

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Innovative Practice Guide

stups



Universidad
de Huelva



UNIVERSIDADE
DE ÉVORA



UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES
UPPER AUSTRIA



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Economía,
Conocimiento, Empresas y Universidad
AGENCIA ANDALUZA DEL CONOCIMIENTO



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Executive summary

This Innovative Practice Guide translates the survey's findings launched by the STUPS Erasmus+ project into a practical guide for higher education institutions. The survey was titled *Sharing innovative practices on student participation*.

The collection of practices was led by the European Students' Union (ESU) in strong collaboration with the University of Huelva (UHU), the University of Évora (UÉ), the University of Applied Sciences of Upper Austria (FH Upper Austria) and the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation of the Junta de Andalucía (DEVA).

This innovative guide aims to provide higher education institutions with insight into new methodologies for promoting student participation and to train student leaders and

higher education institutions to continue to influence innovative practices towards better governance, accompanied by greater inclusion and equality. The Guide includes practical suggestions, resources, insights from other higher education institutions and reflective questions.

This publication is available on the STUPS website (open-source) to be consulted and used by third parties and organisations anywhere and anytime.

Methodology

This guide is inspired by STUPS' conceptual model for the approach to student participation from its four dimensions: government and management; academic and quality; social, cultural, and sports; and equality and inclusion.

Under this framework, the most innovative practices have been chosen to influence one or more of these dimensions. As a result, the most relevant processes and structures of student participation in higher education institutions are established.

Because of their innovative nature, the practices included in the guide must first be contextualised and localised before being deployed in participation systems other than those in which they were conceived and developed.





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From the STUPS consortium, we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the institutions that contributed to the development of this guide:

- 100 % ADN, Association
 - Academic Association of the University of Evora
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 - University of Evora
 - University of Huelva
 - University of Seville
 - University of the Balearic Islands
 - USI (Union of Students in Ireland)
-

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Introduction

During the early stages of the Bologna Process, European leaders made a historic political statement emphasising the importance of student participation in the governance of higher education institutions and systems. As a result, increased student engagement became one of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) principles, and it has been perceived as a political goal, substantial value, and procedural principle at the same time.

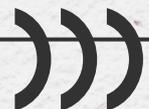
Nonetheless, student participation is currently falling short of desired standards both in quantity and quality, and engagement of underrepresented and disadvantaged groups of students is almost non-existent. These issues must be addressed immediately at the institutional, national, and European levels to promote good governance and inclusion.

The overall goal of the Student Participation Without Borders (STUPS) project is to increase student participation and lay the groundwork for a European network focused on developing new practices to promote student participation to find genuine solutions to one of higher education's most pressing challenges.

To achieve this goal, the project's specific objectives seek to increase and improve student participation, knowledge, cooperation, training, and awareness, an invaluable source of social innovation. This is critical for establishing effective governance and a more diverse higher education system.

STUPS's target audiences include students, student leaders, students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds, higher education institutions, and administrators. Similarly, the project focuses on engaging university administrators with expertise in student participation, inclusion, and equality in dialogue and raising awareness of the benefits of collaboration.

Within the framework of the STUPS project, we have gathered several examples of best practices in student participation from across Europe. We hope that these practices will serve as inspiration for you in various areas of student life, such as student engagement, social inclusion and community development, soft competencies development, and so on.



What is in this innovative practice guide?

The Innovative Practice Guide for Promoting Student Participation brings together innovative practices that have been shown to be effective in promoting student participation and are transferable to any higher education system. This guide includes methodological, conceptual and relational resources of great use for higher education institutions, managers and student organizations related to the four dimensions¹ defined by STUPS. The contents of the guide address both offline and online participat

Section on Fostering student engagement

This section provides examples of policies, guidelines, and activities that promote student engagement. It aims to elaborate on various types of student engagement in various European institutions and countries, using examples from Ireland, Poland, Iceland, and Spain. This section also emphasises the importance of increasing student engagement and better including students in democratic processes within their respective institutions.

Section on Student Info Point

This section discusses various forms of student participation, such as mobility programs, open days, buddy systems, and mentoring programs, encouraging students to become more active in their student life. These initiatives aim to assist students who are new to university life and to provide opportunities for other students to improve their social and communication skills. Examples from Austria and Spain are included in this section.

Section on Soft Competences

This section contains examples of student participation from Austria and Spain. The emphasis is on organising meetings or events to reflect on and improve their soft skills, including communication, emotional, social, cultural, linguistic, management, and other relevant skills.

Section on Social inclusion and Community development

This section emphasises the significance of student participation and the importance of students giving back to their communities. Gender awareness campaigns, volunteering in nursing homes, the inclusion of students from disadvantaged groups, and the inclusion of students during the COVID-19 pandemic are all part of the initiative. Various institutions from Spain, Austria, Finland, and Portugal are used as examples.

Section on Fostering student engagement based on interests

This section contains examples of initiatives that encourage student participation in culture and media, sports, STEM, and sustainability. Austria, Portugal, and Spain are used as examples.

¹ Three dimensions defined. Government and Management refer to the processes and structures (organs) of the democratic government of the university and the management of its regular functioning. Academic and Quality refer (exclusively) to those processes and structures (bodies) for decision-making, administration and planning of teaching, and those related to quality assessment. Social, Cultural and Sports refer to the guarantees for the effective use of the civil and political rights of students and their rights to participate in the design, implementation and evaluation of social, cultural and sports policies within universities. Inclusion and equity are implicit in each of those dimensions.

Understanding Student Participation

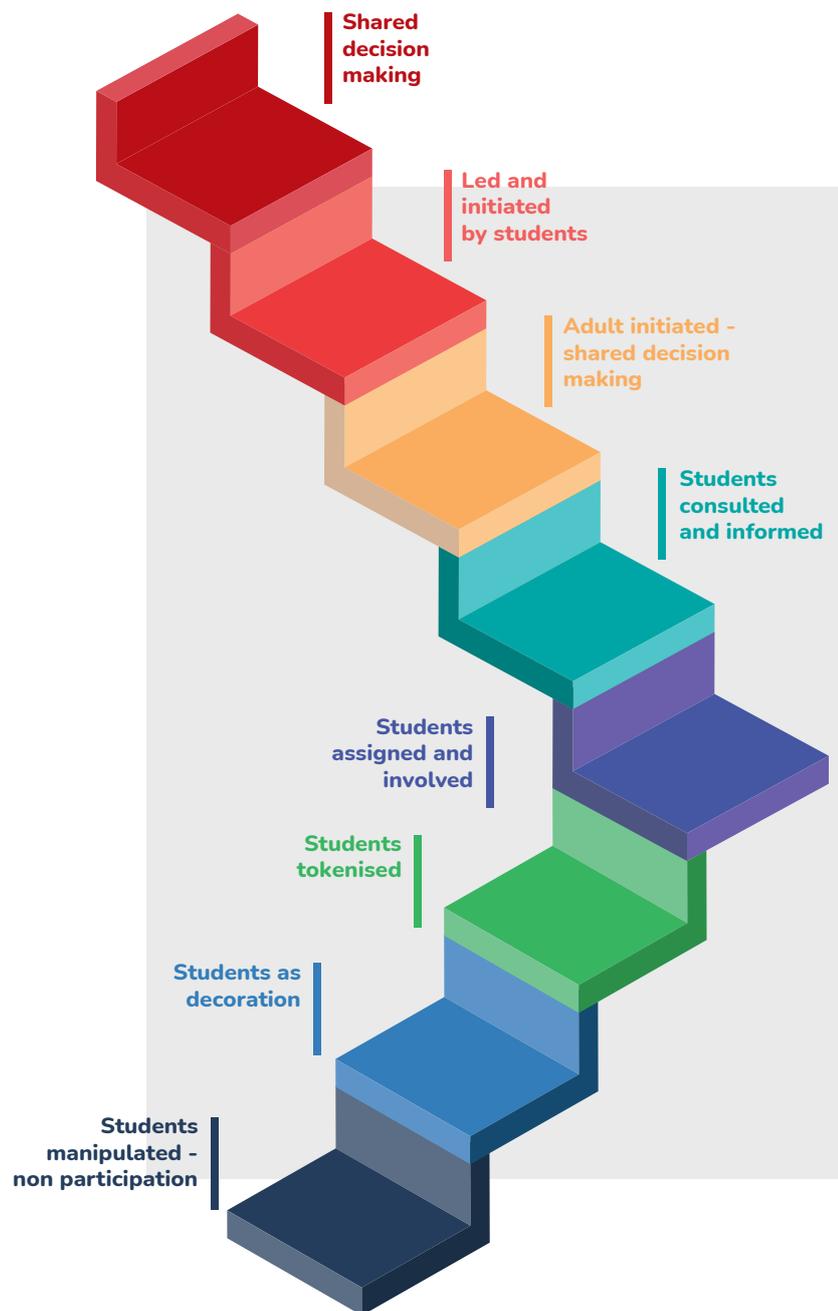
The Ladder of Participation

“ We, the students, have the right to participate in the decisions that shape our education”

Student participation is a critical factor for both the **European Students' Union** and the **Erasmus+ project STUPS**. As a result, we must ensure “meaningful participation” to avoid any harm or instrumentalisation of students. In concrete terms, the voice of students, particularly underrepresented and disadvantaged groups of students, must be heard and included in the activities of Higher Education Institutions and, to the greatest extent possible, in decision-making processes.

A **participation ladder** is a tool that students, student leaders, and students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds can use to understand the primary levels of participation and inclusion of STUDENTS.

A definition on **student participation** that drives the content of this publication reflects that student engagement is a wide-ranging phenomenon that includes both the academic and non-academic activities of the student within the university experience, and there is a significant body of evidence that shows that engagement is a significant factor in student attainment and retention (Krause & Coates, 2008; Kuh, 2009; Tinto, 2010).



Source: in 1992 Roger Hart developed a model for 'Children's participation from tokenism to citizenship' (UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence)

3

Fostering student engagement

This section highlights examples of promoting student engagement in forms of policies, guides and activities.

It sets out to elaborate what various types of student engagement there are in different European institutions and countries, with examples from Ireland, Poland, Iceland and Spain. This section also aims to stress the importance of strengthening student engagement and better inclusion of students in the democratic processes within their given institutions.

The following practices have been shown to be beneficial. These practices take many different forms, depending on learner characteristics and on institutional priorities and contexts.



National Student Engagement Training Programme 2016-2020 (NStEP)



Scope/Country: Ireland

Institution(s):

HEA (Higher Education Authority)

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland)

USI (Union of Students in Ireland)

Mode: Blended

Number of participants: 26

■ DESCRIPTION

The **National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)** was launched in April 2016 by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

NStEP aims to **strengthen student engagement in decision-making across Irish higher education**, supported by a framework of 10 Principles and 4 Domains (HEA,2016). The Programme seeks to champion a strong culture of partnership between students and staff through practice-based projects, training and capacity building and informing policy developments.

