QUAL.AI.TY ENGAGEMENT

EU Status Quo Report on Student Engagement with Society

Fostering Student Engagement through AI-driven Qualitative Quality Assurance Practices

A Project Developed by:

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Project: Fostering Student Engagement through AI-driven Qualitative Quality Assurance Practices

Consortium Partners

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Student engagement with society is the students' active participation in educational-based activities that contributes to addressing social challenges while generating benefits for the diverse internal and external stakeholders. Currently, student engagement with society is operationalised as scattered activities in higher education institutions. There are no established frameworks, dimensions, indicators, outcomes, impacts, or institutional strategies.

Student engagement with society is framed in the rise of the third mission of higher education, understood as "social engagement". Socially engaged universities are strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions, benefits and impacts, aligned to society and business sector needs. For enhancing this mission, developing an institutional strategic approach to student engagement with society is a key challenge to address.

The benefits of student engagement with society happen at the ecosystem, institutional and personal levels. These benefits are:

- **Ecosystem Level:** contribution to the social challenges currently faced by diverse contexts; enhancement of volunteer work for the benefit of the communities; alignment of the professional profiles with the contextual needs of external stakeholders; strengthening of social cohesion, active citizenship and political participation; intersectoral mutually beneficial collaborations; increase in social innovation.
- **Institutional Level:** strengthening of the student-centred educational offer; connecting the educational offer with the social, cultural, and economic context; developing beneficial relationships among communities, businesses, students, and higher education institutions; involving students in community work and initiatives; increasing the impact of alumni in the local context; attracting funds for social innovation and local projects; recognition of the institutional leadership role in the local ecosystem; consolidation of university-business-government-civil society networks; increase in relevance of the educational offers.
- **Personal Level:** opportunities for engaging with society while studying; connection of the theoretical content with the local context; possibilities of engaging with societal stakeholders, local government, and organisations for developing diverse projects; facilitation of the transition from the studies to the professional world; opportunities for gaining academic credits with community work; application of the acquired knowledge.

Student engagement with society can be implemented in teaching and learning, research, third mission, and as student-driven initiatives. Some examples of practices in each of these dimensions are:

- **Teaching and Learning:** Community-Based Learning; challenge-Based learning; internships; international/national exchanges; curriculum co-creation with external stakeholders; co-curricular community-based activities; professors of practice (PoP) strategies; etc.
- **Research:** Community-engaged research (CER); co-creation projects; participatory action research; community and researchers' partnerships, etc.
- **Third Mission:** knowledge transfer to the communities; social innovation projects; entrepreneurship initiatives; service learning; volunteering services to communities, NGOs and organisations, etc.
- **Student Lead Initiatives:** student volunteering initiatives; student projects initiatives; student-community actions, civic life student engagement, etc.

Student engagement with society can be embedded in the institutions by applying national policies on higher education engagement or by developing targeted institutional policies (top-down approach), creating a dedicated institutional strategy or as part of the social engagement strategy or supporting bottom-up initiatives. Embedding student engagement with society requires the collaboration among students; academics; staff; community, businesses, and government representatives; and higher education managers to define shared goals and expected impacts, as well as to build capacities and support structures.

Quality Assurance can contribute to embedding student engagement with society at an institutional level through the definition of frameworks and indicators, and the generation of data for informing the decision-making processes. For this purpose, there is a necessity for developing internal and external quality assurance tools that allow for following-up and benchmarking student engagement with society, since there are no tools or frameworks specialised in this dimension.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- ***Community-based learning (CBL):*** Learning approach incorporating the community and immediate environment into the teaching practices. It aims at developing meaningful interactions between the students and their future employers, colleagues, and customers while tackling real social problems. The main techniques to implement this approach are:
    - integration of community representatives in the classroom,
    - provision of service learning for the communities,
    - participation in community projects,
    - developing community-based research,
    - implementation of social innovation and social entrepreneurship.

  Through this approach, students apply the theory into practice, gain a deeper understanding of the subjects, and enhance critical thinking, interpersonal relations, teamwork, analytical skills, and problem-solving mindset.

- ***Community-based research (CBR):*** research approach in which community partnerships are at the forefront. The necessities of the surrounding communities drive the projects and the community actors are involved in the process of research. This approach is characterised by the collaboration of diverse stakeholders, change orientation, inclusive practices, and co-creation methodologies.

- ***Service learning:*** learning approach in which students learn in the classroom and at the same time engage in providing services to the surrounding communities for the application of the acquired knowledge. The services provided to the community could be direct services (teaching, activities, voluntary work, etc.), indirect services (fundraising, environmental actions, etc.), or advocacy services (policy intermediation, activism, etc.). The reflection generated by the two processes enhances the learning process of the students.

- ***Student engagement:*** according to the Glossary of Education Reform (Great Schools Partnership, 2016), student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion students show in the teaching and learning process. It could be broken down into intellectual, emotional, behavioural, physical, social, and

cultural engagement. The definition and elements of student engagement vary according to institutional priorities and the indicators they use to measure it.

- ***Student engagement with society*:** degree and modalities of engagement of the higher education students with the surrounding communities to strengthen their learning processes while tackling societal challenges and generating multiple benefits for internal and external stakeholders.

- ***University / higher education engagement*:** university engagement refers to the implementation of civic / community / public / social engagement approaches in the diverse missions of the higher education institutions. University engagement aims at increasing institutional accountability and transparency, connecting the institutional actions to the social challenges, and strengthening interactions with the local ecosystem of institutions.

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1. BACKGROUND OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIETY

1.1. "Engagement" in Higher Education

The rise of the third mission of higher education (HE) is an emergent field with diverse perspectives on how a higher education institution (HEI) interacts with the wider world. The third mission usually focuses on industry collaboration. Benneworth et al., (2009) posited that "the third mission has increasingly become equated with commercialisation, patents and licensing" (p. 1). This makes it difficult to visiblize different types of engagement. To include diverse elements in the third mission, the project *European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission* (E3M) defined the third mission in three dimensions: continuing education, technology transfer and innovation, and societal engagement (Garcia et al., 2012). The last dimension, according to Benneworth and Osborne, (2014), "is still at an early, peripheral phase in many European universities, and the central challenge is in placing it at the heart of university life" (p. 219). This enhancement will contribute to building paths for HEIs to engage with society.

There is a growing dispersion in the terminology referring to "engagement" in the third mission of HEIs. The most common terms and acronyms used in the literature are:

- Civic engagement
- Civic and community engagement (CCE)
- Community engagement (CE)
- Engagement with the wider world
- Public and community engagement
- Public engagement
- Regional engagement
- Social / societal engagement (SE)
- Student-community engagement (SCE)
- University-community engagement (UCE)
- University engagement

Each term may have its nuances. For example, community engagement seems to be more involved with disadvantaged communities while regional engagement may refer to the economical part of a region. What all the terms have in common, is the relationship of the HEIs with the broader world and different publics. This document uses the term "engagement with society", keeping the diversity of terms according to the consulted authors when it is appropriate.

The contribution of HE to societies goes beyond the education of professional cadres and it has propitiated the emergence of engagement with society as a policy priority. According to Farnell (2020), HEIs can contribute to topics such as the "grand challenges" of climate change, migration, ageing societies, income inequality, social cohesion, and trust toward political institutions. As defined by ACEEU (2016), an "engaged University is:

> "oriented towards and strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions, benefits and impacts. The institution undertakes education and research aligned with society and business needs. Education integrates external stakeholders and promotes a wide range of career opportunities, including the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Research and projects are collaborative and mutually beneficial. The priority in third mission activities is engagement and the institution accordingly develops its people, organisational capacity, support structures and external collaborations. An engaged university is an influential organisation within the wider ecosystem and is dedicated to continuous improvement and the generation of greater social and cultural impacts for the city and region" (P. 4).

