The European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education. An analysis of its role as a catalyst for Erasmus+ projects to enhance the impact of service-learning in Europe

Irene Culcasi
ire.culcasi@gmail.com
0000-0003-0033-9883
LUMSA University of Rome, Italy

Kaat Somers
kaat.somers@ucsia.be
0009-0000-0515-0532
University Centre Saint-Ignatius Antwerp, Belgium

Nicolas Standaert
nicolas.standaert@kuleuven.be
0000-0003-3598-0558
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Berta Paz-Lourido
bpaz@uib.es
0000-0003-0660-4908
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain

Abstract

This study focuses on the evolution and impact of the European Service-Learning Association in Higher Education, with a focus on the role of Erasmus+ projects in this development. Indeed, the service-learning expansion at the European level is closely linked to Erasmus+ projects that have facilitated the creation of networks, research and institutional practices. A significant result was the founding of the European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE) in 2019. The association promotes social justice, civic responsibility and engagement through service-learning, aiming to promote and institutionalize this practice across Europe. The article discusses the Europe-wide network's milestones and its mission and articulation. Special emphasis is given to the mapping process of Erasmus+ projects on service-learning that reveals the importance of networks in sharing best practices, facilitating collaboration, and influencing educational policies. Emerging themes include digital empowerment, sustainability, and conflict resolution. This contribution provides a structured overview of service-learning in Europe, highlighting how collaborations activated among European partners improve the effectiveness, dissemination and impact of the educational

proposal by contributing to the development of a more equitable and participatory society.

L'Associació Europea d'Aprenentatge Servei a l'Educació Superior. Una anàlisi del seu rol com a catalitzadora de projectes Erasmus+ per millorar l'impacte de l'aprenentatge servei a Europa

Resum

Aquest estudi es centra en l'evolució i l'impacte de l'Associació Europea d'Aprenentatge Servei a l'Educació Superior, amb un enfocament en el paper dels projectes Erasmus+ en aquest desenvolupament. El desenvolupament de l'aprenentatge servei a escala europea està estretament vinculat als projectes Erasmus+, que han facilitat la creació de xarxes, la investigació i les pràctiques institucionals. Un resultat significatiu va ser la fundació de l'Associació Europea d'Aprenentatge Servei a l'Educació Superior el 2019. L'associació promou la justícia social, la responsabilitat cívica i el compromís a través de l'ApS, amb l'objectiu d'institucionalitzar aquesta pràctica en els països europeus. L'article analitza els avenços de la xarxa a Europa, així com la seva missió i articulació. Es fa especial èmfasi en el procés de mapeig dels projectes Erasmus+ sobre ApS, que revela la importància de les xarxes en l'intercanvi de bones pràctiques, la facilitació de la col·laboració i la influència en les polítiques educatives. Entre els temes emergents s'inclou la capacitació digital, la sostenibilitat i la resolució de conflictes. Aquest treball ofereix una visió estructurada de l'ApS a Europa, destacant com les col·laboracions actives entre els socis europeus milloren l'eficàcia, la difusió i l'impacte d'aquesta proposta educativa, contribuint al desenvolupament d'una societat més equitativa i participativa.

Paraules clau: aprenentatge servei, associació europea, xarxa, educació superior, projectes Erasmus+.

La Asociación Europea de Aprendizaje-Servicio en la Educación Superior. Un análisis de su rol como catalizadora de proyectos Erasmus+ para mejorar el impacto del aprendizaje-servicio en Europa

Resumen

Este estudio se centra en la evolución y el impacto de la Red Europea de Aprendizaje-Servicio en la educación superior, con un enfoque en el papel de los proyectos Erasmus+ en este desarrollo. El desarrollo del ApS a escala europea está estrechamente vinculado a los proyectos Erasmus+, que han facilitado la creación de redes, la investigación y las prácticas institucionales. Un resultado significativo fue la fundación de la Asociación Europea de Aprendizaje-Servicio en la Educación Superior en 2019. La asociación promueve la justicia social, la responsabilidad cívica y el compromiso a través del ApS, con el objetivo de institucionalizar esta práctica en los países europeos. El artículo analiza los avances de la red en Europa, así como su misión y articulación. Se hace especial hincapié en el proceso de mapeo de los proyectos Erasmus+ sobre ApS, que revela la importancia de las redes en el intercambio de buenas prácticas, la facilitación de la colaboración y la influencia en las políticas educativas. Entre los temas emergentes se incluyen la capacitación digital, la sostenibilidad y la resolución de conflictos. Este trabajo ofrece una visión estructurada del ApS en Europa, destacando cómo las colaboraciones activas entre socios europeos mejoran la eficacia, la difusión y el impacto de la propuesta educativa, contribuyendo al desarrollo de una sociedad más equitativa y participativa.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje-servicio, asociación europea, red, educación superior, proyectos Erasmus+.

1. Introduction

Between the 1990s and 2000 in Europe there has been an increasing emphasis on the transformation of higher education with a set of policy goals and visions established to promote cooperation among European universities (Simons and Masschelein, 2009). The networked university not only promotes the establishment of networks and interaction between disciplines within a university, but also beyond, in engagement with society (Barnett et al., 2009).