Student engagement is underpinned by the idea that students are partners and co-creators within a learning community, and NStEP aims to actively embed these principles within higher education. NStEP requires a partnership between HEI staff and student representatives, with HEI leadership and Union of Students leadership signing partnership agreements to participate.

To achieve the aspirations of both students and staff, the strategy sets out **three strategic priorities** for 2019 – 2021, which are:

1. Strengthening the value of student engagement nationally
2. Developing the leadership capabilities of students in Irish higher education
3. Supporting staff and students across the sector to foster a culture of partnership

Since 2016 NStEP has worked across 26 higher education institutions, delivered training to over 4,000 student representatives, hosted 20 institutional development workshops, supported several national projects, and developed many opportunities for students and staff across

the sector to share challenges and enablers to enhance student engagement in decision-making practices. This work has informed a strategy for 2019-2021 to embed new approaches and policies for student engagement within institutions and at the national level.

NStEP's Student Training Programme has been central to achieving meaningful and authentic student engagement, training 4,000+ class representatives across twenty-six participating institutions to date.

Up to the spring semester of 2020, training was delivered in single sessions of up to three hours in length, with specialised sessions for postgraduate taught students and those who study in online or blended programmes. The training introduces participants to peer representation while fostering student leadership at the programme/course level and enabling the capacity to work with staff as active partners in learning and teaching enhancement.

Core elements of the training include exploring the student learning experience and institutional practice and support elements that contribute towards an effective learning environment. Student participants are also introduced to the ABCD of effective feedback and how this model can contribute to more meaningful change in teaching, learning and assessment within their programme of study. How student representatives can collect, communicate and respond to feedback are explored, along with a focus on closing the feedback loop between teaching staff, students and the institution.

One of the core strengths of the student training programme is that it is entirely student-led. NStEP recruits and trains a team of Student Trainers every Summer who then travel between

institutions to deliver the training sessions. Student Trainers providing the training ensures that participants comprehend the critical leadership role within their institution and learn from the Trainer’s experiences and perspectives. It also ensures that students gain a sense of agency to play a crucial part in governance structures where decisions are taken about teaching and learning.

All training was moved online during the pandemic, receiving hugely positive feedback (see National Report in the links section). New online self-study modules are now being developed to gather and act on feedback, improve the student learning experience, and implement the national student engagement survey ([StudentSurvey.ie](#)). NStEP is also about to begin piloting an exciting new student training on ‘Representing Diversity’, providing reps with skills to recognise discrimination, overcome bias, and empower their diverse peer groups.

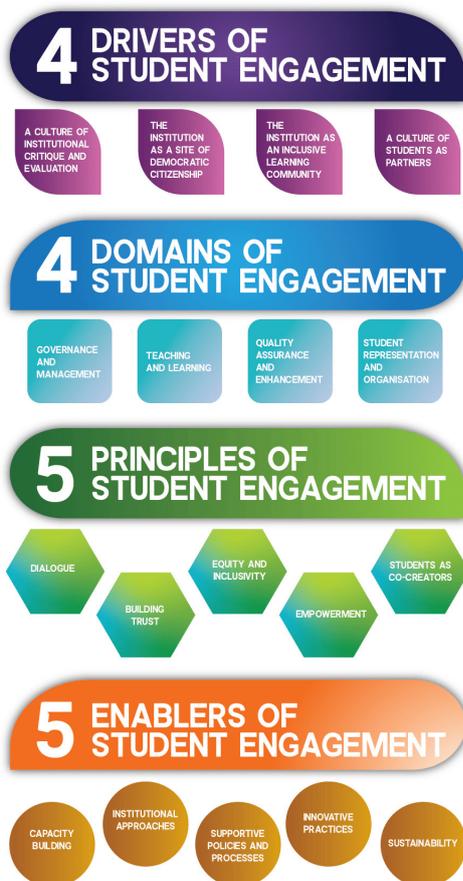
IMPACT ■

Alongside increasing student leadership capabilities at the programme level, NStEP has sought to explore institutional capacities to create an environment for student engagement that fosters a real sense of participative collaboration, supporting staff and students to come together to strategise and implement changes through practice and policy. This approach was pioneered through the NStEP Institutional Analysis project that worked across 17 institutions. The workshops brought together student representatives, senior managers, professional support staff from across services, as well as students and teachers from across disciplines to analyse their areas of strength and weakness within student engagement, to discuss what needed to be prioritised by the institution, and to create student partnership strategies that would ultimately increase the role of students within decision-making and enhance the educational experience (see Institutional Support in the links section).

Through these workshops, institutions and students’ unions, working with staff and students from across roles, have been able to work together towards common goals that can strengthen the student voice across the domains of student engagement. Critical national projects have been developed from this work, examining student engagement in feedback, strategic decision-making, representation, and supporting staff.

NStEP is now developing a short course (6-8 weeks) for staff to build their capacity to engage and partner with students, ultimately co-creating solutions that can improve education.

Overall, the programme aims to bring together students and staff from across roles, remits and disciplines to foster a renewed enthusiasm for meaningful student engagement in the Irish higher education system. A core part of this work is to re-examine what student engagement means within the Irish context, setting new national definitions and a ‘practical’ framework around which learning communities can be strengthened. NStEP launched a new draft version of this framework in November 2020.



Source: National Student Engagement Programme Ireland | Oisín Hassan | Nov 23, 2020 | framework, Student Engagement Resources

NStEP has been considering qualitative impacts, such as expanding training offerings, providing deeper capacity building for staff and students, and enhanced institutional development. In addition, we have reviewed the quantitative feedback from 3,200+ students since 2016 to inform new opportunities, including recognition awards for students.

Since February 2020, NStEP has begun the process of reimagining its student training programme. Through analysis of student feedback and sectoral consultations, it identified three main objectives:

1. Broaden student participation.
2. Update existing content and craft additional learning materials to meet the needs of the Irish higher education sector.
3. Support the ongoing development of class reps beyond a single training session while simultaneously collecting more detailed feedback and student engagement experiences across the sector.

NStEP is remodelling training using a blended learning approach. In-person training continues to focus on crucial concepts using collaborative learning with substantial opportunities for participation. The initial training is complemented by resource-driven online learning. Online training, hosted on NStEP's website using a Learning Management System, affords the flexibility needed by students by offering a variety of short modules available throughout the academic year. Student participation in this blended model will be recognised and incentivised by awarding a digital badge issued by NStEP in 2021.

In supporting and developing practice within institutions, the programme needs to reach more staff who teach and engage them in our work. Often, staff who teach will have limited opportunities to engage with national initiatives; therefore, the programme can bring student engagement into their teaching and learning professional context through the professional development short course roll-out. Gathering evidence of good practice, challenges, and enablers to student engagement can then be more effectively supported, allowing NStEP to nationally analyse and share this practice.

To achieve the ultimate aims of the programme, NStEP has developed a new 'Culture of Partnership' workshop project that had been piloted in an institution before the pandemic. This project will allow each institution to build on what was learned and acted upon during the initial institutional analysis while implementing new strategies to enhance education through student-staff collaboration.

The programme is now evaluating how best to capture our impact, especially considering the disruption caused by the pandemic.

NStEP was created to respond to the lack of central or national support for institutions, students' unions, staff and students. The founding report (published 2016) noted the need for national policy to treat students as partners, not consumers, and the need for capacity building to ensure institutions actively engaged and supported students as part of the learning community. Previous practice was ad hoc in many places, with very little sustainable practice or facilitation with student training. No core materials or guides existed for all institutions and students' unions, while networking and practice sharing opportunities were also ad hoc. NStEP utilised international practice from Scotland, provided via consultancy with sparqs (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland) to build the training programme and create institutional analysis materials. From there, we have built on this initial network of practitioners to develop a cohesive national strategy that supports institutional action.



National Student Engagement Programme

Clár Rannpháirtíochta Náisiúnta na Mac Léinn

Student partnership policy for the students and staff of universities in Iceland



Scope/Country: Iceland
Institution(s): The National Union of Icelandic Students

DESCRIPTION

The student partnership policy developed by Iceland's National Union of Students (LÍS) aims to ensure blended participation of students in higher education institutions committees/councils. In addition, it targets students and staff who serve on these bodies.

Based on the previously mentioned Irish model, the idea behind this policy is for staff and students to have a clear overview of their responsibilities on some issues within the universities. While the Irish model concerns the partnership between one university and its students, the Icelandic version regards all students and all staff within Icelandic higher education institutions. The policy was approved at the National Assembly 2021 and published in Icelandic on LÍS' webpage studentar.is and is yet to be published in English.

The objectives of this practice are to strengthen and better the relationship between students and the staff at each higher education institution, encourage students to participate in work within the HEIs where their voices can be heard as well as provide "rough" instructions on how to have mutual respect between students and staff. Moreover, by creating this policy, the Icelandic NUS aims to create a document where both parties can find help or a guide of how they can better the partnership and work, discover best practices, work through troubles they may have regarding participation and build a basis where people can come together on an equal basis, have mutual respect and work towards making a better university community.



100 Good Practices in Polish Higher Education : A Guide for Student Unions

The Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland



Scope/Country: Poland
Institution(s): Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland
Mode: Online
Number of participants: approximately 300 student unions | 1000 students

■ DESCRIPTION

This initiative results from collaborative efforts by student unions operating under the auspices of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland, and it was prompted by the new Law on Higher Education and Science, which went into effect in 2018. It changed many things and involved the students in putting the new legal document into effect. As a result, a list of practices was compiled and classified into appropriate categories based on consultations, discussions, and surveys. These areas include the internationalisation of education, infrastructure, etc.

This innovative practice aims to showcase solutions that have been adopted at other universities and highlight them as best practices. Furthermore, the practices gathered to serve as a resource for student unions when developing and opening on study programmes. 13 good practices were chosen and included in this guide within the framework of STUPS, and their descriptions can be found below.

Collaboration with students in the implementation of a study program

Łódź University of Technology

The Łódź University of Technology has decided to involve students in the development of new study programmes. Initially, the administration of one of the faculties requested assistance from the Students' Union in surveying student satisfaction. Following the analysis of the study's findings, representatives from both grades met with representatives from the Students' Union and the university. As a result of the discussions and students' expressed expectations via a questionnaire, a new study programme was developed and implemented.

Participation of students in a team charged with developing a new study programme

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

In the academic year 2019/2020, the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań launched a new MA study programme in Polish philology. Several consultations were held before its implementation. To begin, the Faculty assembled a programme team of three students. They were notified of each team meeting and allowed to express their opinions. Furthermore, the Faculty's Students' Union polled BA and MA students. On this basis, conclusions were drawn about the expectations of future second-cycle students and the comments made about the curriculum by second-cycle students.