This definition delineates how "engagement" implies that HEIs align their institutional strategy to intentionally foster "engagement", develop support structures and create an impact on the surrounding ecosystem.

HEIs in Europe have developed multiple tools to enhance the field of the third mission. Examples are, first, the project *European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission* (E3M) (Pausits et al., 2011), which operationalised the third mission in three dimensions and indicators (continuing education, technology transfer & innovation, and social engagement). Second, the Project *Higher Education Institutions Societal Engagement* (HEISE) (Ateca-Amestoy et al., 2019) aimed at fostering social engagement through art-based methods. Finally, the project *Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement of Higher Education* (TEFCE) developed policy tools for supporting, monitoring, and assessing community engagement in HEIs (Benneworth et al., 2018). These projects have contributed to create policy guidelines, roadmaps, frameworks, and indicators delineating engagement with society in HE.

Additional efforts have been made aiming at measuring engagement with society. The PASCAL Universities' Regional Engagement (PURE) project (2002) measures regional engagement aiming to facilitate benchmarking. Additionally, in 2002, the Russell Group introduced the Third-Stream Activities indicators, in which there is a dimension for university–community engagement (Molas-Gallart et al., 2002). Furthermore, in 2007, Sweden also introduced the Vetenskap & Allmänhet (Public & Science - VA) for measuring societal engagement, focused on quantitative outcomes. These examples constitute a base for the enhancement of engagement with society as a mission of HEIs.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of HE social engagement. Examples of engagement such as "undertaking research in pursuit of a vaccine, supplying

COVID-19 testing machines, providing physical space and facilities to local hospitals for the relocation of patients, or producing personal protective equipment for medical staff" (Farnell, 2019, p. 20), demonstrated that HEIs have a broad role in the societies. Farnell (2019) highlighted principles that may stay in the post-pandemic: civic and solidary spirit, interest in researching social challenges and crises, and the redefinition of the role in democratic societies.

The concerns about the financial sustainability of HEIs have led to prioritising this potential for income generation. Nevertheless, Boland et al. (2018) posited that "if CBL [Community-Based Learning] or CBR [Community-Based Research] initiatives help an institution to achieve its goals e.g., student engagement, employability, applied research (or even wider goals such as widening participation), it is less vulnerable to a changing funding environment" (p. 3). Hence, engagement could be an effective institutional strategy to achieve sustainability. It implies that HEIs must develop strategies for "delivering community engagement; accepting community engagement; embedding community engagement within core teaching and research activities; and making and winning the ethical case for engagement within universities" (Boland et al., 2018, p. 230).

1.2. Student Engagement

"Student engagement" (as a broad topic) is a prominent term in HE that could play a vital role in achieving learning outcomes. Student engagement is the "quality of effort and involvement in productive learning activities" (Kuhn, 2009, P.6). Student engagement can be measured and planned as a way to enhance the institutional support to the learning processes.

Student engagement, according to Kahu (2011), responds to the trend of focusing on learning outcomes and student-centred learning and plays a role as a proxy for quality. She highlighted that due to the complexity of the term, there is the lack of clarity on the state of student engagement, the antecedents, and the consequences. Additionally, Groves et al. (2015) also stated that beside student retention, student engagement is a vital topic in the HE agendas, due to the impact that it has on students' experience and learning outcomes.

Students' engagement is a multi-dimensional term that needs different frameworks for its definition. Zepke et al. (2010) elaborated a "conceptual organizer" for student engagement based on literature on the topic. This organizer can be further enhanced by developing indicators for five dimensions:

- **Motivation and agency**: intrinsic motivation and students' agency.
- **Transactional engagement**: Students and teachers engage with each other.
- **Institutional support**: Institutions provide an environment conducive to learning.
- **Active citizenship**: understanding the challenges to social beliefs and practices.
- **Non-institutional support**: family and friends support to engage in learning.

From a different perspective, Kahu (2011) proposed a four elements framework based on the students' antecedents and consequences of engagement:

- **Behavioural perspective**: student engagement behaviour and teaching practices.
- **Psychological perspective**: an internal socio-emotional development.
- **Sociocultural perspective**: influence of the sociocultural and institutional context.
- **Holistic perspective**: student's own motivations perceptions, and experience.

Furthermore, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) from the USA developed a series of indicators to measure student engagement that allows to compare student engagement across institutions. The main dimensions are:

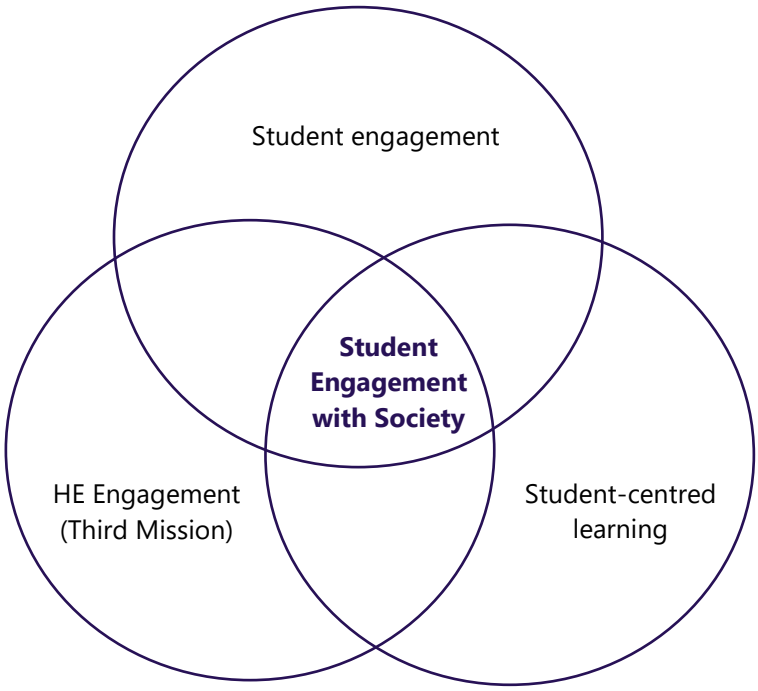
- **Student behaviours:** time inside and outside class.
- **Institutional actions and requirements:** institutional planning and support.
- **Reactions to college:** perception of the quality of students' experience.
- **Students background information:** intentions, commitment, family, work, etc.

From these perspectives, student engagement mostly refers to academic achievements and, according to Groves et al. (2015) lacks social context. Nevertheless, "students and institutions might work together to enable students to challenge social beliefs and practices, to make legitimate knowledge claims, to engage effectively with a diverse range of 'others', to live successfully in the world" (Groves et al., 2015, p. 30). Hence, the dimension of active citizenship (Zepke et al., 2010) and sociocultural perspective (Kahu, 2011) play a broad role by connecting students with their social contexts and enabling them to successfully participate and contribute to their context.

1.3. Student Engagement with Society

Student engagement with society, as defined by the Qual-AI-ty Engagement consortium is the student active participation in HEIs based activities that contributes to addressing social challenges while generating benefits for the diverse internal and external stakeholders.

Traditionally, engagement with society has been defined as volunteering for communities. Nevertheless, the concept has evolved to "engaged learning, then to engaged scholarship, ending with engaged institutions" (Benneworth et al., 2018, p. 57). Hence, more than some scattered independent activities, student engagement is increasingly embedded in the institutional strategy. Student with society, then, can be characterised as the interaction of the third mission, student engagement (in learning) and student-centred learning.