With the Maastricht Treaty (European Union, 1992), the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Declaration, 1999) and the European Research Area (Commission of the European Communities, 2000), the issue of citizenship emerged as a proprietary concern for the European Union. Particularly, in the latter two documents, the promotion of active citizenship through formal teaching and learning in higher education emerge as a backbone for achieving a more cohesive and democratic society. Hernández-Barco et al. (2020) state that the process of European convergence, also known as the Bologna Process, has initiated the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered education. This shift identifies the teacher as a facilitator of learning processes and the student as an active and autonomous subject of his/her learning (Palés-Argullós et al., 2010). Although no specific mechanisms to achieve these goals are outlined at the time, broadly speaking, according to Aramburuzabala et al. (2019, 2) it can be said that currently "there is a relatively enabling policy environment and service learning is one such mechanism to achieve the ideals associated with the democratic citizen and the promotion of active citizenship".

In the context of the European Higher Education Area, the European Union programme named Erasmus+ was created in 1987 to allow students & staff mobility. Over the last decades its scope has been expanded, and in addition to the forenamed mobility (Key Action 1), it also promotes cooperation among organizations and institutions (Key Action 2) and policy development and cooperation (Key Action 3). In line with the European priorities for higher education, many Erasmus+ projects that included to some extent service-learning (SL) were funded.

The expansion of service-learning at the European level is directly linked to the growth of EU Erasmus+ projects that have enabled several universities to establish networks, map existing experiences, promote research, reflect on institutionalization processes, create instruments for training, monitoring and evaluation.

For instance, as a clear example of what was mentioned above, the European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE) was originated as a result of the process initiated during the three-year EU Erasmus+ funded project entitled *Europe Engage: Developing a Culture of Civic Engagement Through*

Service Learning within Higher Education in Europe (2014-2017). The project was initiated at the urging of the 12 European universities involved to address the growing need to consolidate institutional and national engagement to democracy and society through service-learning in a European regional hub, in order to increase knowledge, improve practice and articulate the European engagement in the context of higher education (Opazo et al., 2016).

Since then, many other EU Erasmus+ projects on SL have been funded, allowing for an ever-increasing development of the educational proposal. Consequently, mapping EU Erasmus+ projects on SL allows to track its evolution in terms of research, implementation and impact. Specifically, mapping SL Erasmus+ projects is of crucial importance for several reasons, both academic and practical. Among them, these are directly related to the goals of EASLHE:

1. Sharing Good Practices: Mapping makes it possible to identify and share best practices among different institutions and organizations implementing SL projects. This facilitates mutual learning and the adoption of effective approaches in new contexts

2. Networking and Collaboration: Through mapping, institutions can identify potential partners for future collaborations, creating networks of support and cooperation between universities, NGOs and other entities involved in SL

3. Evaluation and Improvement: The collection of project data allows an overall evaluation of the different initiatives, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. This can lead to continuous improvement of SL practices

4. Social Impact and Spin-Offs: Documenting and analyzing projects allows the social and educational impact of SL to be measured, demonstrating the added value of these experiences for the students and communities involved. This can support the promotion of SL as an effective educational practice

5. Educational Policy Development: The data collected through mapping can influence educational policies at local, national and European levels, promoting the integration of SL into official curricula

6. Research Support: Mapping provides a valuable database for researchers studying SL, facilitating comparative analysis, evidence gathering and the production of new studies and publications

7. Sustainability of Projects: Mapping can help ensure the sustainability of projects by identifying resources, funding and supports needed to maintain and further develop SL initiatives

8. Awareness-raising and Advocacy: Having a detailed map of projects can help raise public and policy-makers' awareness of the importance of SL, promoting its institutional recognition and support

The aim of this contribution is to describe the European service-learning network, its purposes and articulation starting with the first steps taken and defining its milestones, as well as to offer a structured mapping of EU Erasmus+ projects on SL to improve the effectiveness, dissemination and impact of this approach, contributing to the development of a more equitable and participatory society.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 History and milestones of the European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education

The European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education was formally established at the occasion of the Second European Conference of Service-Learning in Higher Education in Antwerp (Belgium) in September 2019, but this formal start was preceded by several significant initiatives.

While there have been national service-learning networks in Ireland, Spain and Germany for multiple years, a first strong collaboration on a European level took shape in the Erasmus+ project *Europe Engage* in 2014, under the lead of Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain and University of Galway, Ireland. The project brought together scholars from universities in twelve European countries and sought to embed the concept and practice of the civic university through service-learning and student engagement with the community. The collaboration in this European project led to an informal network meeting in Galway (Ireland) in September 2017, during a conference of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE). During this meeting, representatives from various European countries expressed their wish to enhance collaboration across Europe.

On 22 September 2018, the first European Conference on Service-Learning in Higher Education (ECSLHE) took place in Madrid (2018), combined with the 9th Spanish Conference on Service-Learning in Higher Education. During this event, the first stones were laid for what would become the European association. The participants welcomed the idea of the establishment of a formal association as it would benefit the networking, dissemination and policy making roles towards the European Commission, universities and other institutions. A task force was created with representatives from Spain, Germany, Ireland, Slovakia and Belgium, resulting in the establishment of a formal, non-profit organization according to Belgian law, the European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE). The first members of the Board and General Meeting were elected on 21 September 2019, during the Second Conference on Service-Learning in Higher Education in Antwerp, Belgium, including representatives of Austria (Academy of Fine Arts & University of Applied Arts Vienna); Belgium (KU Leuven); Croatia (University of Zagreb); Germany (University of Duisburg-Essen); Italy (University of Bologna and LUMSA University); Portugal (Polytechnic Institute of Viana do

Castelo); Romania (National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest and University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca); Slovakia (Matej Bel University Banská Bystrica); Spain (Autonomous University of Madrid); The Netherlands (Erasmus University of Rotterdam); and United-Kingdom (King's College London).

