

Katarzyna Kucharska, the Volunteer Centre of UW

UNICOMM Project - University Community Active Participation Project

Basic Information



Erasmus+ Key Action 2: Cooperation among organisations and institutions

Start: 02/11/2022

Finish: 01/09/2025

Coordinator: University of Warsaw (Poland)

Partners:

Palacký University Olomouc (Czech Republic)

University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria

European Students' Union (Belgium)



Student engagement

Definition

There is no unique terminology for “engagement” at the European level. Some countries will rather speak about “volunteering”, “commitment” or “active participation”.

Thus, student engagement is understood here in a broad sense to refer to students’ involvement in citizenship-related and volunteering activities, their political and associative commitment as well as their involvement within their universities and campuses.

European STEP website



The main aims of the project:

- **identifying the patterns and factors that support the incorporation of **inclusive and active student participation**,**
- **enhancing student competences to allow them fully participate in the inclusive community,**
- **creating guidelines and recommendations concerning organisational structures of European higher education institutions (HEIs) in the context of the uncertain times and rapid changes.**

The idea of the project comes from the belief that higher education institution is more than academic courses and research, and that all of the people who attend and work in this institution should matter and feel motivated to be engaged in the initiatives that are important for them.

The main motivation of this project was to re-establish the sense of belonging to the HEIs community for the students who spent most of their studies in the online mode and are uncertain how the further education will look like.

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Special focus on:

- **International students**
- **Working students**

* We aim at creating inclusive and diverse community within all of the project activities!

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- unicomm**
- # University as community
- Students' perceptions of participation, engagement and belonging at European higher education institutions
- UNICOMM PROJECT SURVEY REPORT
- UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW
WU
University of Vienna
University of Wrocław
Palacký University Olomouc
UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA
Co-funded by the European Union

Activities and results

- ❑ Study Visit in the Palacky University in order to compare similarities and differences between partners' approach to the topic of student participation



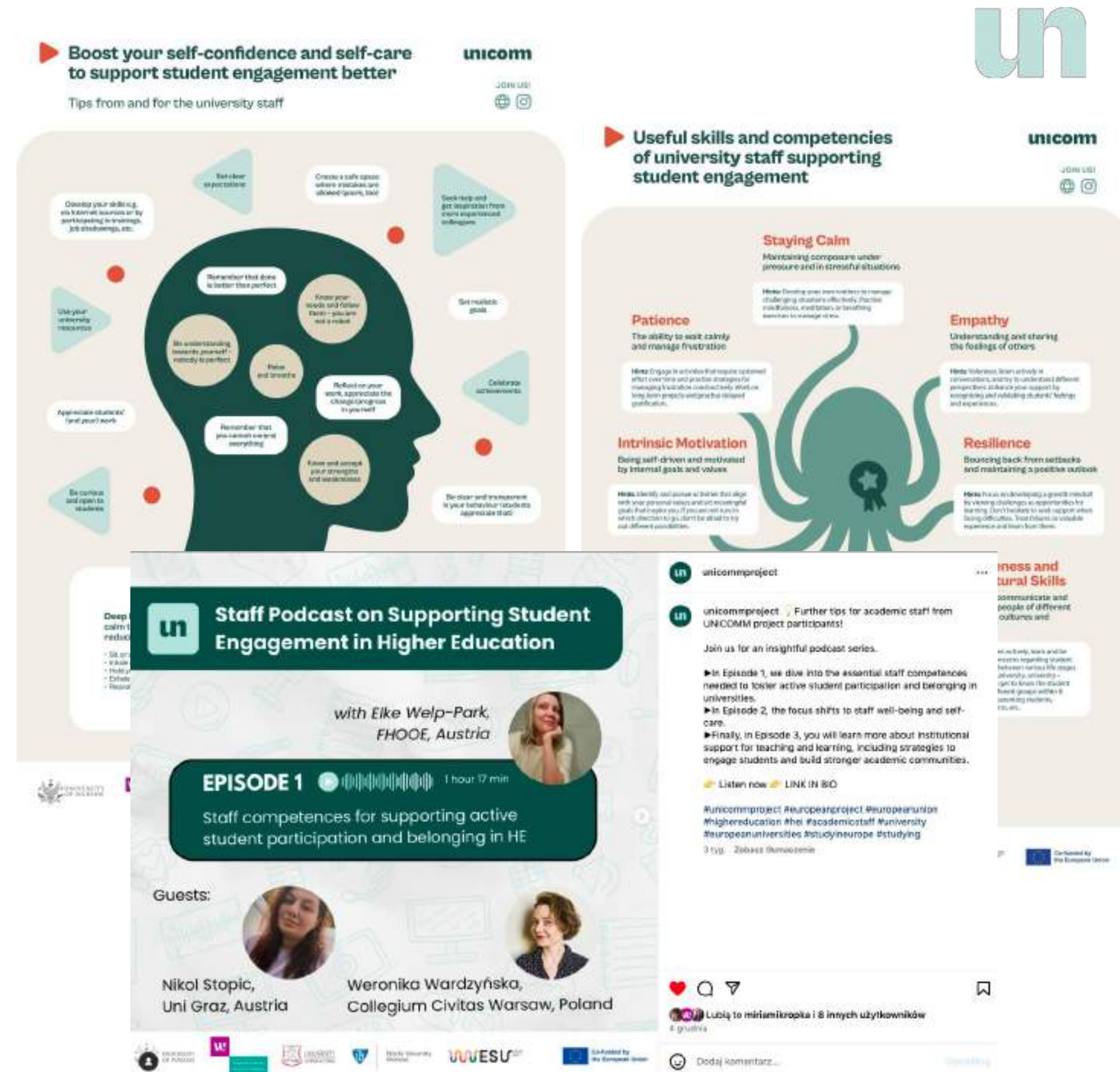
Activities and results

- ❑ Workshops for students aiming at enhancement the sense of belonging and practical skills development
- *“Come for Cookies. Stay for Community.” A Toolbox for Community Building, Facilitating Participation, and Enhancing Belonging for Higher Education Communities*
- The Student Voice podcasts about student engagement and participation based on the workshops’ insights



Activities and results

- ❑ The international peer-coaching group meetings for European university employees who support student participation
- Infographics designed on the base of the peer-coaching group meetings presenting:
 - skills and competencies important in the work of a person who supports student participation
 - ways of engaging students in active participation
 - tips on how to boost your self-confidence and self-care to support student engagement better
- UNICOMM PODCAST SERIES – VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEES – a podcast consisting of the interviews with HEI staff who participate in the peer-coaching group devoted to the role of a university employee in enhancing the HEI community



Activities and results

- ❑ International Summer School on the topic of institutional support of student participation
- Video tutorials covering the following topics:
 - Creating an inclusive space for student engagement
 - Drawing inspiration from cultural diversity
 - Motivating engagement
 - Supporting those balancing work and studies



Activities and results

- ❑ **Online symposium** for professionals and students beyond the consortium institutions involved in the topic of student participation in order to broaden the perspective with the examples from other European HEIs.

- **Final result of the project: UNICOMM HintBook: Building Stronger Communities in Higher Education. Tools and Ideas for Navigating Student Engagement in a Changing World**