Weekend Training Program

Cracow University of Technology

The Law on Higher Education and Science requires students' unions to conduct training sessions on student rights and responsibilities. The Students' Union at the Cracow University of Technology took an unusual approach in this case. In addition to the workshop sessions, first-year students learn about research opportunities at the University and other student organisations. They can also attend workshops on cybersecurity, data protection, and soft skill development. Furthermore, the University and its partners provide each participant with a gift package.

Guide for students from students

Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw

Students' Guide is a project to benefit the student community at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The publication was created as part of Turbo's project, which also includes a gallery and a student forum. The idea arose from a desire for a broad exchange of student perspectives and experiences. The Guide is an attempt at objectivity and a subjective description of the current reality and state of the academic community. It contains data gleaned from student opinions gathered during a survey of the Academy's entire community, as well as personal statements. Additionally, readers can find information on various subjects, including meals, housing, entertainment, legal issues, and study rules. The Guide authors emphasise that the publication's objective was to promote "reading, thinking, and acting."

Tutoring and mentoring program

Collegium Da Vinci in Poznań

Collegium Da Vinci in Poznań offers a comprehensive tutoring and mentoring program for first-year students. Students respond positively to this type of assistance, demonstrating their dedication to the program. Mentoring focuses on evaluating students' abilities both during and after their studies. It is noteworthy for its role in supervising students throughout the educational process. Additionally, they work with a trained tutor who is responsible for dredging assistance competencies and skills.

Help Desk

Medical University in Białystok

First-year students at the Medical University in Białystok have the opportunity to speak with older students after completing mandatory library training by visiting a unique stand created for them. In addition, students receive campus maps and a student calendar containing important information about the University's administration, Erasmus+ program, and Students' Union. Students can also take a tour of the University's buildings and learn about its history. The initiative has been well-received due to its didactic and integrating roles.



Student tutors

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Every year, the Students' Union of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań appoints student tutors to instruct first-year students in their respective fields of study. Furthermore, the union's members create Facebook groups for all BA and MA programmes and, more importantly, assist students in adjusting to their new university environment. Additionally, they cover the most critical aspects of education, including scholarships, student rights and responsibilities, registration, physical education classes, and foreign language courses. Additionally, they provide training on student rights and obligations held on first-year student day.

JOIN US-ALL Great Stories Begin Here

AGH University of Science and Technology in Craców

In response to the growing number of international students enrolled at the AGH University of Science and Technology in Cracow and the need to provide comprehensive support to all people involved in the university's internationalisation process, one of the AGH's units launched a project JOIN US-ALL. The initiative aims to familiarise international students with Polish culture, facilitate experience exchange, and aid in integration. Adaptation days, as well as fun and games with others, are among the activities.

Buddy mentoring program

Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk

The Buddy Mentoring Program, run by the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk, is another exciting opportunity for students. This program assists students who enrol at this higher education institution in planning their trip to Poland and the rest of their student life. Furthermore, the Academy creates a Facebook group to facilitate students' communication and provide a forum for discussion and assistance to anyone interested in international exchange. Students can also enrol in a Polish language course to learn the fundamentals of the language during their stay. They are then instructed through the use of pedagogical drama, simulation games, or small group work. Consequently, various skills and competencies are developed throughout the educational process to adapt to Poland's everyday reality.

Welcome Day

AGH University of Science and Technology in Craców

A welcome Day is a one-day event designed to introduce international students to the AGH's regulations and student life in Cracow and Poland. After the formal introduction, the second part of the event allows students to engage in less formal conversations with teachers and staff.



Student Councils

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Adam Mickiewicz University's Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology is well-known for its innovative projects and educational activities. The Student Council comprises students, teaching staff, and elected student representatives and delegates from all Polish philology courses. The Council's responsibilities include providing information on the most critical aspects of studying, conducting research and speaking to support improving the quality of education, and meeting with the Institute of Polish Philology administration. These people are the first point of contact for any conflicts or potentially problematic situations, such as those caused by students' or staff's inappropriate behaviour.

Students in the Study Programme Council

Łódź University of Technology

Study Programme Councils are a new body in the new structure of the Łódź University of Technology. This unit is in charge of developing study programmes, preparing and improving the concept of new fields of study, and analysing survey data. Each Study Programme Council also has a student representative who contributes to their work. As a result, providing feedback on study programmes is more efficient.

Idea Box

Łódź University of Technology

The Idea Box is another project in which students and employees of the Łódź University of Technology submit ideas for improving the comfort of studying, working, and the quality of education itself. The project is supported by the performance budget. As a result, the University allows its employees and students to impact how the University operates directly. The prize pool was increased to PLN 50,000 in 2019 and was intended for university-wide projects.



Student Participation Plan



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): University of Seville,
 Vice-Rector's Office for Students
 (Guidance and Attention to Students Area)
 Mode: Blended mode
 Number of participants: 71.000

DESCRIPTION

This practice aims to promote student participation in university life, in all of its social areas, by implementing the necessary measures for their integral development as citizens and providing our students with the best possible tools to address their future integration into the labour market.

It is a strategy that was created with the help of students in the first place. It has developed its own identity while visualising and incorporating all university life models into a single document and image.

IMPACT

1. Strengthen communication channels with students.
2. Contribute to the student's comprehensive training by providing courses and workshops to develop the transversal skills currently in demand by the labour market.
3. Involve students in cultural, educational, informative, sports, volunteer, cooperation, and academic development initiatives.
4. Increase student participation in activities involving peer collaboration.
5. Encourage active participation in governing bodies by involving the student body in the University's strategic actions and supporting their activity through a specialised training program.
6. Support student projects of interest aimed at disseminating and transmitting knowledge to society.



Binding student referendums



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Student Council of the Pablo de Olavide University (CEUPO)
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 11.000

DESCRIPTION

Audience:

All the student body of the Pablo de Olavide University. Objective: Decision making directly and from the base.

The referendums carried out by the UPO Student Council sought to submit to the decision of the entire student body those matters and debates of particular relevance, so that said decisions had the maximum representation and support possible.

These referendums were organised in phases:

1. In the Plenary of the Student Council (with between 300-400 representatives), the questions and the deadlines were decided.
2. An extensive discussion was held in each class, facilitated by the teachers. After the debate, they proceeded to vote in each class (by show of hands or by secret ballot as required by the student body present).

Finally, the delegate of each class collected the minutes with the result of the voting and deposited them at the headquarters of the Student Council.

In the first referendum, on a 10-day academic strike as a form of protest, the participation of 8772 students from a community of about 11,000 approx was achieved. The improvement in the culture of the involvement allowed the holding of another five referendums in the two subsequent years.

Innovative element:

The promotion of direct democracy among the student body.



Andalusian sectoral meeting



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Andalusian
Coordinator of Student
Representatives (CARE)
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 180

■ DESCRIPTION

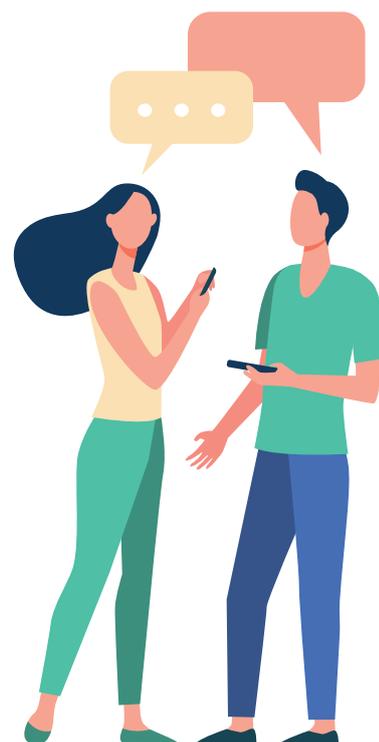
This initiative aims to create new connections between students studying for the same degree at different universities, improve current study plans, and communicate good practices between universities through the student body.

The Andalusian Sectorial Meeting was established as a multidisciplinary forum for Andalusian students to contribute structurally to the learning processes proposed by each Andalusian university to consolidate sectorial networks of Andalusian scope and to create sectorial networks that did not previously have representation.

Student representatives from each university met by degrees/disciplines of knowledge and articulated proposals addressed to both their respective deans and, as appropriate, the competent Ministry. Furthermore, the meeting included several spaces dedicated to debate and teamwork, training sessions and workshops, a joint plenary session, and a discussion with Junta de Andalucía university leaders.

■ IMPACT

Four new sectorial sectors that did not previously exist in Andalusia or Spain were created a posteriori. This initiative articulates a dynamic sectorial forum created by and for students, accommodating all degrees and discussing academic issues that are common and sectorial.



Forum for sectoral dialogue between universities



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Junta de Andalucía
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 20
Audience: **Highest student representatives and vice-chancellors for Students of Andalusian universities**

■ DESCRIPTION

This initiative aims to create a forum for sectoral dialogue between universities, the regional government, and the Andalusian student body. This forum, which met three times at the request of the Junta de Andalucía, allowed all student policies to be addressed concurrently with all actors involved and the necessary flexibility to deal with all topics of interest.

The General Directorate of Universities, Vice-Rectors for Students, and the highest student representatives from Andalusian universities were among those who attended. All parties involved had already agreed on the agenda, and unpublished debates could be given so far.

■ IMPACT

Many regulations that were only available until then in some universities, such as the compensation courts, were homogenized parties. The innovative elements of this practice is the transversality of the debate fostered by the direct dialogue of all the actors involved, avoiding breakdowns in parallel negotiations, and the traction exerted by the most advanced universities in student rights.



Photo by Mikael Kristenson on Unsplash

Evaluation talks between the dean and student representatives



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union and Departments, University of Applied Science of Upper Austria
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 1.000

DESCRIPTION

The goal of this innovative practice is to improve educational quality by emphasising student evaluations and feedback.

Following each semester, an obligatory feedback meeting is held with all year and student representatives to discuss the evaluations. Students must express their concerns and work with the program director to find a solution. It is a meaningful exchange and good cooperation between students and teachers to improve and develop the university system positively. As part of this practice, the department head and student representatives must discuss the semester's evaluation results. For example, if a professor was evaluated poorly three times in a row, the professor could no longer teach.

Students can also provide more feedback and be more involved in their study forms. They critically examine study topics and provide feedback on student life and professor-student interactions. This ensures a fair exchange and a better academic experience. The innovative aspect of this is to fire professors who discriminate against students, change the current system, and improve education quality.



Source: ÖH FH Oberösterreich Facebook

4

Student info point

A brief overview of critical points

Depending on learner characteristics and institutional priorities and contexts, these practices can take many different forms.