In this context, Blasko et al. (2018) highlighted that the benefits of student engagement with society for students are:

- the positive attitude and behaviours towards social engagement
- Expected future political participation
- probability of undertaking various positive civic actions

Additionally, society also benefits from knowledge transfer, co-creation, and civic actions led to solving social challenges and community problems. From an institutional perspective, the benefits are:

- Recognition of their leading role with local public, private and civil society institutions
- improvement in the quality of the educational offer
- consolidation of networks with the surrounding ecosystem
- Effective fulfilment of the mission.

One of the biggest challenges in student engagement with society is assessment. Assessing "students' civic growth throughout their college careers will help us refine our assessment tools and develop additional prompts that can generate more authentic evidence" (Steinberg, 2011, p. 14). For that purpose, the Qual-AI-ty engagement project aims at developing a framework for embedding student engagement with society as a dimension of HEIs quality assurance.

2. Implementation of Student Engagement with Society

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIETY

The implementation of student engagement with society is characterised by a series of scattered actions, mostly visible in the form of service learning (Stamm, 2009). With the rise of the third mission, the HEIs have embraced institutional engagement with society due to the "observation of mutual benefits for academic (learning and research) and community goals (capacity-building for change and improvement), as well as mutual goals of understanding, cooperation, and quality of life" (Benneworth et al., 2018, p. 57). This section presents the activities, inputs, outputs, and impacts of student engagement with society, with an emphasis on the European context, providing a broad picture of the dimensions and process implies.

2.1. Activities in Student Engagement with Society

In 2018, the project *Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement of Higher Education* (TEFCE) developed a framework to operationalise university-community engagement. The project used previous frameworks and groups of indicators such as the Russell Group Indicators (2002), the Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement (2005), the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) (2006), and the PASCAL University Regional Engagement benchmarks (2009). The result of this benchmarking of frameworks and indicators is a framework for university community engagement consisting of eight dimensions and six main examples of engagement practices (Benneworth, 2018):

1. Institutional engagement: policies and practice for partnership building with the community.
2. Public access to university facilities.
3. Public access to knowledge: dissemination of academic findings.
4. Engaged teaching and learning.
5. Engaged research.
6. Student engagement.
    - Student volunteering initiatives
    - Student-led projects/initiatives (e.g. arts, environment)
    - Social innovations by students
    - Contributing to the civic life of the community
    - Practice placements
    - Student-community actions

7. Faculty engagement.

From the perspective of student engagement with society, the dimensions overlap in the framework. Students can take part in the rest of the dimensions: they can participate in research, teaching and learning activities, and the general institutional engagement planning and development, with society.

Knight-McKenna et al. (2018) posited that HE students engage with the community in activities "ranging from service-learning and community-based participatory research to internships and civic engagement projects" (p. 66). Those activities happen in different institutional dimensions: research, teaching and learning, and can cover institutional, local, national, and international levels (Boland et al. 2018). Hence, students' engagement with society constitutes a wide range of actions that could be scattered in different units and policies.

The following three subsections examine student engagement with society from the perspective of the activities in which they take part, adapting the TEFCE framework to the dimensions of teaching and learning, research, and students-lead activities.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching and learning dimension is where the HEIs can embed university-community engagement into the curriculum or/and co-curricular activities. Farnell (2020), in the NASAT Report on Community Engagement in Higher Education, highlighted that the activities in university-community engagement are classified in four main actions:

- The development of curricula that support community and social development.
- Provision of lifelong learning and adult learning opportunities
- Involvement of community practitioners in devising curricula and delivering teaching as teachers.
- Community-based learning for students.

These activities engage the external community and students are defined as active subjects that shape the teaching and learning processes. This is different from the perspective of offering institutional services to the external community or doing research to collect data with the community. Farnell (2020) highlighted that among the four activities, Community-Based Learning is the most popular one since it comes from the tradition of "service-learning". In this activity, students take part in an organized service to solve a social challenge in the local community. Generally, these activities require an academic unit or a course that manages the service.

Some examples of student engagement with society in teaching and learning are:

1. **Community-Based Learning**: also extended to the term **Community Engaged Research and Learning** (CERL). The ENtRANCE project (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2021) systematized a series of practices in CERL on how to implement learning activities with the participation of the community. The CERT project demonstrated the benefits for students, professors, HE staff, and the broader community that teaching, learning, and research activities with the community can generate.
2. **Continuing education and training**: in this activity, the HEI offers a service of training or education to the community, and the students participate as support or as the main actors providing the service. According to Benneworth and Osborne (2014), these activities are service-learning and have been traditional in the USA and less used in Europe. The main example in Europe is the project VALUE (Volunteering and Lifelong Learning in Universities in Europe) (University of Liverpool, 2012). The project documented how students can act as educators in diverse community contexts.
3. **Internships**: internships typically respond to the labour market needs and is the opportunity for connecting with the local labour ecosystem by gaining real-world information about the social needs and requirements.
4. **International experiences:** International experiences also represent an opportunity for students to engage with citizens in other countries and to explore the difference in social dynamics. One example, as mentioned by Farnell (2020), is the project IngénieuxSud (Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium). In this project, engineering students collaborate remotely for one year with partners in the Global South, looking for solutions to social problems. Towards the end, students meet in a one-month international internship. After finishing the internship, they return to their countries to share the experience.
5. **Co-creation of curricula with students and community representatives**: this activity is organized by the programme managers of the HEIs and it is usually part of the continuous improvement processes that involve the perspectives of the diverse stakeholders of the surrounding ecosystem.
6. **Extra or co-curricular community-based activities to enrich the personal and professional development of students**: these activities run parallel to the curriculum and are organized for different academic units in the HEIs. It involves conferences, summer schools, workshops, and cultural activities, among others.
7. **Teaching courses/seminars for/with hard-to-reach groups and those in risk/marginalised groups**: these activities involve targeted populations that the HEIs or

any course have identified. It involves consultancy, capacity building, encouragement, and knowledge exchange, knowledge co-creation, among other activities.

8. **Public lectures, seminars, and non-credit courses**: These activities involve organizing academic events with open doors for the broader community to participate. Generally, these events are part of the co-curricular activities and involve the students as organizers, support, or participants.

Research

Engaged research refers to the practices in which the researchers engage with the community. Students can also engage in these activities supporting data collection, workshops, focus groups, etc. These activities were originally proposed by Benneworth et al. (2018) as part of the framework for community engagement in HE. The following review enhances each activity from the perspective of student engagement with society and with pertinent examples from European countries:

1) **Research projects involving co-creation:** these projects involve the participation of academics, students, and citizens for creating a specific output. As an example, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece has experimented with the methodology of co-creation and living labs courses. For this purpose, they created a course for engineering students aiming to "design and implement serious games web applications for Parkinson patients that would help them improve some personal capacities (e.g., memory, attention) that will assist them in facing the disease's symptoms" (Konstantinidis et al., 2021, p.3). In this activity, students learn from the academic knowledge, design their own prototypes, and engage with the end-users to adapt, co-create, and receive feedback for finetuning the final output.
2) **Co-production of community-relevant research with community partners***:* these initiatives develop research projects with community partners. As an example, University College Cork has developed the project Community University Biodiversity Action - CUBA (2021). This project build capacity to face Ireland's biodiversity crisis. The project created biodiversity groups with the communities, and students play the role of coordination, support, and researchers for constructing a meaningful research product on regional biodiversity and conservation.
3) **Collaborative community-based research programmes responsive to community-identified needs***:* these initiatives respond to community needs and deliver solutions or services for solving such problems. As an example, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, through the Community Service-Learning office (2021), involves students to offer solutions to specific local

problems such as loneliness in Amsterdam and circular economy consulting. In both cases, students are involved in research and services for the local community.