From the beginning, a strong partnership was created between EASLHE and Spanish Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (ApSU), facilitated by the fact that both had their founding presidency on Pilar Aramburuzabala. From 2019 diverse projects were developed involving both organizations, such as the creation of the European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE). This observatory was developed to map service-learning projects across Europe proposing guidelines towards its institutionalization (Ribeiro et al., 2021). To date EASLHE has increased to 260 members from over 120 universities and social entities from 33 countries.

2.2 Service-learning for values promoted by the EU

Service-learning is a contextualized practice. For that reason, in the process of embedding SL in Europe, EASLHE pays much attention to values that are central for the EU's vision on humanity and society. Article 2 of the the Treaty of the European Union (European Union, 2016) states that the EU is founded on:

> *"The values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of people belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail".*

The Treaty highlights the pivotal role of education in the promotion of these European values. Those are included in the European Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture developed by the Council of Europe in 2013 as part of the four-dimension approach that include attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding. Five years later, the Council Recommendation of 2 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching reinforced the need to empower educational staff by making effective use of EU funding instruments as Erasmus+, among others.

More recently, in the European Strategy for Universities (2022) the European Commission points to European higher education institutions as lighthouses of our European way of life, institutions striving for future-oriented education by fostering European democratic values. Students should be educated to be active and responsible EU citizens that are capable of positively contributing to society. To do so, education should look for opportunities to connect with society, encourage

application of knowledge to real-world context and involve key stakeholders in society.

Since the intention of this work is not to go in depth about the roots of the social dimension of European higher education, the aforementioned are just a few to be added to many other recommendations regarding the student-centered approach, the European values or the societal or environmental challenges to be addressed through education. EASLHE emphasizes the importance of value-driven education, pushing service-learning forward to meet the EU calls towards European universities. The association acknowledges social justice and solidarity as key principles that underpin service-learning and believes that introducing this innovative pedagogy in European higher education can contribute to the development of a fairer society.

2.3. EASLHE Goals & Activities

EASLHE promotes the development and dissemination of practice, research, institutionalization and policymaking on service-learning in European higher Education. The association aims to create a European service-learning community and to install an active learning network among EASLHE members. To achieve this, EASLHE aims to:

- Disseminate and exchange information, good practices and knowledge about service-learning
- Foster and develop training activities and resources on the service-learning pedagogy
- Establish links between local, transnational and global networks
- Organize opportunities for exchange through seminars, conferences, webinars and other events
- Advancing service-learning in higher education institutions in Europe
- Contribute to the development of policy recommendations and initiatives
- Support individuals and institutions in developing service-learning projects
- Conduct and encourage research and scientific publications on service-learning
- Raise funds, receive legacies and donations to achieve the goals of the association

Since its establishment, EASLHE has set in motion multiple projects and events to bring together scholars and teachers from European higher education institutions. The association organizes the yearly European Conference on Service-Learning in Higher Education (ECSLHE). The conference represents an opportunity for exchange of knowledge and best practices, for networking and collaboration, and offers valuable resources to further progress on issues related to the institutionalization of SL in European higher education.

So far, seven editions have taken place, with the support of local European universities. These conferences have often been organized in conjunction with Erasmus+ projects as multiplier events, facilitating the dissemination of project outputs:

- 1st ECSLHE "The Role of Service-Learning in the construction of Global Citizenship", 20-22 September 2018, Madrid (Spain), in collaboration with the Autonomous University of Madrid, the National University of Education at Distance, the Comillas Pontifical University and the Spanish Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education
- 2nd ECSLHE "Learn to Engage–Engage to Learn", 20-21 September 2019, Antwerp (Belgium) hosted by the University Centre Saint-Ignatius Antwerp (UCSIA)
- 3rd ECSLHE "What does it mean to be (become) an Engaged University" (organized as a multiplier event for the Erasmus+ project SLIHE), 13-15 July 2020 (virtual conference), hosted by Matej Bel University (Slovakia)
- 4th ECSLHE "University Meets Local Communities. Service-Learning in Higher Education" (organized as a multiplier event for the Erasmus+ project ENGAGE STUDENTS), 16-17 September 2021 (virtual conference), hosted by Polytechnical University of Bucharest (Romania)
- 5th ECSLHE "Service-Learning for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)", 6-7 October 2022, (virtual conference), hosted by Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands)
- 6th ECSLHE "Futures of Service-Learning: Digital Empowerment, Transformational Literacy and Civic Engagement" (organized as a multiplier event for the Erasmus+ project SLIDE), 27-29 September 2023, Rome (Italy), hosted by LUMSA University of Rome
- 7th ECSLHE "Transforming Europe through University Collaboration" (organized as a multiplier event for the Erasmus+ project SLIDE), 24-25 September 2024, Palma de Mallorca (Spain), hosted by the University of the Balearic Islands.

Besides the yearly conference, EASLHE undertakes other actions to achieve its goals in promoting and institutionalizing SL in the European context. These vary from publications to webinars, experts' seminars or research collaborations, among others, clustered around four main topics:

1. Dissemination: The dissemination working group supports the communication and dissemination activities of EASLHE to create a European SL community and to install an active learning network among EASLHE members.
2. Policy making: EASLHE advocates for SL on a national, European and international level, and develops actions to promote the SL pedagogy to policy makers. Especially regarding the institutionalization of SL, the

working group has done some substantial work by publishing the Green Paper on the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education (Paz-Lourido et al., 2024), in collaboration with the EOSLHE, based on data collected all over Europe.