Mobility programme for new student representatives, Blas Infante Program



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Coordinadora Andaluza de Representantes de Estudiantes (CARE)
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 12
Audience: New Student Representatives

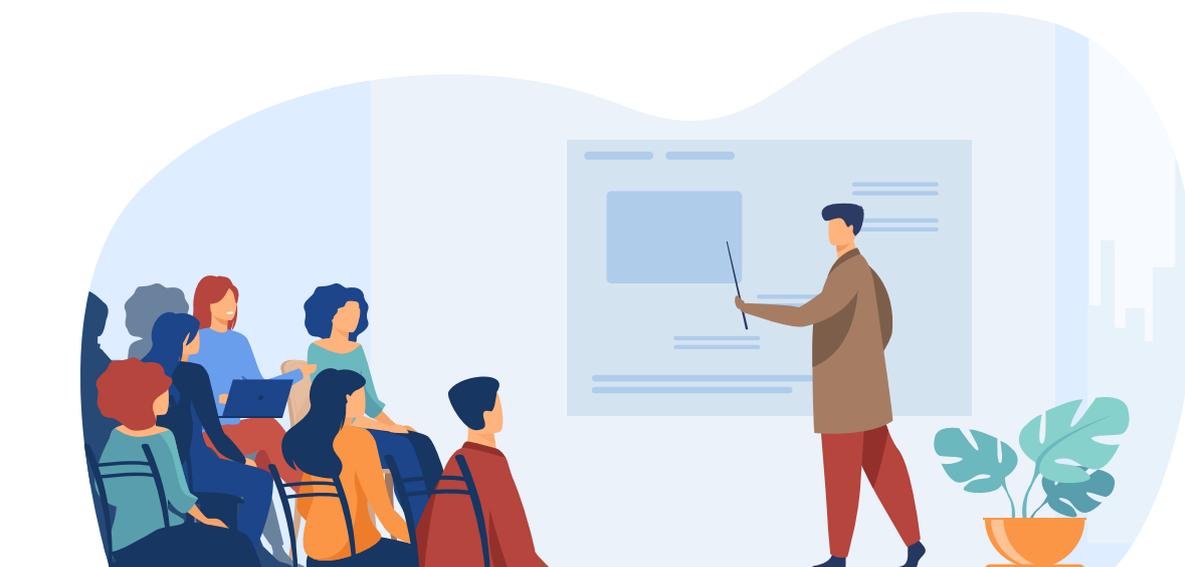
■ DESCRIPTION

Through its mobility program, the main goal of this practice is to train new generations of student representatives.

Under this program, organised and financed by the CARE student councils, stays of one to two weeks were ranked in other Andalusian universities for newly admitted student representatives. Moreover, with their participation in the daily activity of the destination student council, they became familiar with other practices and realities while supporting their good performance.

■ IMPACT

A total of 12 student representatives from 3 universities (UHU, UPO, UAL) were formed. This initiative allowed the creation and financing of a specific mobility program for student representatives and strengthened ties between organisations and people from different territories



Mentoring programme I



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union
(University of Applied Science of
Upper Austria)

■ DESCRIPTION

In this mentoring programme, students from the year above explain the campus and the rules to first-semester students and insider knowledge about everyday life. The objectives of this practice are for students to get to know each other, network, create new group dynamics and learn from one another. This practice results in always having a mentor to talk to in times of uncertainty.



Mentoring programme II



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Faculty of Education, Psychology and Sports Sciences (University of Huelva)
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 50

DESCRIPTION

From the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Sports Sciences of the University of Huelva, defined within the Orientation and Tutorial Action Plan, the Mentor Program has been launched and targets new coming students.

The goal of this program is to develop support, guidance, and training mechanisms for new students in the faculty, which is articulated through the assistance of other students from higher courses, for the proper development of their university life (facilitating their academic and social integration) and success in their studies.

The role of the mentors is to offer guidance to newcomers (first year) or international students (Erasmus) or from another Spanish university (SICUE) for academic and social integration in university life. As main functions, we find:

- To welcome new students, in general, by collaborating in the Welcome Days and in a particular way with their mentoring group.
- Develop mentoring sessions with the group awarded work in which, first, the plot of "academic orientation" (subjects of the course, academic standards, characteristics of the subjects, teaching guides). Secondly, the «social orientation» will be worked on, helping your group to adapt to the university world, the organisation of the faculty.
- Finally, they will collaborate in the "administrative orientation" of their group of tutors, offering them information on administrative procedures, the Faculty Secretariat, scholarships and grants, mobility, etc.

NEW MEASURES IN MADRID

1- Bars ,restaurants and everything will close at 21:00

2-Everyone should be by law at home at 22:00 until 06:00

3-Not allowed to be in a house unless is yours

4- EXTREMELY important to only take out the mask to drink or eat and then put back

5-New restricted areas, link in bio

6- 50% capacity inside bars

7- 75% capacity in outside spaces

8- Meetings of max 4persons



SOURCE: COMUNICADO DE PRENSA COMUNIDAD DE MADRID 23-01-021

Unity is committed to provide fun and safe activities in your studyabroad

What to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been contact with someone who has:

- 1- Contact us as soon as possible.
- 2- Stay at home and do online classes.
- 3- Fill the form that was sent to you. Also in BIO.
- 4- Contact the persons with whom you have been in contact +15min without mask and distance.
- 5- If you have any doubts contact the university: info.covid19@comillas.edu

Thanks for helping us!
A safe semester is a happy semester!

Unity is committed to provide fun and safe activities in your studyabroad

Steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- 1- Wearing masks is mandatory in all of the events. Only take out if drinking.
- 2- We will divide people in groups/ tables of max 4 persons. DON'T change tables please.
- 3- The number of people in each event is limited and access must be with a prior reservation.
- 4- In case of potential outbreak we will contact every person
- 5- Events close at 21:00 following the restrictions of the ministry of health
- 6- We will provide hand sanitizer for everyone as well as masks in case anyone needs it.
- 7- In case someone doesn't follow the indications of the staff, that person will be expelled from the event and forbidden to join us in the future.

Thanks for the understanding!
A safe semester is a happy semester!

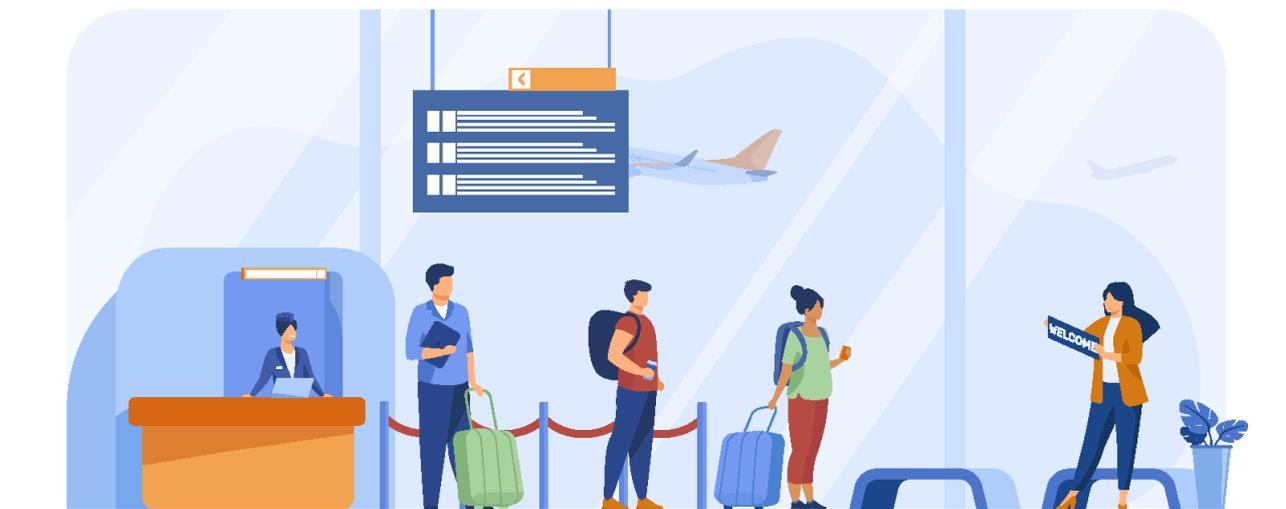
Buddy programme I



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union
(University of Applied Science of
Upper Austria)

■ DESCRIPTION

Local students volunteer to be international students' buddies at the university. This is primarily aimed at students who are just starting out on campus or in a new city. Students are usually picked up at the airport or train station by their buddies. This program aims to promote international and intercultural exchange, improve language skills, meet new people, and participate in exciting recreational activities.



Buddy programme II



Scope/Country: **Spain**
Institution(s): **International Relations Service (University of Huelva)**
Mode: **Blended**
Number of participants: **50**
Audience: **International students**

DESCRIPTION

This practice aims to connect international students with local students for guidance and advice before their arrival and during their stay to expedite their integration into university life.

The program is intended for UHU university students interested in meeting international students, helping them with the language, adapting to the city and the university itself, and the customs and way of life in Spain.

Sponsor-sponsored pairings are made based on the participants' affinity for languages, studies, preferences, and hobbies. Once international students arrive in the host country, the students of the University of Huelva assist them in the management of administrative procedures, participation in the city's cultural life, knowledge of the environment, and university life in general.

IMPACT

This practice has resulted in the formation of a pool of student mentors within the Faculty. The use of the peer mentoring model has proven to be effective and beneficial to international students.



Invitation of students to open days



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): University of the Balearic Islands
Mode: Online

DESCRIPTION

The goal of the open days is to connect current and prospective students. Current students are invited to share their experiences and thoughts with future students, asking and discussing any topic of interest.

This initiative allows students to gain firsthand knowledge on university life while also increasing future students who enrol in university programmes. Going outside of the formal setting and having a more intimate gathering with student testimonies allows prospective students to make informed decisions.



Universitat
de les Illes Balears



Tour of city | Speed getting to know each other

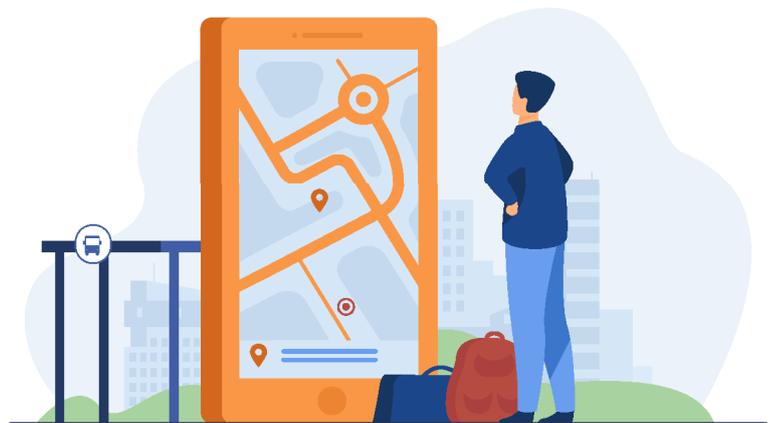


Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): National Student Union
Student Union of the Department
University of Applied Science of
Upper Austria
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 45

■ DESCRIPTION

This practice aims to bring people together and promote well-being on campus and in the community. As part of this practice, student union members gathered in the city one evening a week after the semester began and were given a general tour of the city. Following that, the students' union organised a speed-connection event in a restaurant. Students from the first semester sat across from each other and exchanged questions and topics for a few minutes. As a result, this event provided networking opportunities and new ideas for the daily study routine.