4) **Participatory action research***:* this typology of research develops studies in which the researchers participate in the dynamics of the studied group. So, more than an observant role, the researchers get involved in social activities. As an example, the University of Valencia in Spain, in the Master Programme in International Development Cooperation developed participatory action research engaging students and the local community (Palau et al., 2014). For the study of developmental processes in society, students got involved in the urban vegetable gardens created by the Association of Neighbours of Benimaclet. Students worked with the gardens, collected data for their research projects, and analysed the dynamics of the social processes that are happening in the context.

5) **Research collaboration and technology transfer to the community***:* these projects develop transference of technology and knowledge, or innovation in the local communities. An example of this activity is the Wine Lab Project led by the University of Macerata (Leffi et al., 2020). The aim of this project was to generate innovation for small wineries located in remote rural areas of Italy. The project generated a knowledge spill-over from the university to society, benefiting the communities, but also generating dialogue among academia, business, and regional communities. In this project, students participated as interns that did mobility to specific regions and serve as the bridge between the communities and the academia.

Student-Driven Initiatives

As posited by Farnell (2020), most of the literature in university-community engagement highlights how the HEIs provide opportunities for students to engage with the community, but do not highlight the student's agency to develop their own initiatives. The author highlighted two main forms of the student-driven initiatives. First, within formal organisations, such as clubs, guilds, and organisations that have the official support of the HEI. Second, as informal initiatives organized by an advocate, activist, or any informal group. The following activities are part of the dimension of student engagement, that refer to student-driven initiatives.

1. **Student volunteering initiatives***:* although universities provide opportunities for engaging in volunteer positions, students also engage in volunteering activities with an external organisation, or create their own volunteering initiatives. Despite these initiatives being usually non-credit activities, they are also not registered. The registration or the incentives to share the experiences could lead to engaging other students that are looking for similar opportunities. Farnell (2020) cites the initiative in Dresden Ankommen

(Technische Universität Dresden, Germany), in which the university supports students engaged in volunteering to assist refugees.

2. **Student-led projects/initiatives (e.g., arts, environment)**: in these activities, students propose to foster events, conferences, workshops, with external communities, on-campus or outside. As an example, in the project sUsTain (University of Twente, Netherlands), the association of students promote the incorporation of the sustainability principles in the HEI, with the collaboration of the local community. Students organize debate nights, assemblies, cooking workshops, blogs, and social network activism, among other activities.
3. **Social innovations by students**: these activities include the promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship developed by students. As an example, the project TU Dublin Enactus (Technological University Dublin, Ireland) is a student-driven initiative that fosters sustainable social entrepreneurship. Under this initiative, students have developed hackathons, sustainability workshops, competitions, and summits, among other activities.
4. **Contributing to the civic life of community**: under these activities, students engage in civic life activities related to political or environmental activism, taking part in civic society organisations. As an example, in the project Travelling Scientists (University of Rijeka, Croatia), students travel to elementary schools to offer interactive workshops in biology, chemistry and physics.
5. **Student-community actions**: these activities refer to specific action that students make involving the community such as planting of trees, cleaning of specific areas, organizing cultural demonstrations, among others.

The above-mentioned activities could overlap, but could also be considered as separated actions in which students have leadership in engaging with the external community.

2.2. Inputs

Community engagement builds institutional capacities for developing partnerships with societies. As declared by Farnell (2020), “the literature is virtually unanimous in declaring that genuine community engagement involves embedding partnerships with external communities into the core activities of the university” (p. 23). It is to say, institutions may traditionally develop scattered activities with external communities, but “engaged” institutions embrace the collaboration with external communities as part the institutional identity, the teaching, research, and third mission activities. This implies that institutions need to develop policy instruments to implement engagement.

Policy instruments for engagement were denominated as “policy levers” by Schneider and Ingram (1990). They proposed a framework composed of five levers that work at a systemic level in HE:

- **Authority tools**: legal statements issued by the authorities that grant permissions or require actions to be taken. This tool has the power of placing community engagement in the policy agendas: regulations, legal obligations audits, external accreditations, and performance-based funding.
- **Incentive tools**: tangible rewards to introduce compliance, incentive a behaviour and incentivize certain strategies like funding and reputation (rankings and benchmarking) initiatives.
- **Capacity tools**: provision of information, training, education, and resources to facilitate decision-making and the development of activities by individuals, groups, and institutions. This tool helps HEIs to evaluate their current state and to get the knowledge they need to develop the policies: support programmes with targeted project funding, support tools, optional institutional reviews, and optional standards guidelines.
- **Symbolic and hortatory tools**: tools that use images, symbols, and labels to change the perceptions of policy-preferred behaviours by turning them into intangible values. Examples are policy statements, quality labels, and awards. It is to highlight that there have been created some awards in university-community engagement, such as the Professor Sir David Watson Awards for Community-University Partnerships, created in 2015 by diverse representatives of HEI worldwide.
- **Learning tools**: tools that allow to experiment with different policy approaches and draw conclusions. Examples are learning resources, thematic networks, and conferences. This tool can place the topic of community engagement as a research subject which will be further theorized.

From an institutional perspective, the *European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission* (E3M) (2012) elaborated quantitative indicators for the dimensions of the third mission: continuing education, knowledge transfer and innovation, and social engagement. For engagement, the project proposed five sub-dimensions:

1. Institutional involvement
2. Non-disciplinary volunteering
3. Expert advisory engagement
4. Services and facilities to community
5. Educational outreach, collaboration and widening participation.

As the inputs and resources for social engagement, the project highlighted inputs in five dimensions, according to the *Conceptual Framework for Third Mission Indicator Definition* (Pausits et al., 2011):

Inputs for institutional involvement with social engagement*:* Needs analysis; cooperation with NGOs; desire to offer services; issues and problems emerging from context. Resources: Faculty, students, staff time; dedicated funds; projects.

Inputs for non-discipline volunteering*:* Needs identification for volunteer work; direct requests; cooperation with social organisations; issues and problems emerging from the local context. Resources: Faculty, students, staff time; dedicated funds.

Inputs for expert advisory engagement: Invitations from external bodies and organisations; volunteer proposals. Resources: Staff and students time; travel and subsistence costs; dedicated funds.

Inputs for services and facilities to the community*:* Direct request; proposal from faculty; HEI strategy. Resources: Cooperation agreements; joint events; oriented research projects.

Inputs for educational outreach/collaboration and widening participation*:* Joint discussions; requests from the community; Initiative appraisal; specific departments. Resources: Dedicated funds; staff and student time; physical facilities; coordinating office(s).

This framework provides a clear overview of specific inputs for social engagement. Nevertheless, the topic is in continuous development and a recent framework from the project *Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement of Higher Education* (TEFCE) proposed seven dimensions: (1) institutional engagement (policy and practice for partnership building); (2) public access to HEI facilities; (3) public access to knowledge (dissemination of academic findings); (4) engaged teaching and learning; (5) engaged research, (6) student engagement; and (7) faculty engagement. Some dimensions overlap in the two frameworks, but some are new: public access to knowledge, student engagement, research, teaching and learning, and faculty.

2.3. Outputs

As a general trend in HE, specially incentivized by the new public management approaches to education management, there is a strong focus on outputs (Benneworth et al., 2018). Outputs in university-community engagement are complex to measure and to compare. Hence, it is necessary that institutions develop their own benchmarks or their own aspirational references when measuring engagement, before measuring and comparing outputs (Benneworth et al., 2018). The main criticism in measuring and comparing outcomes is the use of league tables and rankings, which leads to decontextualization of the results.