3. Research: EASLHE promotes research on SL in Europe, reaches out and collaborates with researchers in the field, and examines potential for funding research projects. The research working group has been contributing in the data collection for several research projects conducted by EASLHE members. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the research working group supported higher education teachers by bringing together literature and empirical research on e-service-learning in the *Practical Guide on e-Service-Learning in response to Covid-19* (Albanesi et al., 2020). Currently, the working group is in the process of assembling a European Research Agenda to identify new, pressing research questions and to act as a guide for future research and research collaboration in the European context.

4. Networking: EASLHE aims to create a joint European SL community. To do this, the association wants to bring together and support SL networks and alliances in Europe. Currently, the networking working group is in the process of mapping the existing networks and alliances in Europe that focus on the topic of SL and community engagement in higher education.

Besides its day-to-day activities, EASLHE has been involved in multiple European projects, focused on the development of the SL pedagogy in Europe. The role of the association in these projects has been two-folded: a) it acts as an umbrella organization that brings together the teachers and scholars from the different universities and organizations involved in the project; and b) it serves as a powerful actor for dissemination of the project outputs on a European and international level. Since its origin as a formal association, EASLHE has been supporting many European projects and collaborations of its member institutions. Moreover, EASLHE has also been involved in the following projects as an active partner:

- Erasmus+ project SLIHE (2020) *Service-learning in Higher Education: fostering the third mission of universities and civic engagement of students* (2017-2020)
- Erasmus+ project ENGAGE STUDENTS (2021) *Promoting social responsibility of students by embedding service learning within HEIs curricula* (2018-2021)
- *Service-Learning to embed real democracy and civic engagement in European higher education*, funded by Porticus (Aramburuzabala & Paz-Lourido, 2022)
- Erasmus+ project SLIDE (2024) *Service-Learning as a pedagogy to promote Inclusion, Diversity, and Digital Empowerment* (2022-2024).

3. Methodology

3.1 Mapping the Erasmus+ Projects on Service-learning

Mapping all the Erasmus+ projects on service-learning is useful for identifying, sharing, and replicating best practices, thereby enhancing educational and social impact across Europe. This mapping allows for a comprehensive understanding of the diverse approaches and outcomes of SL initiatives, facilitating cross-institutional collaboration and innovation. Furthermore, it supports the sustainability and scalability of successful models by providing a centralized repository of knowledge and resources. Such mapping efforts contribute to the ongoing development and integration of the SL pedagogy within European higher education, promoting civic engagement and social responsibility among students.

The mapping method implemented followed several phases described:

1. Definition of mapping criteria: as indicated in the Table 1 the following criteria were defined to determine which information to collect.

Table 1. inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Description
Sources of funding	Erasmus +
Key Action	Key Action 2 (KA2): Cooperation among organisations and institutions
Type of Action	KA203: Strategic Partnerships for higher education KA206: Knowledge Alliances for higher education KA220-HED: Cooperation partnerships in higher education KA211: Capacity Building in higher education
Topic	service-learning
Field	HED: higher education
Project status	Completed Ongoing With results

2. Data collection: The type of source chosen was secondary (existing database) and consisted of the use of the Erasmus+ official platform (Erasmus+ EU programme for education, training, youth and sport website), projects section. For this first mapping it was decided not to use primary sources, that is to directly contact the institutions and organizations involved in SL projects to obtain detailed information.

3. Data selection and organisation: The selected projects that met the inclusion criteria (Figure 1) were organized into clear categories consisting of project Title, period and Action type and reference number funding program, short description of the project, website and partners involved.

Figure 1. Flowchart
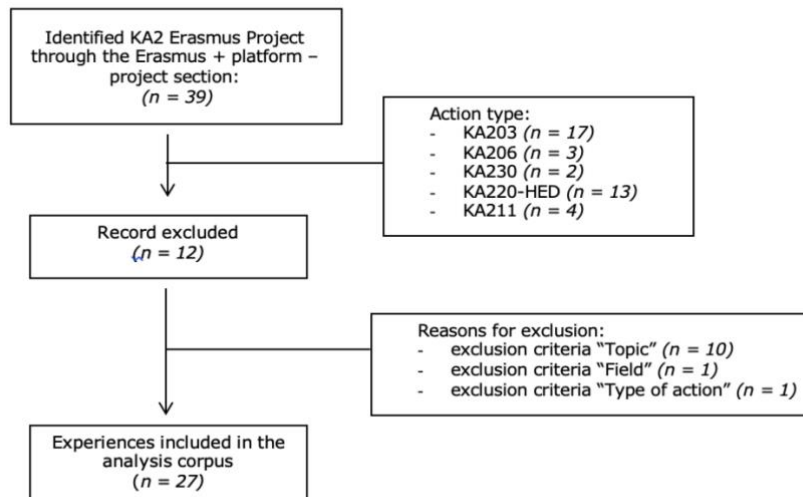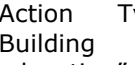
4. Results

By implementing the steps of the methodological process, it was possible to create a detailed map of European SL projects (Table 2), which contributes to improving the knowledge, collaboration and effectiveness of this educational proposal at European level. The map includes projects on service-learning or that incorporate SL as part of a broader purpose (ej. 10, 17, 26 in Table 2).

