototype of an ECIU Student App

The first approach taken was to develop a prototype of an ECIU Student App. 4 students from the Masters in Multimedia Communication at the University of Aveiro contacted the ECIU University to offer, as part of a course project, to make a benchmark study of several student mobility support websites and apps available, including ErasmusU, International Students, GoAbroad, Buddy System, ErasmusApp, Visit City and Inspirock, comparing them in terms of authentication system, search engines, mentor system, live chat and tips. A survey of ECIU member universities was also carried out, to hear what the International Offices considered important to include in a future ECIU Student App. The (interactive) prototype, developed by the students, can be viewed and explored in the link provided in Figure 1.

Fig.1 Prototype of ECIU Student App

<https://www.figma.com/proto/SC35rrwgfJ2e2cmcJkXxzW/ECIU-HIFI?node-id=12%3A13&scaling=min-zoom>



Although the students themselves were very successful in their academic project, ECIU University decided not to invest money into the App development, for 3 reasons:

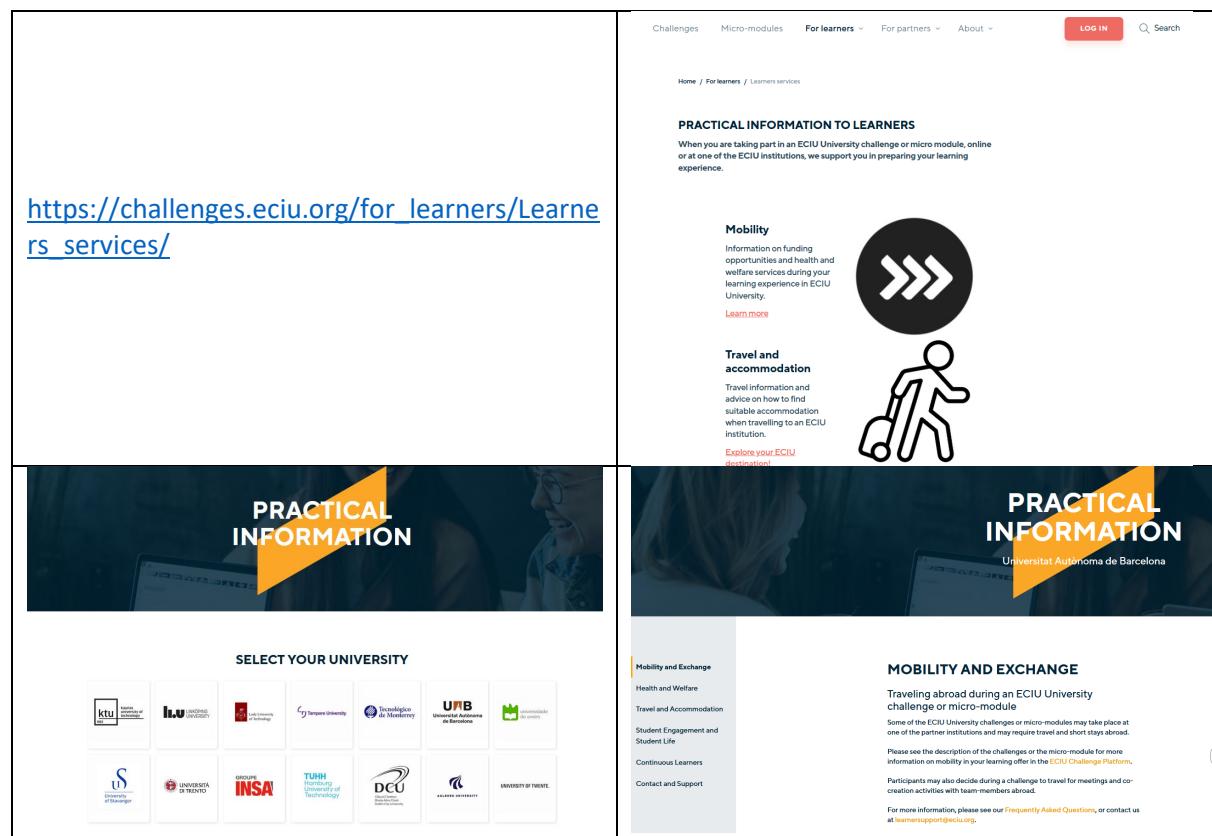
- a) The user community of just 13 universities is too small to justify any significant investment, especially as we understand that students would naturally prefer to take recourse to the major search engines like Google, which offer a large array of integrated services, GPS localisation and so on.
- b) The student wing of the ECIU, the ECIU AGORA community, is also active in providing student-to-student advice, information and help through its social media groups, and considered that an ECIU Student App would not bring significant advantages to the community.
- c) The ECIU digital strategy is centred on a new experience platform which is under development, which we call DxP, supporting the engagement of all users with ECIU University activities in education, research, and innovation towards building a wider European community. DxP aims to include personalized features that help teachers, learners and researchers meet their individual needs in academic terms, providing them with a true ECIU experience. DxP benefits from a multi-million-euro budget. In this context, ECIU University is not available to invest in a new App.

## Second approach: a student-centred travel website

Considering the requirement, we turned our attention to the ECIU website, more specifically to the Challenges platform at <https://challenges.eciu.org>. This is the space where ECIU offers a Learners Support Service to all participants, including mobile participants.

Since student engagement is fostered through the AGORA network of ECIU students through its [social media](#) groups, while the Institutions provided institutional information for mobile participants, including on housing, health, welfare and grants. All of the information for candidates and participants is therefore brought together in a single space.

Fig. 2 Screenshots of information for mobile participants



[https://challenges.eciu.org/for\\_learners/Learner\\_services/](https://challenges.eciu.org/for_learners/Learner_services/)

All of this information is updated and sustained by the ECIU web team and the Learners Support Service, with the help of the International Offices of each ECIU University whenever required.

Feedback from users is guaranteed through the student surveys on Challenges that ECIU University promotes each semester, as well as through the dedicated service team that has been set up within the context of Work Package 7 (Joint Structures) of the present pilot project.

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