Outputs are planned accordingly to the objectives and, as mentioned by the project *Higher Education Institutions' Societal Engagement* (HEISE), the "clarification of the main objectives of activities/project undertaken allows to focus on main stakeholders and (expected/intended) outputs" (Kein & Sassi, 2017, p. 9). Following the *Conceptual Framework for Third Mission Indicator Definition* (Pausits et al., 2011), in the dimension of social engagement (SE), the outputs the project proposed for each of the six sub-dimensions are:

Outputs for institutional involving with social engagement: Definition of activities; funding of SE; staff participation; research oriented to SE.

Outputs for non-discipline volunteering*:* Contribution to social organisations; contribution to HEI by community through collaboration; community welfare; cooperation mechanisms between HEI and NGOs; personal development of faculty, staff and students, systems, etc.

Outputs for expert advisory engagement: Scheduled interventions; pro-bono work; interviews; public documents.

Outputs for services and facilities to community*:* Cooperation agreements; joint events; oriented research projects.

Outputs for educational outreach/collaboration and widening participation*:* Dedicated projects; seminars, workshops; public interventions.

There are no studies on outcomes of student engagement with society. Therefore, it is necessary to determine what could be the intended outcomes of student engagement with society from an institutional and multidimensional perspective.

2.4. Impacts

The impacts, understood as the "long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended" (Intrac, 2017), in university-community engagement is still a developing field. The look for measures is criticized by Jongbloed and Benneworth (2013) for two main reasons: "reducing engagement to a set of numbers, and different kinds of engagement for different kinds of institution." Since there is not a consensus on engagement and it depends on the context, the identity of the HEI, and the main activity in which engagement is embedded (research, teaching and learning, etc.), so the expected impact is variable and could be read from different perspectives.

The difficulty in measuring the impact of HE engagement with society is related to the complex nature of the activities. Simple numeric indicators reduce engagement to outputs and too complex indicators are difficult to measure. In this regard, Benneworth et al. 2018 stated that "the problem

does not only concern the difficulty of defining what those indicators might be, but also of determining whether it is realistic that higher education institutions will be able to collect (or have the willingness or capacity to collect) such data" (p. 125). In this regard, Farnell (2020) notes that measuring impact is still a challenge and that the most common alternative solution has been the use of case studies.

Facing the difficulty of measuring impact in university-social engagement, it was developed the project *Social Impact Assessment Methods* (SIAMPI) (2009-2011). The project aimed at developing methods for assessing the 'societal impact' of research. The project identified the concept of 'Productive Interactions', defined as "exchanges between researchers and stakeholders in which knowledge is produced and valued that is both scientifically robust and socially relevant" (SIAMPI, 2012). With this definition, they identified three types of Productive Interactions, and their relationship to impact and stakeholders, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Examples of Productive Interactions, and their relationship to impact and stakeholders

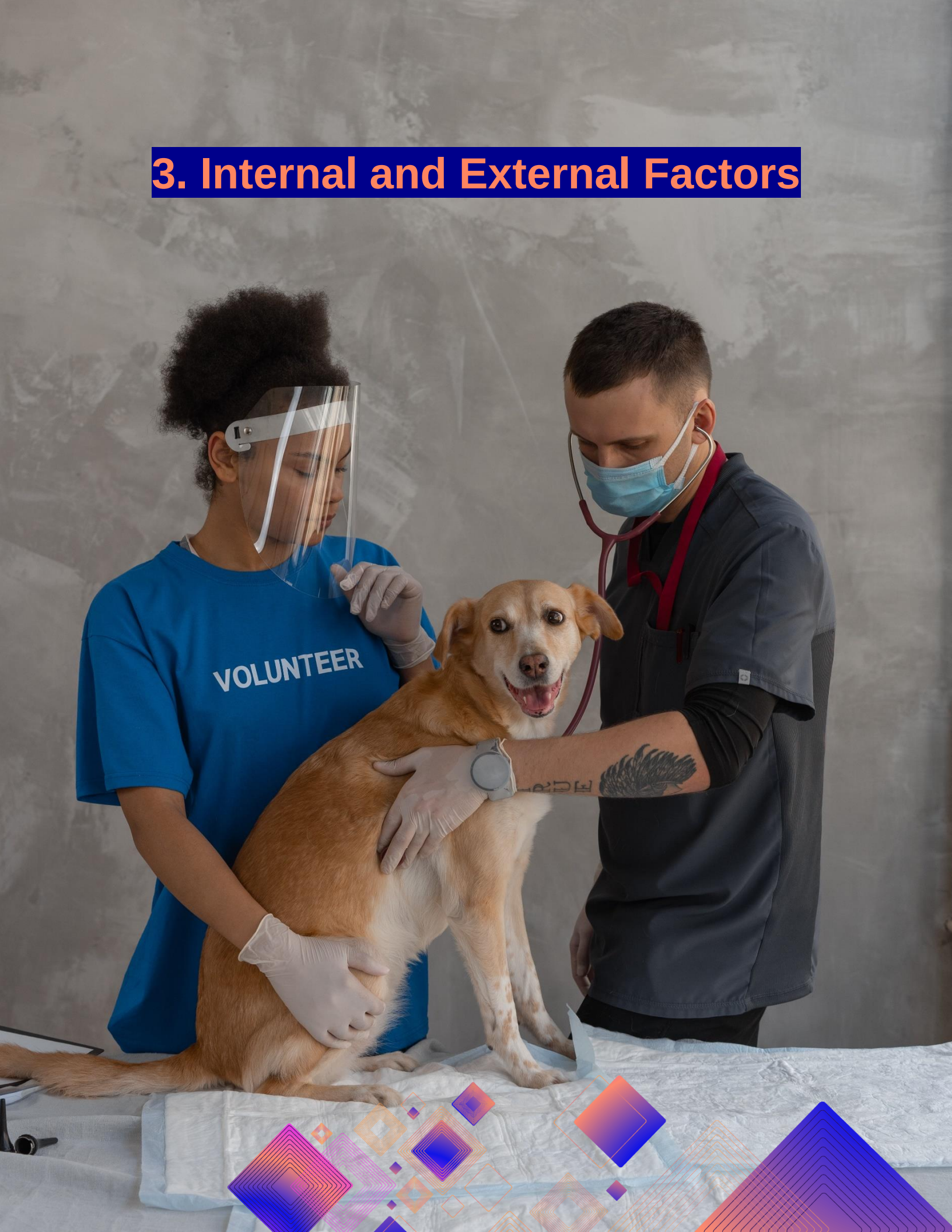
Productive Interaction	Social Impact	Stakeholder	Assessment Tool
Direct, personal	Behavioural change	One-to-one, personal and professional networks	Interviews, focus group
Indirect, media	Uptake, use	Different audiences	Quantitative data collection
Financial or in-kind support	Collaboration	Joint projects	Annual reports, other documents

Source: SIAMPI Project (2012).

Table 1 classifies the impact into three types: behavioural change, uptake, and collaboration. Additionally, it recommends an assessment tool for each one: interviews, quantitative data, and annual reports. In the first assessment tool, it is to note that these tools are used for case studies to assess the impact, report it, and disseminate it.

From the student perspective, Knight-McKenna et al. (2018) classified the outcomes of student engagement with society into cognitive, affective, and behavioural. From the cognitive perspective, previous studies conducted between 1999 and 2012 demonstrated that student engagement with communities enhanced academic performance, disciplinary knowledge, awareness of social issues, and critical thinking capacities. The affective outcomes included enhancement and increase in self-efficacy, self-esteem, determination and persistence, cultural proficiency, attitudes about education and community involvement, and leadership. Finally, in the behavioural dimension, it is remarked the enhancement of skills related to interpersonal and civic communication, civic organisation, political involvement, and democratic participation.