Table 2. European project map on service-learning

Project Title	Period, Action type & Ref. No.	Short description	Website
1 **COPAFEU** Co-Producing Knowledge On Sustainable Growth through Service Learning Pedagogy between African and European HEIs	2024-2027 Action Type "Capacity Building in higher education" No. 101128829	The goal of COPAFEU is to enhance the capacity of HEIs to align the skills and knowledge of their graduates to ensure employability and entrepreneurial skills to meet the needs of the local and global labour market, while actively contributing to and shaping sustainable local growth. To do so COPAFEU will develop an innovative, enhanced service-learning methodology (e-SL) for the production and dissemination of high quality open-access teaching material on sustainable local growth. **Keywords**: employability skills; entrepreneurial skills; sustainable local growth.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/101128829
Countries Covered: 🇫🇮 Finland 🇬🇷 Greece 🇳🇬 Nigeria 🇿🇦 South Africa 🇹🇿 Tanzania 🇪🇹 Ethiopia			
2 **CLINICALSIM** Clinical simulation practice-based learning in nursing	2023-2026 Action Type "Capacity Building in higher education" No. 101128330	CLINICALSIM is a capability building project targeted to Angola Higher Education Institutions with the aim of improving the practical training of nurses through simulation suites and multimedia digital tools to deploy experiential learnings and to promote a Community Service and Service-Learning into the universities. In the context of Service-Learning, the project appoints special considerations to individuals with socio-economic obstacles and health problems and the promotion of better nutrition habits. **Keywords**: practical training for nurses; Angola health problems; multimedia digital tools.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/101128330
Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇦🇴 Angola 🇵🇹 Portugal			
3 **servU** Service-learning in	2023-2025	The ServU project aims to enhance synergy between Ukrainian higher education institutions (HEIs) and local territorial	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/sear

	Higher Education for Ukraine's Recovery	Action Type "Capacity Building in higher education" No. 2018-1-FR01-KA203-047829	communities to jointly contribute to the recovery of Ukraine through the implementation of Service-learning education. The project aiming at adapting the SL methodology for wartime and recovery, takes into consideration the needs of three types of local territorial communities, that have been affected by the war: 1) territories with a large number of internally displaced people, 2) liberated territories, and 3) territories in close proximity to the front lines. **Keywords**: Ukraine recovery; Service-learning during wartime; teacher training.	ch/details/101128922
Countries Covered: 🇺🇦 Ukraine 🇮🇹 Italy 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇩🇪 Germany				
4	**BOLD** Building on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity for social action within and beyond European universities	**BOLD** 2022-2025 Action Type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2022-1-DE01-KA220-HED-000086001	The project Bold aims to bridge the gap between initial teacher education and engagement in actions for a social purpose. Bold will support student teachers' active citizenship and civic engagement through the development of professional knowledge and competencies leading to social action collaborative projects in informal and non-formal educational contexts. Bold will transform the way initial teacher education is carried out promoting the collaboration of HE institutions with civil society organisations and associations, through the implementation of service-learning advocating for linguistic and cultural diversity. **Keywords**: initial teacher training; informal and non-formal educational contexts; defense of linguistic and cultural diversity.	https://boldproject.eu/
Countries Covered: 🇩🇪 Germany 🇬🇷 Greece 🇪🇸 Spain 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇳🇱 Netherlands 🇫🇷 France				
5	**IDOL** Intergenerational Digital Service Learning	**IDOL.** 2022-2024 Action Type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-DE01-KA220-HED-000031186	The IDOL project grew out of concern for the civic engagement responsibilities of HEIs during the pandemic and the need to do more to help students tackle intergenerational tension, while also meeting community needs. IDOL aims to design and develop a new teaching approach which empowers HEI staff and lecturers to implement intergenerational digital service-learning through innovative modes of collaboration, improved digital skills and better understanding of the role of service-learning not just a "third mission" activity but as an essential part of HE educational	https://digitalservicelearning.eu/

			mission. **Keywords**: intergenerational digital service-learning; digital skills.	
Countries Covered: 🇩🇪 Germany 🇩🇰 Denmark 🇸🇪 Sweden 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇪🇸 Spain 🇦🇹 Austria				
6	**Green Skills for Cities** A cross disciplinary service-learning platform integrating design, business, botanics and technology	GREEN SKILLS FOR CITIES 2022-2023 Action Type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-AT01-KA220-HED-000027583	Green Skills for Cities (G4C) establishes a transdisciplinary service-learning platform targeted at the development of skills in the field of nature-based solutions (NBS) to be implemented in the cities. The aim is to develop curricula targeted at working in the public sector by bringing together trainers and learners from the fields of botany, technology, design and economy. **Keywords**: transdisciplinary curricula; Nature-based solutions skills; botany, technology, design and economy fields.	http://greenskills4cities.eu/
Countries Covered: 🇦🇹 Austria 🇪🇸 Spain 🇮🇹 Italy 🇫🇷 France				
7	**SL-ICP** - Service-Learning: Intersectoral Collaboration Practices for the development of students´ soft skills and socially engaged universities	ServiceLearning 2022-2024 Action Type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2022-1-FR01-KA220-HED-000089742	The SL-ICP project aims to disseminate the implementation of Service-Learning within European universities and to support stakeholders (students, professors, teaching and administrative staff, civil society organizations) to collaborate on innovative SL method and implementation steps in higher education. SL-ICP will create innovative learning and teaching practices so students can gain field experiences developing soft and hard skills in order to enter the labor market with a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship skills. **Keywords**: soft skills; hard skills; entrepreneurship skills.	https://eurasianet.eu/en/sl-icp-university-empowering-society/
Countries Covered: 🇫🇷 France 🇪🇸 Spain 🇬🇷 Greece 🇮🇹 Italy 🇷🇴 Romania				
8	**SLIDE** Service-Learning as a pedagogy to	SLIDE 2021-2024	The SLIDE project aims to intertwine the Service-Learning (SL) pedagogy with digital empowerment (DE) in order to promote inclusion (I) and diversity. The general purpose of SL is to instill a	https://www.slide-erasmus.eu

			sense of civic engagement and responsibility in students and to motivate them to make positive social change, while the purpose of digital empowerment (DE) is to make an individual fit to the digital technology, placing that individual at the center of teaching and drawing upon his personal experiences to engage her/him. Linking SL and DE makes faculty and students digitally able to engage with communities at risk, both in their immediate surroundings and in more remote areas. **Keywords**: digital empowerment; digital engagement; communities at risk.	
	promote Inclusion, Diversity, and Digital Empowerment Erasmus+	Action TYpe "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-BE02-KA220-HED-000032235		