Now there is more exchange between students from different years. Before, there were not even representatives from each cohort or group. So there is more connectedness, more accessible low-threshold communication and new ideas from some students.



5

Soft competencies

A brief overview of critical points

The following practices have been shown to be beneficial. These practices take many different forms, depending on learner characteristics and on institutional priorities and contexts.



Coaching and self-knowledge sessions



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): University of Huelva
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 25

DESCRIPTION

This practice seeks to produce the best professionals from the student body, encompassing critical and other abilities and academic qualities.

The student candidates are chosen through an open call. Students who apply and are selected for an interview go through a competency training program that includes coaching and self-awareness sessions.

IMPACT

Year after year, the number of students interested in participating in coaching and self-knowledge sessions grows. Furthermore, the skills gained through program participation are recognised. Beyond knowledge, behaviours, and values, this program considers the student's academic record and other significant professional and personal life areas.



Universidad
de Huelva



Personal Coaching



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union
(University of Applied Science of
Upper Austria)
Mode: Online

■ DESCRIPTION

All students are eligible for free structured personal coaching from the students union to improve their leadership, communication, negotiating, management, and other professional abilities.



Student projects



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Vice-Rector's Office for Students, University of Huelva
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 650

DESCRIPTION

This initiative seeks to enhance and promote university life by funding projects and activities that benefit all or a portion of its constituents.

Students' projects and activities must improve the community's training and/or acquisition of personal, professional, or technical skills and carry out solidarity actions whose beneficiary is the community itself.

The projects are related to the following work areas: strengthening student representation and participation, improving relations with secondary education, disseminating and promoting the image of the University of Huelva among prospective students Academic, vocational, and professional student orientation Social program development and implementation, as well as assistance services and student care, The role of social volunteering and cooperation in the university community, as well as the promotion of associations, are being raised among the university community.

IMPACT

Twenty-five projects have been requested and implemented during the time that this call has been in effect. Each project is initiated, managed, and implemented by the students themselves. Students can learn project management, public speaking, team building, and other skills through this process.



Doctoral grant | Development of own's project

Call for grants for the completion of Industrial Doctorates



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): The University of Huelva, Vice-Rector's Office for Research and Transfer
Audience: PhD students

■ DESCRIPTION

This initiative aims to provide grants to contribute to the socio-economic fabric's competitiveness and internationalisation through talent retention by placing doctoral students in positions to develop R&D&I projects in a company.

A grant of € 12,500 per year is given to public or private companies that have signed a collaboration agreement with the UHU. Furthermore, the doctoral student will be assigned to complete a thesis that meets the requirements of the Industrial Mention. This assistance is intended to assist the company in co-financing a person's contract. These grants may be renewed for two more annuities if funds are available.

■ IMPACT

Completion of a doctoral thesis with an industrial mention, which helps postgraduate students advance in their careers.

Allows carrying out the doctoral thesis in a context different from that of the university facilities and the possibility of carrying out projects in investigation, development and innovation in collaboration with the company, facilitating the students' approach to the productive fabric.



An ideal class created by students | The reverse class “Professor for a day”



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): Vice-Rector’s Office for Students and University Centers/ International Postgraduate School (University of Seville)
 Mode: Audiovisual recording
 Audience: Students enrolled in centres belonging to the University of Seville

DESCRIPTION

To advance and improve the quality of university education, it is critical to understand students’ perspectives on the teaching methodologies used in class, as a direct recipient of them, and seek their cooperation in the changes and innovations that occur in the classroom.

The Vice-Office Rector’s for Students promotes the call, which is part of the implementation of the University of Seville’s I Student Participation Plan, to encourage students to participate in teaching innovation mechanisms and to provide them with a space for expression and presentation of proposals aimed at improving teaching methodologies in their respective studies.

The goal is for each participant to convey an original and creative vision of their “ideal class” in the form of a short video. To do so, the student must pretend to be a teacher and devise a methodologically innovative proposal, the summary presentation of which must be recorded.

There will be one 10-minute video for each participant, which may include different themes such as the representation and/or theatricalisation of a short class, new forms of knowledge transmission, innovative ideas for improving the quality of university education in the studies under consideration. Any of the subjects and/or subjects included in the study plan of the student’s degree will be referred to in the video’s innovation proposal. Each student may give a single presentation, either individually or as a group.

IMPACT

This practice did not previously exist. It has been framed within the teaching innovation program. TContrarythe usual, it is to say when it is the teachers who propose innovative practices in teaching. A prize is awarded for each branch of knowledge of €600 and accession of €300.

It usually has high participation, resulting in the works of sufficient quality so that there are no deserted prizes, there is competitiveness.



6

Social inclusion | Community development

**6.1 Inclusion of disadvantaged |
vulnerable groups**

6.2 Gender Equality

6.3 Adapting to COVID-19 pandemic



6.1

Inclusion of disadvantaged | vulnerable groups



‘Holding Hands’ | Interaction between the students and the seniors in the local communities



Scope/Country: Portugal
Institution(s): Academic Association of the University of Évora
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 38

DESCRIPTION

Students from the University of Évora and elders from two nursing homes in Évora made up the audience. The goal was to bring together two generations who both live in Évora.

The students volunteered every two weeks to visit nursing homes and promote some activities to the residents (games, songs, painting, etc.) The elders adored the students and requested that they visit them more frequently. At the time, this was the only informal group of students visiting nursing facilities.



Source: Facebook group AAUE



Audiovisual resources to help students with special needs

“Include me”



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): European University (Universidad Europea)
 Mode: Blended
 Number of participants: 35 students and 4 teachers

■ DESCRIPTION

To provide audiovisual resources to teachers and other educational community members to assist students with special needs.

An interdisciplinary team of teachers and students (Higher Degree and Grade Training Cycle) and knowledge areas have created a series of dramatised audiovisual pieces that allow characterising the standard behaviours of students with certain déficits or special needs while also providing teachers with a guide on how to act in the classroom with these students.

■ IMPACT

This practice has numerous advantages. First, demonstrate the characteristics of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) so that teachers can identify and respond appropriately to associated behaviours. Second, sensitise students to this type of deficiency through their participation in practice. Third, incorporate video production into the content of subjects at various educational levels—fourth, foster student responsibility by involving them in complex interdisciplinary working groups. Finally, the practice directly involved students from two groups (35 students) and four teachers.

Implementing this type of “inter collaborative” and multidirectional practices fosters activities and projects that improve the quality and awareness of teaching work and students’ commitment. This practice enabled the institution to evaluate the possibilities and capabilities of enhancing learning through audiovisual storytelling. Students and teachers have embraced the Diversity Unit as a welcoming and helpful resource provided by the University to all.

A roadmap is established for the future so that the project continues to grow, both involving students (expanding the number of subjects) and teachers who can participate in the project.



Teaching social education with and through groups



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): Department of Applied Pedagogy and Psychology of Education, University of the Balearic Islands
 Mode: Offline
 Number of participants: 57
 Audience: Students of the bachelor's degree program in social education

■ DESCRIPTION

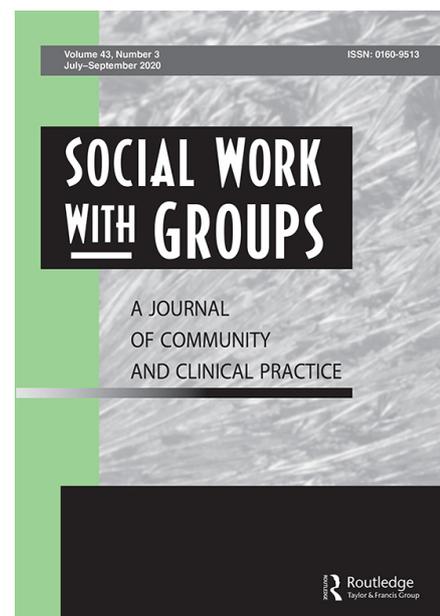
This practice entails adhering to a teaching model based in a group dynamic setting, which includes various elements that necessitate cooperative group work, continuous assessment, peer assessment, class consideration as a group, and the professor's consideration as a guide.

This group work experience aims to achieve a variety of goals, including developing relevant social and personal skills for students' professional futures, promoting the development of the class as a whole, creating spaces of confidence, and fostering positive interdependence among students.

A teaching model based on experiential learning and group work used in the training of social educators. Based on his adult learning and development work, this teaching model is based on Kolb's (1984) comprehensive, multidimensional experiential learning model.

IMPACT ■

The findings show that this teaching model promotes learning and understanding of the main course contents (social empowerment processes, social participation, community development and nonformal education, and cultural cooperation and development) while also contributing to positive interdependence among students, creating spaces of confidence and mutual understanding, and cultural cooperation and development.



Delivering children toys to a hospital: “Give Christmas to a child”



Scope/Country: Portugal
Institution(s): AAUE (Academic Association of the University of Évora)
Mode: Offline

DESCRIPTION

The goal of this practice was to collect new and semi-new toys in Évora and distribute them to three institutions (a pediatric hospital, the municipal hall, and a children’s home). As a result, 321 toys were collected and distributed, and the event became Évora’s first primary toy collection.



Inclusion of disadvantaged groups by student volunteers 'Volunteering during confinement march 2020'



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Student Council UCAM (Catholic University of San Antonio of Murcia)
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 169
Audience: Elderly people and those with reduced mobility

■ DESCRIPTION

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a group of students banded together to help those who couldn't leave their homes.

The university student volunteers coordinated and carried out tasks in response to the needs of the public services and the entities with which they collaborated, such as answering phones and providing logistical support in the organisation of the clothing and food stores, which were working tirelessly at the time to serve the most vulnerable families.

■ IMPACT

A high number of students volunteered for this initiative. 169 students helped vulnerable people.



The Deputy Mayor of Cartagena, Noelia Arroyo, in a meeting with older people. / A. C., Source: [La Verdad newspaper](#) /

Enabling affordable student accommodation



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): University of Huelva,
 University Community Attention
 Service
 Mode: Offline
 Number of participants: 20

DESCRIPTION

This initiative was created to make it easier for students to live with young people struggling with social deprivation, job insecurity, or economic insecurity. As part of an Alternative Accommodation Program, students from the University of Huelva stay at Casa Paco Girón.