3. Internal and External Factors



3. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

This section presents the supportive mechanisms, the drivers and motivations, the stakeholders, and the barriers and challenges in student engagement with society. First, the supportive mechanisms focus on a systematic and institutional level. Second, the drivers and motivations present the institutional and student perspective for engaging with society. Third, the stakeholders' analysis presents an overview of the stakeholders involved in student engagement with society. Finally, the barriers and challenge section identify internal and external challenges for developing student engagement with society.

3.1. Supportive Mechanisms

The supportive mechanisms for university-society engagement at a policy level aim at mobilizing resources and achieve a greater impact. Farnell (2020) classified the policy approach in four, as presented in Table 2. The table classifies the approaches from the most to the least comprehensive.

Table 2: Approaches to support community engagement.

Policy approach	Description
1. Transforming framework conditions	System-level embedding of community engagement in education and research.
2. Targeted supportive policies	Increasing the prevalence and quality of community engagement activities at system level.
3. Incorporating community engagement into existing programmes	Encouraging community engagement activities at the level of individual HEIs.
4. Status quo / bottom-up initiatives	No specific policies other than general references to 'relevance' and 'impact'.

Based on Farnell (2020).

From table 2, Farnell (2020) recommends the approaches 2 and 3 as the first steps to further develop the topic and approach one as the future scenario, after some steps have already been taken.

Benneworth and Osborne (2014) collected examples of regulatory and supportive mechanisms for engament in different countries in Europe:

1. The Netherlands created a legal mandate in 1992 for universities to make their knowledge available for society. The funding for this action is dedicated to technology transfer, but there is no funding for the engagement with society.
2. Finland created performance contracts for HEIs to take the responsibility of knowledge transfer aligned to regional needs.
3. Sweden has a HE act since 1997 that requires HEIs to interact with society and the HEIs decide how they interpret and implement the third mission.
4. In the UK, the REF 2014 introduced metrics for evaluating the impact of research on culture, creativity, and society.
5. France has created a series of legislations and financial rewards for HEIs to engage with disadvantaged communities.

Overall, the countries introduce regulatory mechanisms, incentives, rewards, and metrics to incentivize HE engagement with society.

At an institutional level, Felten and Clayton (2011) noted that student-community engagement requires collaboration “among students, faculty/staff, community members, community organisations, and educational institutions to fulfil shared objectives and build capacity among all partners; and include critical reflection and assessment processes that are intentionally designed and facilitated to produce and document meaningful [outcomes]” (p. 76). Hence, finding the shared objectives and building the required capacities are key to develop well designed student-community engagement strategies.

3.2. Drivers / Motivations

From an institutional perspective, HEIs have numerous reasons for engaging with their local communities. Conway et al. (2009), in an extensive literature review classified these drivers in six elements:

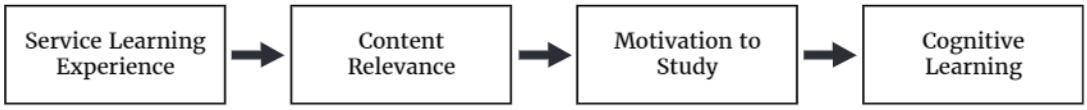
1. The wider external pressures on governments and universities for HE system reforms embracing engagement.
2. The national pressures and competition in the HE system (need to gain visibility).
3. The national cultures and traditions of engagement.
4. The local demands placed on HEIs as institutions.
5. The capacity within the HEIs from previously undertaken activities.
6. The intentional decisions of HEIs’ governance structures to undertake engagement.

These drivers could be enhanced with other motivations such as:

- Fostering “mutually beneficial relationships with wider civil society, activity that contributes to a richer cultural environment and activity that promotes greater environmental awareness and contributes to achieving broader social goals on sustainability” (Marconi, 2019, p. 403).
- Enrichment of teaching and research (Benneworth et al., 2018), which could directly impact the quality of education.
- Gaining “valuable insights on the skills graduates need; effective approaches to curriculum design; the performance of graduates in the labour market; and ways to strengthen work-based learning” (OECD, 2017, p. 94).

From the students’ perspective, the motivations for strengthening student engagement with society is related to outcomes. Previous studies have found that engagement with society is positively associated with students’ motivations to learn, perceptions about content relevance, motivation to study, cognitive learning, and higher scores (Lundy, 2007; Strage, 2000). This chain of positive correlations was schematized by Warren and Sellnow (2021) from the perspective of service learning as the trigger of positive perceptions and a final impact in cognitive learning as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Service learning process



Source: Warren and Sellnow (2021).

Despite cognitive learning has been widely mentioned as a motivation to implement student-community engagement, Warren and Sellnow (2021) noted that most of the studies in this regard are bases on students’ self-report, posttest recognition, and few used exams score. Hence, despite the positive perception of cognitive motivation, there is still a gap of knowledge in this field.

3.3. Stakeholders

The stakeholders in university-community engagement are groups of communities that have relationships and knowledge exchange with the HEI (Conway et al., 2009). Table one presents a broad overview of the stakeholders presented by Conway et al. (2009) (based on Jongbloed & Salerno, 2007), with the introduction of the classification of internal and external stakeholders, depending on the direct type of affiliation with the institution.

Table 3: Table 1 Stakeholder categories and constitutive groups

	Stakeholder category	Constitutive groups, communities
Internal	Governing entities	State & federal government; governing board; board of trustees, buffer organisations; sponsoring religious organisations
	Administration	President (vice-chancellor); senior administrators
	Employees	Faculty; administrative staff; support staff
	Clienteles	Students; parents/spouses; tuition reimbursement providers; service partners; employers; field placement sites, etc.
External	Government regulators	Ministry of Education; buffer organisations; state & federal financial aid agencies; research councils; federal research support; tax authorities; social security; Patent Office
	Non-governmental regulators	Foundations; institutional and programmatic accrediting bodies; professional associations; church sponsors.
	Joint venture partners	Alliances & consortia; corporate co-sponsors of research and educational services
	Communities	Neighbours; school systems; social services; chambers of commerce; special interest groups, etc.
	Financial intermediaries	Banks; fund managers.
	Suppliers	Secondary education providers; alumni; other colleges and universities; food purveyors; insurance companies; utilities; contracted services
	Competitors	Direct: private and public providers of post-secondary education potential: distance providers; new ventures substitutes: employer-sponsored training programmes
	Donors	Individuals (includes trustees, friends, parents, alumni, employees, industry, research councils, foundations, etc.)

Based on: Conway et al. (2009).

This list of stakeholders is challenged by the need framework "focused on the practical mechanisms enabling interactions between the stakeholders and these communities, and the ways in which these are deemed to be useful by the community mechanism stakeholders" (Benneworth et al., 2018 p. 93). Hence, it is necessary to visibilize the potential benefits of the relations and create for fostering the interactions.

In terms of student engagement with society, Coates (2005) posited that "institutions and teachers need to provide students with the appropriate resources and opportunities to make possible and promote specific kinds of interactions" (p. 26). The point is how to stimulate student engagement with society, not only in institutionalized spaces, but in their own agency. Further, another level of stakeholders' interaction is student and society, how to define the type of interactions sought and how to establish mechanisms for sustained interactions among internal and external stakeholders.

3.4. Barriers and Challenges

The identified barriers for university engagement with society cover different levels from policy to discipline issues. There are few references to the challenges for student engagement with society. Diverse authors highlight as challenges:

Externally:

- "Community engagement" remains as a vague concept grouping scattered activities that could be covered in teaching and research, or in the third mission defined as knowledge transfer" (Benneworth et al., 2018).
- HE systems have diverse pressures as global competition in table leagues, decreasing levels of public funding, accountability, and implementation of economic development activities. Community engagement usually has a low priority. In fact, "policies related to areas such as academic promotion, research assessment or quality assurance may implicitly discourage community engagement activities" (Farnell, 2020, p. 51).
- The prominence of knowledge economy and activities related to innovation, technology transfer, entrepreneurship, economic development, and the labour market put the pressure on HEs to play on the economic dimension (Benneworth et al., 2018).
- The use of new public management as the predominant approach to HE management that responds to performance-oriented behaviours (Benneworth et al., 2018).