Countries Covered: 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇦🇹 Austria 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇷🇴 Romania 🇳🇱 Netherlands 🇩🇪 Germany 🇸🇰 Slovakia 🇮🇹 Italy 🇪🇸 Spain

9	**e-SL4EU** e-Service-Learning for more digital and inclusive EU Higher Education systems Erasmus+	2021-2024 Action type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-PL01-KA220-HED-000032194	The e-SL4EU project focuses on emergence of e-Service-Learning as an innovative pedagogical approach based on experiential learning within the context of higher education in Europe. The objectives of the project are: to spread the knowledge on e-SL methodologies developing training materials for academics and to develop HE lecturers/trainers/students' digital skills aimed at the implementation of e-SL methodologies. **Keywords**: e-Service-learning; digital skills; teacher training.	https://e-sl4eu.us.edu.pl/en/home/

Countries Covered: 🇵🇱 Poland 🇮🇹 Italy 🇸🇰 Slovakia 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇷🇴 Romania

10	**SE 4Ces** Joining Social Economy Forces towards Community development, Connected societies, Co-creation of knowledge and Collaborative education	2021-2024 Action type "Knowledge Alliances for higher education" No. 621511-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA2-KA	SE 4Ces responds to the needs for stronger collaboration among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), enterprises and local societies, improved employability based on transversal skills, more engaged citizens and connected societies and the need for innovative, multidisciplinary approaches for knowledge co-creation, co-teaching and co-learning under inclusive, collaborative and highly interactive educational environments. The project envisions to create, sustain and expand the first European Community of Practice in Social Economy involved in piloting the application of service-learning and the integration of real life societal issues into curricula.	https://socialeconomy4ces.auth.gr/

			Keywords: Social economy; employability transversal skills; multidisciplinary approach; interactive educational environments.	

Countries Covered: 🇬🇷 Greece 🇮🇹 Italy 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇪🇸 Spain 🇬🇧 United Kingdom

11	**ENHANCE** Enhancing Career and Service Learning in Higher Education	enhance 2021-2024 Action type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000031128	The ENHANCE project aims to address the university challenge of promoting and improving the quality of teaching, for which it is necessary to implement innovative student-centered teaching methodologies. The project proposes the Community Service Learning (CSL) model, which promotes innovation in teaching by implementing learning in real-world situations, involving students in civic initiatives and social programs that benefit local or international communities. Specifically, SL provides a unique opportunity for students to get involved with their communities in a tangible way, by integrating service projects with didactic and learning. **Keywords**: quality of teaching; Community Service-learning model.	https://www.projectenhance.eu/

Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇮🇹 Italy 🇷🇴 Romania 🇬🇷 Greece 🇹🇷 Türkiye

12	**Nemos** A new educational model for acquisition of sustainability competences through service-learning	nemos 2021-2024 Action type "Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000027570	NEMOS project aims to implement in practice new educational models to effectively acquire sustainability competences through Service-learning in food-based degrees. The project aims at: defining a food sustainability profile (FSP) through a community building methodology; defining a methodological handbook (MH) in Food sustainability through SLM; defining assessment tools of FSP and MH by co-creation practices in SL. **Keywords**: sustainability competences; food-based field; food sustainability profile.	https://nemosproject.com

Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇦🇹 Austria 🇮🇹 Italy 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇫🇷 France

13	**Map4 Accessibility**– Civic	Map4Accessibility 2021-2024 Action type	By blending social inclusion, disability accessibility, civic engagement and ICT-enabled solutions, the Map4Accessibility project aims to civically engage HEI students through service-	https://map4accessibility.eu/

engagement of HEI students in the creation of a Pan-European mapping app for socially inclusive higher education institutions and accessible European cities	"Cooperation partnerships in higher education" No. 2021-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000030320	learning ECTS recognised activities and to promote an inclusive education agenda. The project's goal is the co-creation of a pan-European accessibility mapping tool (highlighting both digital and physical accessibility) based on an existing mobile application, enabling people with disabilities to be better informed on the accessibility of public spaces and be able to influence both HEIs and a variety of institutions for an improvement in accessibility levels. **Keywords**: accessibility; inclusion; technology-based solutions.	
Countries Covered: 🇮🇹 Italy 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇩🇪 Germany 🇧🇬 Bulgaria 🇵🇹 Portugal			
14 **FacingFIRE** Service-Learning to improve training and employability in wildfire management in southern europe	FacingFIRE 2020-2023 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education" No. 2020-1-ES01-KA203-083219	The aim of FacingFIRE project is to encourage social engagement among students to improve their capacities in Forest Fire Management (FFM) training and gender-balanced employability. FacingFIRE introduces the Service-learning approach to develop training projects in areas impacted by wildfires. The scope of this will be further enhanced by the use of innovative online learning tools and international collaboration. Employability skills, with special emphasis on women, will be boosted by hands-on practices and direct contact with employers. To transfer the project benefits to society, multiple interactions between educators, researchers, forest companies/ NGOs, and decision-makers are planned. **Keywords**: Forest Fire Management; gender-balanced employability; online learning; international collaboration.	https://facingfire.eu/
Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇬🇷 Greece 🇮🇹 Italy 🇵🇹 Portugal			
15 **INCOPS** Integration of Work-based Learning in Conflict, Peace	(INCOPS) 2020-2023 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education"	The INCOPS project will develop a comprehensive and systematic approach to overcome existing limitations in the field of Peace, Conflict & Security Studies (PCS) both in the EU and globally. It will develop and apply a tailored concept of the Work-based Learning (WBL) approach to systematically integrate theory and practice in university teaching and curriculum development with a particular focus on the role of internships and voluntary work. The	https://www.uni-marburg.de/en/conflict-studies/internationalisation/incops