They help with the house's upkeep and maintenance in exchange for a small financial benefit, provide academic support when needed, and participate in leisure and free time activities with the other young people who live there. Mutual assistance among program participants is thus facilitated, promoting values like solidarity, mutual support, coexistence, and respect.

IMPACT

This program has been requested by many students who have been struggling to pay for their housing. Thus, by putting university students in coexistence with young people at risk of social exclusion in personal and work autonomy, the UHU increases and promotes high values diversity.



VIVIENDAS COMPARTIDAS ENTRE PERSONAS MAYORES Y ESTUDIANTES

Estar en compañía no es estar con alguien, sino estar en alguien.



2016 - 2017 Este curso te ofrecemos un

ALOJAMIENTO CON CORAZON

PROGRAMA DE ALOJAMIENTO UNIVERSITARIO EN CASA PACO GIRÓN, PATROCINADO POR AGUAS DE HUELVA

Con 150€ mensuales y tu colaboración en las labores académicas y domésticas podrás disfrutar del alojamiento y la convivencia con jóvenes que están en un proceso de autonomía personal y laboral.

Plazas muy limitadas. Más info: www.uhu.es/sacu/alojamiento

Harassment-prevention system



Scope/Country: Finland
Institution(s): Student union
Laureamko
Mode: Online

DESCRIPTION

The primary goal of the system is to prevent harassing situations from occurring. Second, it allows students to report incidents of discrimination, harassment, bantering, or other unfavourable behaviour to Laureamko, the student union (Laurea UAS, Finland). Laureamko volunteers then react by taking appropriate actions, engaging in relevant conversations with staff, carrying out activities agreed upon by all stakeholders, or providing peer support. Third, the service offers the option of communicating anonymously.

IMPACT

The system sends a clear message that the student union and the school are committed to preventing discriminatory or exclusionary behaviour. No one is left to deal with difficult situations alone.



Source: [Laureamko webpage](#)

Inclusion awareness campaign



Scope/Country: **Finland**
 Institution(s): **Student union Laureamko**
 Mode: **Offline**
 Audience: **Students from underrepresented groups**

DESCRIPTION

The primary aim of the harassment prevention campaign *Let's talk about it!* is to raise awareness and educate peers about student diversity and non-inclusive practices.

The campaign takes a holistic approach in organising several different, diversity-related events and activities. These activities can be organised based on the **sample** every year or suitable rhythm each semester.

The activities are organised and run by the student union Laureamko at Laurea UAS and involve volunteers from the student body. Laureamko believes that a peer-action based system is more approachable and credible than a formal institution-led campaign. The concept has been developed in cooperation with Laurea student teams on a Service Design study unit. The results of these practices are in enabling the study environment to be more inclusive, and it is innovative for the fact that this was a peer-action based and non-institution-led practice.

CHECKLIST EXCERPT FROM
A self-assessment checklist

- ✔ What do you do to build students' self-confidence and self-efficacy?
- ✔ What learning opportunities do you provide for students to work autonomously as well as in teams / collaboratively?
- ✔ What staff development is in place to ensure staff appreciate their roles in fostering higher levels of student engagement?
- ✔ How do you seek to inject suitable challenge into your course?
- ✔ What do you do to be as inclusive and welcoming of diversity as possible, enabling students to enhance their social and cultural capital in the process?
- ✔ How well do you work with central support services to ensure students are well supported?

6.2

Gender Equality



Education on gender-based violence, Key actors against gender violence



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): The University of Huelva, Directorate of Equality and attention to diversity. University of Huelva
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 118

DESCRIPTION

Raising awareness, preventing, detecting, and responding to gender violence and gender-based discrimination in the university environment.

The initiative aims to train and sensitise the university community about gender violence, creating collaboration agents who know how to prevent toxic relationships, detect cases of sexist abuse in their environment, support victims in seeking help, and utilising existing resources.



IMPACT

The formation of a pool of Gender Equality-trained students who will directly collaborate in the monitoring and referral of detected cases of gender violence to the various services that may be involved.



Gender-diverse toilets



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union and
Administrative Staff,
The University of Applied Science of
Upper Austria
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 4

■ DESCRIPTION

This practice aimed to convert some toilet signs to gender-appropriate toilets, particularly for intersex and transgender students, to make their daily study life as comfortable as possible while avoiding exclusion or discrimination. In addition, this practice aims to promote inclusion, raise gender awareness, and make studying more enjoyable. As a result of the student representatives' input, the toilet signs have been changed.



6.3

Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic



#SafeSemester=#HappySemester: How to build community with exchange students in a safe environment



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): Unity Comillas
(International student association of
University of Pontificia Comillas)
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 25 local
students, 150 exchange students

DESCRIPTION

This initiative focuses on two major groups within the education community: exchange students from various nationalities participating in a shared semester or year abroad and local students. They are eager to contribute to the community's growth, ensure the safety of the activities, and assist the exchange students in any way they require.

The practice's goal was to ensure the safety of the incoming students during unusual Covid times. However, the ultimate goal is to demonstrate local culture's essentials and serve as a bridge between international students and the city (including healthcare centres, new measures, university protocols...)

For example, the volunteers supported the exchange students with the translation of the measures and Covid-19 protocols of the University, Madrid and the Government of Spain. Doing so, they have ensured the essential goal of the #safe semester.

Also, this group has organised #safeevents following strict measures but ensuring that nobody felt alone in a new city in such unique times. However, several challenges have faced the group of students volunteering, for example, to convince the university that doing #safeevents was better than inducing students to do house parties or join unsafe events.

IMPACT

Unity was able to organise more than 30 events, and the number of positive cases was relatively low and expected given the circumstances. Proof of the success was the considerable amount of gratitude they received at the end of the semester, some of which can be found in our Instagram @unitycomillas.

Unity is committed to provide fun and safe activities in your studyabroad

Steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19



Online meeting of students (Mini-games)



Scope/Country: Austria
 Institution(s): Students Union of the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria
 Mode: Online
 Number of participants: 29

DESCRIPTION

This practice is intended to break up the monotony of distance learning. Students take part in the event in four-person groups. As a result, to verify their groups, they must win five mini-games. For the best-dressed individuals, there is also a costume rating. The goal of the lockdown was to bring students together and improve their daily lives and well-being.

Innovative features include the ability for any student to participate, even if they live far from campus, and the ability to connect students who have just started university and have had little opportunity to meet others. Every Wednesday, students competed in MS Teams of four people, and they had to demonstrate their abilities in five mini-games.



7

Fostering student engagement based on interests

7.1 Culture and media

7.2 Sports

7.3 STEM

7.4 Sustainability



7.1

Culture and Media



Students' radio station - Uniradio



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): University of Huelva - UHU Radio Education Association
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 100

■ DESCRIPTION

It is a project created by a group of professors, journalists, and University of Huelva members, with institutional support from the UHU. It entails creating a university radio station with a social focus, in which members of the university community (and outsiders) can participate by creating their radio programs. Uniradio is housed in the UHU Faculty of Education, and each course includes a call for ideas where anyone can present their program proposal. Specific to connect programs are featured on the daily or weekly content grid (Monday through Friday). Many programs are created and run entirely by students.

For example - History Program "The memory train". - Japanese Culture Program "Nihon Yosai". - Literature program - Program of debates - Easter - Scientific Dissemination - Program made by the Council of Students and Representatives of the University of Huelva - The Typometer Program of interviews and debates made by journalists who are friends of the UHU - Program on curiosities of the informatics - El Zapato Roto, a program made by prison inmates as a form of participation and social reintegration.

■ IMPACT

Uniradio has received numerous awards, especially recognising its participatory nature by entities in Youth and Journalism.

Many people's participation reached a peak of involvement to form a family of 100 people from all areas (primarily students) across all programmes. The direct involvement of students and the co-management and direction of their content is a significant innovative component.



Source: UniRadio webpage

University bands meeting | Music session



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union
Department Linz, University of
Applied Science of Upper Austria
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 100

■ DESCRIPTION

All students on campus were invited to attend. Three different bands composed of university students performed, while others met and networked to connect students and bring their skills together. As a result, they have a better understanding of the student union, communicate with others, and are more aware of their rights. Furthermore, there was previously no way to connect students from different departments on campus.



Social media campaign during exam period



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): University of Huelva
Mode: Online

DESCRIPTION

The goal of this innovative practice is twofold: for the university, broadcasting humorous content on social media during exam season leads to an increase in interactions and followers. The campaign is aimed to be beneficial to students as they experience support and understanding from their university during their most rigorous study days and exams. It enhances the university's positive image and allows students to win prizes and spread positive messages.

The practice entails creating a public relations campaign centred on university exams. They are carried out with two types of communications: messages of encouragement to students throughout their studies and evaluations and

marketing of the UHU and its study rooms located across campus. In 2018, a Star Wars-themed campaign was created, along with innovative graphic artist concepts. That theme was chosen since it is associated with intergenerational culture, and they had recently released a film on the subject. A call for pictures was issued as part of the campaign's final phase. Participants were required to post a photo on their Instagram account while studying, incorporating some aspects of the campaign and tagging the university. This was done to raise the number of followers and allow students to promote the UHU Instagram page, which had 200 followers at the start of the campaign and grew to almost 2,000 by the end. As a prize, the winning photograph received an iPad.

IMPACT

The direct results are the increase in followers on Instagram, the social network with the fewest followers. Also, the growth of the university's positive image and direct interaction of social media profiles with students, use of creative artistic elements to encourage students. It is important to note that no Spanish university has carried out a campaign of this type. However, due to the UHU social media campaign, some universities such as Cádiz, Granada or León made a similar attempt.



7.2

Sports



Organised boat race, Boatmania



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): FH Steyr Eventverein,
Students from University of Applied
Sciences Upper Austria
Mode: Offline

■ DESCRIPTION

Boatmania is a sporting and creative event that is widely regarded as Upper Austria's craziest boat race. The goal is for students to spend quality time together. The event is usually co-organized by students from the FH Upper Austria Faculty of Management at the Steyr Campus. During this event, the most unusual watercraft and crews are sought to cover a short distance on the Steyr River. On the other hand, this challenge is about executing a unique and inventive idea rather than speed.

A jury of politicians, athletes, business people, and audience members select the one-of-a-kind watercraft and crew (through SMS voting). As a result, there is more variety and a break from the monotony of lectures and seminar rooms.