Internally:

- The difference in what engagement means for the diverse disciplines leads to different tasks, practices, identities, “academic tribes” and to different levels of acceptance. Coordinating these differences requires time, effort, and support (Farnell, 2020).
- Managing community engagement is difficult to measure, which complicates performance assessment, and the construction of continuous improvement cycles based on evidence (Benneworth et al., 2018; Farnell, 2020).
- The centralization of the management of community engagement may have perverse effects since it reduces engagement to specific indicators and to a list of activities covering the institutional level, without the disciplinary diversity (Farnell, 2020).
- The long-term process that implies building a culture of engagement with society (Benneworth et al., 2018).

In the interception of internal and external challenges to overcome, there is the dimension of student engagement. This dimension lacks a clear delimitation, frameworks, definitions and strategies. Previously identified challenges in student engagement with society refer to the availability of time of students, since some split their time with par-time jobs (Krause, 2005). Additionally, the overwhelmingness of some students with the complexity of the community challenges, where unplanned events might occur (Knight-McKenna et al., 2018); and the enhancement of student agency and their leaderships skills with the communities (Farnell, 2020). These and other emerging challenges are enhanced according to the specific conditions of each ecosystem.

4. Further Insights

4. FURTHER INSIGHTS

This section introduces the linkage of student engagement with society to quality assurance, an overview of the incentives in the field, and the opportunities the field offers. The first section summarizes the frameworks and tools for measuring and assessing student engagement with society in accreditation, classification, or other tools. The second section presents the mechanisms used for introducing incentives in student engagement with society. Finally, the chapter summarizes the opportunities that student engagement offers for students, institutions, and communities.

4.1. Student engagement with society and quality assurance

The link between quality assurance (QA) and student engagement with society relies on the change of parading in HE, which embraced student-centred approaches to teaching and learning. Maynooth University (2016), in their *Framework for quality assurance and enhancement*, posited that "since 2005, through the application of the ESGs [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area] as well as other Bologna related developments pertaining to qualification frameworks and the promotion of learning outcomes, there has been a paradigm shift in HE towards student-centred learning and teaching" (Maynooth University, 2016, p. 5). Hence, students are included in QA by taking a more active role in the QA processes.

Traditional involvement of students in QA includes student assessment (student experience, faculty ratings, observations, interviews, and case studies) and institutional assessment (surveys and questionnaires for students and faculty) (Mandernach, 2015). Students participate from the point of view of the student experience. Also, some institutions use instructor observations of student behaviour through rubrics, used to create a comprehensive evaluation of elements difficult to evaluate. Observation of student behaviour includes: 1) collaboration with peers, 2) interaction with faculty, 3) participation in learning communities, and 4) devotion of significant time to academic tasks (Mandernach, 2015). Despite this student-centred perspective, student-engagement with society is an absent element.

Student engagement with society is a difficult area for assessment (Benneworth et al., 2018; Farnell, 2020). There are no established frameworks, dimensions, indicators, outcomes, or measurable impacts. The most comprehensive work is the compilation of tools for institutional assessment of community engagement developed by Benneworth et al. (2018), *Mapping and Critical Synthesis of Current State-of-the-Art on Community Engagement in Higher Education*.

Here, we divide the frameworks between internal and external mechanisms for assessment, and bring the students' dimensions, in case the tool has a clear mechanism oriented to include students:

4.1.1 Internal institutional assessment tools: tools for institutional assessment or self-evaluation (See Appendix 1 for the associated indicators of each tool):

1. **Indicators of Engagement (Campus Compact, 2009):** set of indicators aiming at documenting and disseminating good practices in civic and community engagement in Community Colleges and Minority-Serving Institutions covering 12 dimensions, from the mission and purpose to the forums for fostering public dialogue. Students are central and there is a dimension for ***Student Voice*** covering student participation.
2. **Holland Matrix for Institutional Engagement (Holland, 1997)**: this matrix aims at measuring the levels of institutional commitment to service in the mission; promotion and tenure, hiring; organisation structure; student involvement; faculty involvement; community involvement; and campus publications. This matrix includes the dimension for **student involvement**, which is considered four levels of student involvement: low, medium, high, and full involvement.
3. **Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education (Furco, 1999 & 2009)**: this rubric aims at assisting institutions in the development of service learning. The rubric overs five dimensions: philosophy and mission of service-learning, faculty support for and involvement in service-learning, **student support for and involvement in service-learning**, community participation and partnership, and institutional support for service-learning.
4. **The EDGE tool (National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement - NCCPE in the United Kingdom, 2020)**: this is a self-assessment tool for public engagement. It evaluates three dimensions: purpose, process, and people. Each dimension has 3 subdimensions and students is a subcomponent of the **people dimension**. There are four levels of the development, and the highest is "All students have the opportunity to get involved in public engagement and are encouraged and supported to do so. The institution offers both formal and informal ways to recognize and reward their involvement" (NCCPE, 2020).
5. **Institutional Self-Assessment for Building Capacity for Community Engagement (Gelmon et al., 2005):** this tool was designed to evaluate institutional capacity for community engagement and community-engaged scholarship. It proposed six dimensions: definition and vision, faculty support, **student support**, community support, institutional leadership, and community-engaged scholarship.

These tools approach student engagement from an institutional self-evaluation perspective, including a dimension or components for student engagement with society. Other tools have aimed to create inter-institutional data for comparative purposes.

***4.1.2 External assessment tools for measuring or assessing engagement*:** tools aiming to compare or benchmark institutions (See appendix 2 for the associated indicators of each tool):

1. **European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission (E3M):** this project, completed in 2012, was focused on developing indicators for third mission activities, in which **societal engagement** was one dimension. It proposed the dimensions of institutional involvement in social engagement, non-discipline volunteering, expert advisory engagement, services and facilities to the community, educational outreach/collaboration and widening participation.
2. **AUCEA Benchmarking University Community Engagement Pilot Project (Australia, 2008):** this project aimed at developing benchmarking elements for university-community engagement at a national level. The benchmark proposed an institutional self-assessment questionnaire, a partner perceptions survey, and a 'good practice' template. There is not an explicit mention of student engagement with society.
3. **Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement (2006):** the classification for community engagement is defined as a documentation process for self-assessment and quality improvement to recognize community-engaged institutions. The framework for this classification includes, first, seven foundational indicators (Carnegie Foundation, 2021): 1) institutional identity and culture, 2) institutional assessment, 3) institutional communication, 4) institutional-community relations, 5) infrastructure and finance, 6) tracking, monitoring, and assessment, 7) faculty and staff. Second, the categories for community engagement: 1) curricular engagement, 2) co-curricular engagement, 3) professional activity and scholarship, 4) community engagement and other institutional initiatives, and 5) outreach and partnerships.
4. **U-Multirank (2014):** U-Multirank is a user-driven approach for comparisons among HEIs that provides information in five dimensions: 1) teaching and learning, 2) research, 3) knowledge transfer, 4) international orientation, and 5) regional engagement.

4.1.3 Students in Quality Assurance: At a European level, the most outstanding experience of students involved in quality assurance is the creation of ESU (European Students' Union) Student Experts' Pool (ESU QA Pool) which trains students and representatives to take part in international reviews of programmes, institutions, and agencies. Students are involved in external procedures, in policy-making, and at a European level (Kažoka, 2015). ESU organizes training

sessions for developing the skills and knowledge in the participants. They also have created toolkits and handbooks for those trainings.