and Security Studies	No. 2020-1-DE01-KA203-005661	project's primary focus is the development of INSPIRE (Integrating Service Learning in Peace & Conflict Studies Internships): a three-part structure informed by Service-learning to support students throughout their internship journey. **Keywords**: Peace, Conflict & Security Studies field; work-based learning; internship.	

Countries Covered: 🇨🇾 Cyprus 🇪🇪 Estonia 🇭🇺 Hungary 🇬🇷 Greece

| 16 | **NB LAB** – Nature-based living-lab for interdisciplinary practical and research semester on sustainable development and environmental protection in the Amazona Rainforest | 2020-2023 Action Type "Capacity Building in higher education" No. 619346-EPP-1-2020-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP | The NB-LAB project addresses the need of the partner universities in Peru and Ecuador for more applied research and research oriented programs, relevant to the current societal and environmental challenges in the region from multiple disciplines. For this purpose, The NB-LAB partners will establish nature-based living labs at the heart of the Amazon Rainforest and Community service learning has been selected as the most suitable educational approach for the transfer of the research results in the society. Close connection and collaboration with local communities and the indigenous populations will open new avenues for social and economic development in the region. **Keywords**: Amazon environmental challenges; indigenous populations; social and economic development. | http://www.nb-lab.info/ |

Countries Covered: 🇩🇪 Germany 🇪🇨 Ecuador 🇵🇪 Peru 🇪🇸 Spain

| 17 | **S-DCE** Students as Digital Civic Engagers | 2020-2022 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education" No. 2020-1-AT01-KA203-078125 | The main aim of the S-DCE project is to create a link between the field of student engagement and the creative use of digital technology. This new connection refers to DIGITAL civic engagement (DCE) in higher education that takes place either within study programs (e.g., Service-Learning) or in extracurricular activities (e.g., volunteering in a student union). The final objective is to introduce a flexible civic engagement syllabus that works across subjects and disciplines and to empower students to become digital civic engagers making the most of digital technology available to them. **Keywords**: civic engagement syllabus; digital civic engagement. | https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-AT01-KA203-078125 |

Countries Covered: 🇦🇹 Austria 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇬🇧 United Kingdom 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇪🇪 Estonia

| 18 | **UNICORN** – UNI-CO-leaRN: University-Community-Learning | 2019-2022 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education" No. 2019-1-IT02-KA203-063122 | The purpose of the UNICORN project is to design and test a new Mobility Scheme for students that combines international mobility with a Service-Learning experience in the community (International Service-Learning, ISL). The project works on the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society. More specifically, the main goal of the project was to provide students with the necessary "competences for democratic culture" to effectively contribute to society and address societal challenges. **Keywords**: international mobility; quality of education; competences for intercultural and democratic culture. | https://site.unibo.it/unicorn-eu/en |

Countries Covered: 🇮🇹 Italy 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇪🇸 Spain 🇩🇪 Germany 🇿🇦 South Africa

| 19 | **Urban diversities**: challenges for social work | 2019-2022 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education" No. 2019-1-BE02-KA203 060321 | The aim of Urban Diversities project is to develop and implement an international 'blended learning course' that would promote, at different levels (academic/student/neighborhood/professional), the acquisition of flexible intercultural skills and practical know-how that enable social workers to analyse the complexity of urban neighborhoods; disentangle different tensions; enter into the lives of urban residents, their aspirations and horizons of meaning; combine social and educational perspectives and practices; and strengthen the capabilities of (future) social professionals when intervening in urban tensions and complexities. The Community Service-learning (CSL) helps in better understanding their characteristics, needs and assets, and to be able to compare the different areas. **Keywords**: blended learning; intercultural skills; social workers field; urban diversities challenges. | https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2019-1-BE02-KA203-060321 |

Countries Covered: 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇫🇮 Finland 🇳🇱 Netherlands 🇭🇺 Hungary 🇬🇧 United Kingdom				
20	**Nexus** PromotiNg thE neXus of migrants throUgh active citizenShip	2019-2022 Action type "Strategic partnership for higher education" No. 2019-1-ES01-KA203-065861	NEXUS empowers migrant students to explore the relationship between participatory digital tools and democracy, by innovating civic education at higher education institutions. NEXUS bases its approach to civic education through the peer-to-peer networks, exploring how meaningful civic learning is undertaken in online environments and bringing together the students' preference for online activity with the availability of networked citizenship tools. The project created an inventory of digital tools for open democracy and digital citizenship education, a handbook for educators on civic education for a digital age, and a policy document focused on the implementation of service-learning as a pedagogical method for HEIs. **Keywords**: migrant students; digital democracy; civic learning; online environments; networked citizenship tools.	https://nexus4civics.eu/
Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇲🇹 Malta 🇮🇹 Italy 🇸🇮 Slovenia 🇸🇪 Sweden 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇧🇪 Belgium				
21	**Rural 3.0**: Service Learning for the Rural Development	2019-2021 Action type "Knowledge Alliances for higher education" No. 599382-EPP-1-2018-1-PT-EPPKA2-KA	The Rural 3.0 project wants to implement the Service-learning approach, not in an urban context but in rural communities, that make up over 90 % of the territory and are home to more than 56 % of the population. The objectives of the projects are: analyse in which way rural communities can be given access to services that students can provide; evaluate the extent to which Service-learning occurs in rural areas, in which forms and how effective it is; establish a structure of rural SL education shared and developed by HEIs and rural partners; Promote education that improves lives of people in rural areas and their communities; strengthen skills and innovative capacity of adult rural SE; provide practical SL and SE experiences to students in rural settings **Keywords**: rural areas; rural Service-learning education; rural community improvement.	https://rural.ffzg.unizg.hr/
Countries Covered: 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇩🇪 Germany 🇪🇸 Spain 🇱🇹 Lithuania 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇳🇱 Netherlands 🇦🇹 Austria 🇮🇹 Italy				