Source: [Boatmania webpage](#)

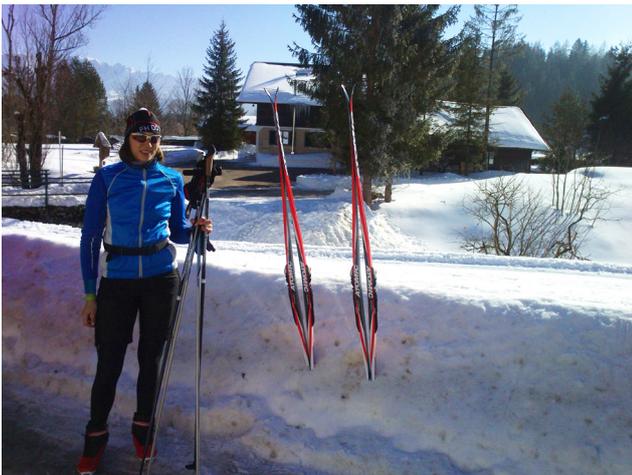
Skiing day for students



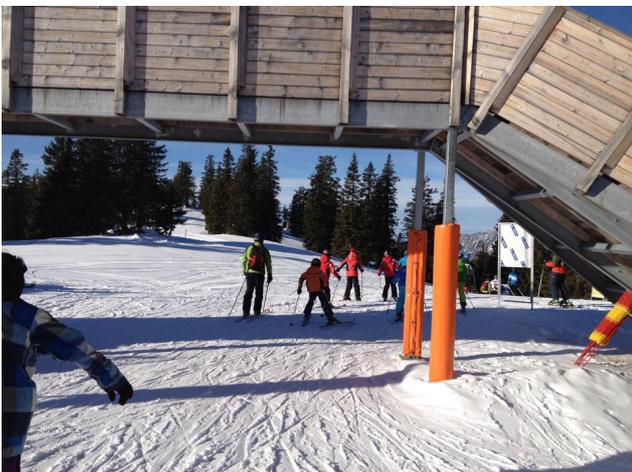
Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union Campus Hagenberg
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 40

DESCRIPTION

The goal of this practice is to participate in athletic activities together at a low cost. It is also a unique practice in that students spend the entire day together and get to know each other on a meta-level. Furthermore, by getting to know more people and associating with the school, students can make new friends and improve their overall well-being.



Source: FH OÖ Sports Team Facebook



Students' sports league



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): Student Council of the University Pablo de Olavide (CEUPO), University of Huelva
 Mode: Offline
 Number of participants: 120

DESCRIPTION

This initiative aims to promote sports participation among students while instilling values such as cooperation and ethics. Two leagues (futsal and basketball) were held, which were self-managed by the students, who were in charge of the entire organisation, including registration.

Furthermore, these leagues consisted of mixed teams, and instead of referees, they employed the figure of the mediator, which was previously unheard of in university competitions.

IMPACT

Hundreds of students were directly involved in their own sports activities, which were carried out following the values of cooperation and ethics.

In addition to being self-managed, these leagues lacked the figure of a referee. Instead, a mediator facilitated and energised the development of the matches. Nonetheless, it was ultimately up to the players to enforce the rules, so both parties promoted fair play.

This experience, in addition, was an incentive for the improvement of the traditional leagues offered by the sports service of the University.



Source: [Deportes UHU Facebook](#)

7.3

STEM



Students construct a motorcycle, Moto ETSI-UHU



Scope/Country: Spain
 Institution(s): Students of the University of Huelva
 Mode: Offline
 Number of participants: 15
 Audience: mainly students of mechanical engineering

DESCRIPTION

Participation in the MotoStudent championship.

The initiative consists of a group of students, mainly from Mechanical Engineering (though some from other disciplines such as ADE) are dedicated to the design, development, and construction of various motorcycle models from the ground up under the supervision of a professor.

Once the motorcycle is finished, they participate in the national Motostudent competition, even winning in different categories. Then, using the knowledge acquired in the Degree, students put them into practice to build different motorcycle prototypes. On the other hand, the project receives funding from many public entities and companies in the Huelva environment.

The Vice-Rector's Office for Strategic Planning, Quality and Equality is the unit responsible for providing financial support, space needs and promoting the project outside the University.

IMPACT

The best example of putting what you've learned into practice. Transfer, participation, competition, and co-management of a project created by the students themselves are innovative elements to encourage student participation.



Official photo of the MotoETSIUHU Team in the IV MotoStudent edition, Source: MotoETSIUHU webpage

Students manufacture their car, ARUS (Andalucia Racing Team) Association, Formula Student Sevilla



Scope/Country: Spain
Institution(s): University of Seville
(Higher Technical School of
Engineering, check name in English)
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 90

DESCRIPTION

An initiative to formwork teams from various fields of knowledge and/or specialities to put ideas developed within a multidisciplinary university team into action. Students develop concepts, present them, formalise their organisation, manage their resources, develop marketing and communication strategies, find sponsors, etc.

ARUS Andaluca Racing is the first Andalusian team to compete in Formula Student, the world's most prestigious university car competition, in which nearly 600 universities from all continents compete. The competition is organised by the SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers). It is supported by several well-known companies and engineers from the racing world and motorsport in general. ARUS comprises more than 90 University of Seville students who are all passionate about motorsport and competition.

Innovative elements: The ARUS Andalucía Racing Team is the Formula Student team of the University of Seville, made up of almost one hundred university students from the ETS of Engineering, the Higher Polytechnic School, the Faculty of Communication and the Faculty of Economic Sciences. In 2018, they became the first team in Spain with two single-seaters, combustion and electric, thanks to the development of their ART-18e. With them, they have been able to compete in the best circuits in the world, such as Montmeló (Spain), Hockenheim (Germany) or Red Bull Ring (Austria), among others. Furthermore, the team has developed its work thanks to a network of one hundred collaborating companies, including Endesa or Airbus, and other smaller ones, such as Nino Truck, Talleres Navarro or Itz.

In Formula Student, students design and manufacture their cars, with which they then compete on the essential circuits in the world. That accompanied them from the beginning. ARUS competes every summer in Formula Student, the so-called 'University Formula 1', in which more than 600 universities from all continents participate. In Formula Student, students design and manufacture their cars, with which they then compete on the essential circuits in the world. That accompany them from the beginning.



7.4

Sustainability



Students organising a panel on sustainability | Electoral debate



Scope/Country: Portugal
Institution(s): 100% ADN (Association) and AAUE (Academic Association of the University of Evora)
Mode: Offline
Number of participants: 80

■ DESCRIPTION

"Sustentabilidade no ADN" was an event organised by 100 per cent ADN, a local youth organisation in Évora, in collaboration with AAUE, the University of Évora's students' union. The event, which took place in the main auditorium of the University of Évora in May 2019, was the most considerable discussion on sustainability in the Évora region.

The first panel discussed rural engineering, the second panel geosciences, and the third discussed landscape, environment, and planning. In contrast, the fourth panel discussed Youth in Europe, and the final conference featured a political debate with the parties' youth candidates for the European election in May 2019.



Source: Facebook page, Sustentabilidade NO ADN

ECO community online platform for students



Scope/Country: Austria
Institution(s): Student Union,
University of Applied Science of Upper
Austria
Mode: Blended
Number of participants: 20 - 40
Audience: Students on campus
interested in sustainable topics

DESCRIPTION

The ECO's most powerful online platform aims to bring people together who share common interests, ideas, and second-panel sustainable initiatives. Furthermore, the platform seeks to implement innovative techniques, innovations, and ideas to make the campus and university more sustainable by bringing people together who share common interests, ideas, or sustainable initiatives. Every Monday, students gather as part of this platform to hear presentations on sustainable topics.

IMPACT

As a result, projects from several departments are being discussed and new concepts such as a sustainable beverage dispenser and some green energy. The innovative features of this practice are reflecting outdated processes and conserving energy at the institution. Moreover, it provides opportunities for conversation and to connect people within their sustainable initiative.



8

STEP good practices



About STEP

(European Student Engagement Project)

The idea behind the STEP project lies in the fact that according to Eurostat (2017), more than 9 million out of the 19.5 million students in Europe (source: Eurostat 2017) already experienced volunteering, while on the other hand, active participation of students through all types of involvement (in students associations, unions or political parties), is still too often poorly understood and therefore little recognised and valued.

The European Student Engagement Project (European STEP) project recognises and improves students' active participation in Europe, particularly in developing key and cross-curricular skills complementary to the academic path. The project achieved the following objectives:

- 1 | Map the legislative frameworks for student engagement recognition in Europe.
- 2 | Quantitative and qualitative studies of the modes of recognition of students' active participation by the different European countries.
- 3 | Equipped and supported committed students and higher education institutions in Europe with a guidebook of practices and a training toolkit for better recognition of student engagement.
- 4 | Ensured the sustainability of the project results with a booklet with recommendations.

Partners:



Anima'fac



University of Vienna



University of Warsaw



University of Valladolid



University of Cergy-Pontoise



Dublin City University

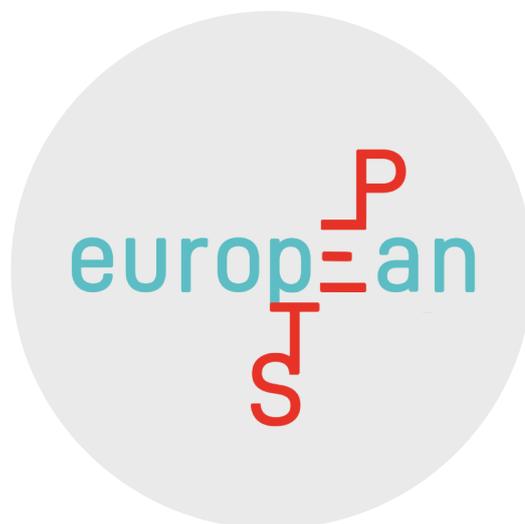


European University Foundation

Examples

Four-step guide for advocating for the recognition of student engagement

*Taken from “European Student Engagement Project (2021). Guidebook of practices regarding the recognition of student engagement in European Higher Education Institutions



■ DESCRIPTION

This practice is a four-step method on how to advocate for student engagement to be recognised.

The first stage is getting a basic sense of how your institution deals with student participation and recognition and assembling a motivated team to fight for the changes you want to make. The objectives include identifying the required or requested adjustments in your institution; gathering data on which practices exist in your organisation; putting together a group of committed students and instructional, academic, and administrative staff.

The second stage is to develop a strategy for recognising student participation at your institution.

The objectives are to understand better how your institution recognises student participation and determine which modalities of student engagement recognition to use.

The third phase includes developing the argument as well as the distribution plan. This section is aimed to assist you in creating a student engagement advocacy campaign based on the level of student engagement recognised in your institution as indicated by the first and second stages.

The final stage consists of organising a small-scale experiment and establishing a framework for evaluating the practice.