4.2. Incentives

Resch et al. (2021) acknowledged that despite student engagement in learning being a widely researched topic, student engagement with society remains unrecognized. “Recognition can be viewed from two perspectives: on the one hand as a formal act of credit transfer for (extra)curricular activities and on the other hand as a personally and socially gratifying experience of participation in services for others” (Resch et al., 2021, p.3). Hence, there is still a way to go in this direction by exploring alternatives for integrating, recognizing, and incentivizing student engagement with society.

Creating incentives systems seems to be a complex panorama since it implies identifying institutionalized ways of engaging and levels of engagement, for recognizing and rewarding the real commitment from the simple fulfilment of a task. In terms of basic and general recognition, what HEIs do is:

- Recognizing ECTs from community or social work.
- Embedding community and social work in curricular or co-curricular activities.

In both cases, the recognition applies to all students, independently of their activities and levels of engagement. From another perspective, HEIs can also look for making student engagement with society a voluntary task, to attract only committed students. In this strategy, HEIs:

- Embed student engagement with society in co-curricular and third mission voluntary activities
- Recognize students’ initiatives related to engagement with society.
- Create supporting mechanisms for students, academic, and staff initiatives.
- Open opportunities for external stakeholders to recruit and develop projects with students.
- Create rewards, prizes, awards, and certifications.

Two examples of the creation of incentives are:

- The University of Kassel, under the program UNIKAT start-up support programme, involves students in entrepreneurship and have a section dedicated to social innovations, in cooperation with the Social Entrepreneurship Network Germany (SEND). This section involves students with society by offering catalogues of courses with a service-learning component and catalogues of students’ initiatives with the contact points.

- The Community and Civic Engagement Portal of the University College Cork (Ireland), a portal connecting academics, staff, and the local community, offers students the possibility to engage with the local communities for civic leadership, volunteerism, and community service.

These examples include incentives such as awards, “visibility strategies”, support for dissemination activities, support in fund-raising, grants to support projects, possibilities for developing dissertations (and students’ research projects), additional certified training, and recognized ECTs. These incentives could be key to promoting and sustaining these initiatives in the HEIs.

4.3. Opportunities

Certainly, student engagement with society in HE is a developing topic which merges “student engagement on learning, retention, and study success”, “university engagement with society” (and all the similar streams as university-community engagement, and civic engagement, among others.), and student-centred teaching and learning perspectives. The topic already exists in diverse quality, ranking, or thematic frameworks focused on university engagement, in which “student engagement with society” is a separate dimension with indicators.

Resch et al. (2021) noted that “while students are responsible for their own learning processes, higher education institutions should stimulate opportunities for engagement” (p. 2). This is true also for providing opportunities for students to engage with the wider society. HEIs already engage with society as a strategy to construct mutual beneficial relations and enrich the diverse institutional dimensions. With the existing developments, it is the opportunity for HEIs to construct their own strategies for student engagement with society. This will imply the identification of the outputs and impacts expected, developing dimensions and indicators, and building the capacities.

More research on student engagement with society will be needed, especially regarding the benefits and impacts, as in the diverse forms that student engagement could adopt according to the institution’s identity and contexts. The opportunities that student engagement with society offers could be classified as:

- **Ecosystem:** societal challenges addressed by HEIs and students; students as volunteer workers contributing to the benefit of the communities; professionals aligned with the contextual needs and with the diverse actors of the society; strengthening of social cohesion; promotion of active citizenship; intersectoral mutually beneficial collaborations.
- **Institutional:** strengthening of the student-centred educational offer; connecting the educational offer with the social, cultural, and economic context; constructing beneficial

relationships among communities, students, and the institution; involving students in community works, research, and initiatives; and opening possibilities for having alumni with a greater impact in the local context of the institution; attracting funds for social innovation and local projects.

- **Personal:** opportunities for engaging with society while studying; connection of the theoretical content with the local context; possibilities of engaging with societal stakeholders, local government, and organisations for developing diverse projects; connection of academia with society to easily transit from the studies to the professional world; opportunities for gaining academic credits with community work.

These benefits are just a general view, the impact depends on the context and the orientation and identity that HEIs give to their modes of external engagement.

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Appendix 1

Matrix of Internal Assessment Frameworks and Tools for Student Engagement with Society

	Tool	Indicators / Rubrics / Elements
Internal Assessment Frameworks and Tools	Indicators of Engagement (Campus Compact, 2009)	Students' voice dimension: • Student participation in institutional committees. • Venues for students and communities. • Leadership training with community. • Concepts and skills in community work. • Recognition of the student-initiated advocacy campaigns.
	Holland Matrix for Institutional Engagement (Holland, 1997)	Levels of Student involvement: • Low: Part of Extracurricular student activities. • Medium: Organized support for volunteer work. • High: Opportunity for extra credit, internships, practicum experiences. • Full integration: Service-learning courses integrated in curriculum; student involvement in community-based research.
	Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education (Furco, 1999 & 2009)	Student support and involvement in service-learning dimension: • Student awareness • Student opportunities • Student leadership • Student incentives and rewards

	The EDGE tool (National Coordinating Centre for public Engagement - NCCPE, United Kingdom, 2020)	People dimension: • Students can get involved in public engagement and are encouraged and supported. • The institution offers formal and informal ways to recognize and reward students' involvement.
	Institutional Self-Assessment for Building Capacity for Community Engagement (Gelmon et al. 2005)	Student support dimension: • Student awareness of community engagement • Student involvement in community engagement activities • Student incentives and rewards

Appendix 2

Matrix of External Assessment Frameworks and Tools for Student Engagement with Society

	Tool	Indicators / Rubrics / Elements
External Assessment Frameworks and Tools	European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission-E3M (2012)	Societal engagement dimension • Number of students involved in non-discipline volunteering. • Number of NGOs benefitting from non-discipline volunteering (staff or students). • Time spent by HEI staff and students for non-discipline volunteering. • Number of students involved in volunteering advisory. • Time spent in volunteering advisory by HEI staff members or students. • Number of faculty staff and students involved in Educational Outreach activity.
	AUCEA Benchmarking University Community Engagement Pilot Project (Australia, 2008)	No specific dimension • Self-assessment questionnaire. • Partner perceptions survey. • 'Good practice' template.
	Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement (2006)	Diverse dimensions: • Number and percentage of student's participation in community-engaged courses. • Institutional learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with community. • Departmental or disciplinary learning outcomes for students' engagement with community. • Curricular for-credit research, leadership, internships, study abroad, career exploration activities with community engagement.

		• Co-curricular activities for students in social innovation/entrepreneurship, community service, alternative breaks (domestic and international), student leadership, internships, work-study placements, living-learning communities/residence hall/floor, student teaching assistants, athletics, Greek life. • Co-curricular engagement tracking system that serves as a co-curricular transcript or record of community engagement. • Co-curricular programming providing developmental pathways through which students can progress to increasingly complex forms of community engagement. • Community engagement directly contribution to the institution's diversity and inclusion goals. • Relationship of community engagement to efforts aimed at student retention and success. • Community engagement connection to campus efforts that support federally funded grants for broader impacts of research activities of faculty and students. • Encouragement and measurement student voter registration and voting. • Opportunities for students to discuss social, political, or ethical issues across the curriculum and in co-curricular programming as a component of or complement to community engagement.
	U-Multirank (2014)	Diverse dimensions: • Community service learning (credits given in service-learning activities) • Inclusion of work/practical experience (student satisfaction survey) • Student internships in the region, and MA graduates working in region.

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