Welcome Point



Scope/Country: Poland
Institution(s): University of Warsaw

DESCRIPTION

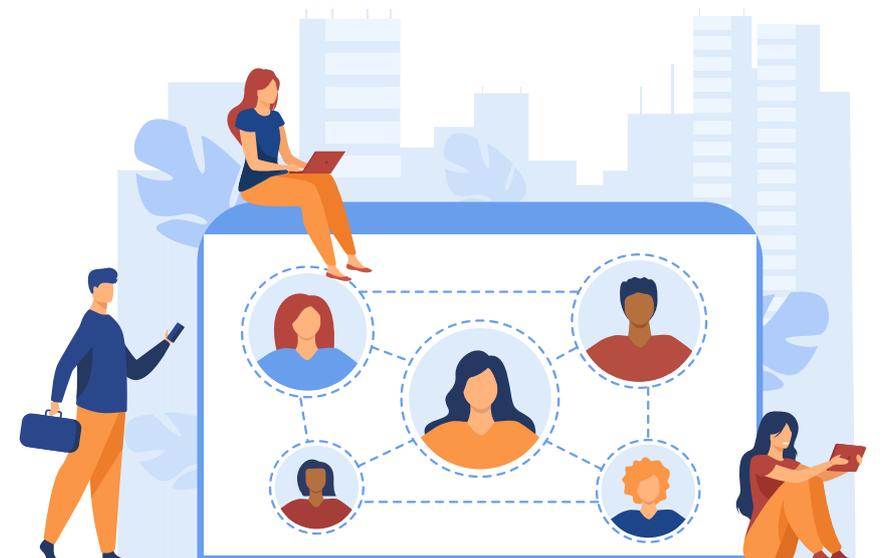
Welcome Point is the central information service for international visitors and students - both those who come to the University of Warsaw for semester exchange and those who plan to stay for the entire academic year.

Role of the Welcome Point:

- Providing up-to-date and relevant information on the University, student activities, and everyday life.
- Organising informative sessions and workshops.
- Assisting with the legalisation of a stay throughout the academic year.

Welcome Point hosts dozens of meetings and workshops. Moreover, the service keeps students informed about university life, but it also helps develop skills and interests.

As part of the Welcome Point, every year, Cultural Hot Spot UW is organised in collaboration with the University Volunteer Centre and the Students' Union of the University of Warsaw. The main objectives of the Cultural Hot Spot are to encourage multiculturalism, bring different cultures closer together, and aid with the integration of Polish and international students. This all-day open air-event creates an opportunity to meet and converse, hosts over 50 volunteers from 12 countries, has multicultural discussions, cultural pavilions with costumes, music, mini-workshops, and language courses.



Student cookbook

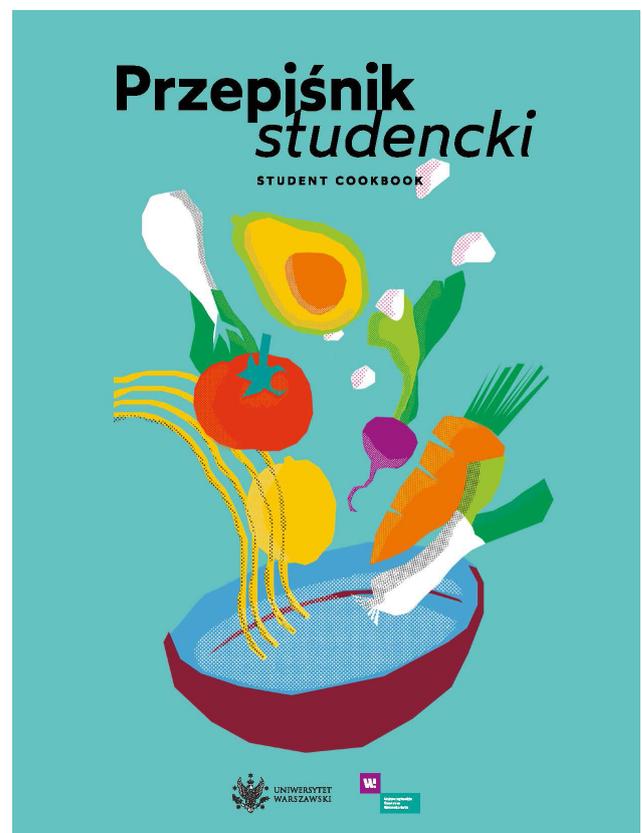
The Volunteer Center of the
University of Warsaw



Scope/Country: Poland
Institution(s): The Volunteer Center of
the University of Warsaw
Mode: Online

■ DESCRIPTION

During the pandemic in spring 2020, the Volunteer Center of the University of Warsaw wanted to inspire students to take action that would allow them to disconnect from reality, and they realised that for many people, spending time at home allowed them to practice their cooking skills. As a result, cooking enthusiasts were invited to share their regular meal ideas. As a result, between November and December 2020, Polish and international UW students shared more than 50 of their favourite recipes for dishes, snacks, or desserts, as well as anecdotes or stories about a particular cuisine, in the form of an online publication. In addition, the authors were invited to take culinary classes that included online cooking. They were led by Daria Rogowska, also known as Ekocentryczka, a blogger who promotes healthy eating and the zero-waste concept (one of her recipes is included in the publication). As a result, participants could share their culinary expertise, learn new recipes, and spend time in a relaxing setting.



Source: [Webpage of the cookbook](#)

9

STUPS innovative practices



Student rights charters

The Student Rights Charter outlines the primary rights that students have to participate in and influence the administration and management of the University in terms of teaching and evaluations and social, cultural, and athletic activities on campus.

The goal is for the student body to play an active role in decisions that affect the day-to-day life of the University, which is why the Charter includes three dimensions: 'Government and Management,' 'Academic and Quality,' and 'Social, Cultural, and Sports.'

The Dimension of 'Management and Government' collects vital information on various fundamental bodies in universities' and student representation entities, such as the Council of Students and Representatives, the centre, class and degree delegates.

Students are detailed in this area on how they can influence all of these university areas, including who they can vote for, who can stand for the various bodies, the weight of the student body, and the frequency with which electoral processes are held.

On the other hand, the 'Academic and Quality' Dimension establishes several student rights, such as the right to academic recognition, the ability to file appeals or reviews (evaluations), participation in calendar decisions (exams, projects, etc.), and the reconciliation of studies with work and family life.

Concerning the 'Social, Cultural, and Sports' Dimension, the students' right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association is emphasised; the right to the formation or dissolution of university associations; the certification of volunteer and cooperation activities; participation in the Advisory Commission of Uniradio; the compatibility of sports practice with academic training; or the right to participate in the Advisory Commission of Uniradio.

All of these student participation rights are found under the umbrella of other rights that apply to all aspects of student participation: the right to equality and non-discrimination and the right to inclusion and equal opportunities for all students. These pioneering student charters in Europe will make it easier for community students to understand and exercise their recognised rights.

All the Charter Rights can be found on [the project website](#).



Student participation indexes

The Student Participation Index is based on a set of indicators that assesses the potential for participation offered by various countries across four dimensions:

1



Government and Management

2



Academic and Quality

3



Social, Cultural, and Sports

4



and a transversal to the previous one's Equality and Inclusion

10

Reflective Questions

The Checklist



- a) In what ways are student views gathered at your Institution?
- b) Do students at your university have opportunities to voice their views concerning curricular and teaching, and learning aspects?
- c) How (and when) do students receive feedback about their input?
- d) What opportunities are available for students at your institution to have discussions directly with the Government body?
- e) How can university managers collaborate with students to make crucial decisions together with the students?
- f) How does your school reach out to students who might be having difficulties participating?
- g) How do your university programmes encourage student participation in all it's dimensions?

Table 1:

Summary table of the value creation elements of each of the selected innovative practices

Name of practice	Keywords	
National Student Engagement Training Programme (NStEP)	Student engagement, national framework, student unions	11
Student partnership policy for the students and staff of universities in Iceland	Partnership policy, national student union, blended participatio	14
100 Good Practices in Polish Higher Education - a Guide for Student Unions	Student unions guide, student unions, student participation	15
Student participation plan	Student participation, university life	19
Binding student referendums	Student democracy, university life	20
Andalusian sectoral meeting	Sectoral forum, student networking	21
Forum for sectoral dialogue between universities	Sectoral dialogue, HEI, student policies	22
Evaluation talks between the dean and student representatives	Student democracy, university life	23
Mobility programme for new student representatives, Blas Infante Programme	Student representatives, mobility programme	25
Mentoring programme I	Mentoring, university life	26
Mentoring programme II	Mentoring, university life	27
Buddy programme I	International students, intercultural exchange	28
Buddy programme II	International students, student inclusion	29

Name of practice	Keywords	
Invitation of students to open days	Student inclusion, university life	30
Tour of city Speed getting to know each other	City tour, student inclusion	31
Coaching and self-knowledge session	Soft competencies, non-academic skills	33
Personal coaching	Personal coaching, student unions	34
Student projects	Skills training, university life	35
Doctoral grant Development of own's project	Funding, university life	36
An ideal class created by students The reverse class "Professor for a day"	Education quality, student engagement	37
'Holding Hands' Interaction between the students and the seniors in the local communities	Student engagement, community development, social inclusion	40
Audiovisual resources to help students with special needs "Include me"	Student inclusion, community development	41
Teaching social education with and through groups	Social education, student engagement, university life	42
Delivering children toys to a hospital: "Give Christmas to a child"	Community development, social inclusion, student engagement	43
Inclusion of disadvantaged groups by student volunteers 'Volunteering during confinement march 2020'	Social inclusion, volunteering, student engagement	44
Enabling affordable student accommodation	Community development, student accommodation, university life	45
Harassment-prevention system	The anti-bullying campaign, student engagement, university life	46

Name of practice	Keywords	
Inclusion awareness campaign	Social inclusion, diversity, student engagement	47
Education on gender-based violence, Key actors against gender violence	Gender-based violence, student engagement, gender equality	49
Gender-diverse toilets	Gender diversity, university life, gender inclusion	50
#SafeSemester=#HappySemester: How to build community with exchange students in a safe environment	A student exchange, community development, COVID-19 pandemic	52
Online meeting of students (Mini-games)	Student inclusion, COVID-19 pandemic	53
Students' radio station - Uniradio	Culture and media, student inclusion	56
University bands meeting Music session	Student inclusion, culture	57
Social media campaign during exam period	Student support, social media, campaign	58
Organised boat race, Boatmania	Student participation, sports	60
Skiing day for students	Sports, student inclusion	61
Student's sports league	Student participation, sports	62
Students construct a motorcycle, Moto ETSI-UHU	STEM, student innovation	64
Students manufacture their car, ARUS	STEM, student innovation	65

Name of practice	Keywords	
Students organising a panel on sustainability Electoral debate	Student democracy, sustainability	67
ECO community online platform for student	Sustainability, community development	68