22	**ENGAGE STUDENTS** Promoting social responsibility of students by embedding service learning within HEIs curricula	ENGAGE STUDENTS 2018-2021 Action type "Strategic Partnerships for higher education" No. 2018-1-RO01-KA203-049309	The ENGAGE STUDENTS project focuses on social responsibility of higher education institutions at student and teacher level. The project's general objective is to empower the social dimension of higher education by increasing its relevance for society through embedding service-learning as a common pedagogical approach within education and research practice. The project specific objectives are: to explore the existing methodology of service-learning and other forms of community-related learning and research; to develop a methodological toolkit and a pedagogical workbook for teachers; to build the critical mass of knowledge and resources in partner HEIs in order to foster the use of service-learning and community-related learning methodologies. **Keywords**: social responsibility; education and research practice.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2018-1-RO01-KA203-049309
	Countries Covered: 🇷🇴 Romania 🇱🇹 Lithuania 🇮🇹 Italy 🇦🇹 Austria 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇮🇪 Ireland			
23	**INHSOC** INternships for enhancing SOcial and Civic Key Competences for Lifelong Learning in Technical Universities	iN4SOC 2018-2021 Action type: "Strategic Partnerships for higher education" No. 2018-1-ES01-KA203-050697	The INHSOC project aims to promote internships as essential tools for the professional and personal growth of university students, providing real experiential learning. The project emphasizes the significant role of social engagement in learning processes and fosters cooperation between academia and organizations through service-learning experiences within well-designed internships. **Keywords**: internship; professional and personal growth; social engagement.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2018-1-ES01-KA203-050697
	Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇩🇪 Germany 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇭🇺 Hungary 🇫🇷 France			
24	**SLIHE** – Service learning in higher education - fostering the third mission of	slihe 2017-2020 Action type "Strategic Partnerships for higher	The SLIHE project envisions strategy for Service-learning, thanks to which universities fulfill their third mission and prepare a new generation of experts.The project builds partnerships between the sectors and develops cooperation between the universities and public and non-governmental organizations in the region. The project builds on the needs of an international dimension - to	http://www.slihe.eu/project-overview/description

			motivate students to civic engagement and enable teachers to support the social role of higher education institutions (HEIs). **Keywords**: university's third mission; international civic engagement.	
universities and civic engagement of students	education" No. 2017-1-SK01-KA203-035352			
Countries Covered: 🇸🇰 Slovakia 🇩🇪 Germany 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇦🇹 Austria 🇨🇿 Czechia 🇷🇴 Romania				
25	**CASE** - Competencies for A sustainable Socio-Economic development	CASE Competencies for a sustainable socio-economic development 2015-2017 Action type "Knowledge Alliances for higher education" No. 554244-EPP-1-2014-1-AT-EPPKA2-KA	The CASE project proposes a Knowledge Alliance (KA) that aims to train the skills needed for sustainable socio-economic development and for sustainability driven enterprises. This shall be achieved through the creation of a sustainable entrepreneurial education and increasing university-business cooperation in the context of a "green economy". Five regional pilots which form an inter-university course with more than 25 Service-learning projects (and 25 partners / enterprises) will test and optimise the course while providing various best practice examples of university-business cooperation in an open access knowledge platform. **Keywords**: sustainable socio-economic development skills; sustainable entrepreneurial education; green economy; university-business cooperation.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/554244-EPP-1-2014-1-AT-EPPKA2-KA
Countries Covered: 🇦🇹 Austria 🇨🇿 Czechia 🇮🇹 Italy 🇸🇪 Sweden 🇩🇪 Germany				
26	**UNIBILITY** University Meets Social Responsibility	UNIBILITY university meets social responsibility 2015-2017 Action type "Strategic Partnerships for higher education" No. 2015-1-AT01-KA203-005033	The UNIBILITY project aimed at strengthening the relationships of universities with their local communities through University's Social Responsibility (USR) activities. Specifically, the project developed training material and guidelines for universities to increase their social responsibility actively on student and staff member level. In the implementation phase service-learning is the method used in order to implement the USR-activities beneficial to the local communities. **Keywords**: University's Social Responsibility.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2015-1-AT01-KA203-005033

Countries Covered: 🇦🇹 Austria 🇪🇸 Spain 🇸🇮 Slovenia 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇷🇴 Romania 🇧🇪 Belgium			
27	**Europe Engage** - Developing a Culture of Civic Engagement through Service-Learning within Higher Education in Europe	Europe engage 2015-2018 Action type "Strategic Partnerships for higher education" No. 2014-1-ES01-KA203-004798	The 'Europe Engage' Project seeks to embed the concept and practice of the civic university through Service-Learning (SL) and student engagement with community. The overall aim of 'Europe Engage' is to promote Service-Learning as a pedagogical approach that embeds and develops civic engagement within higher education, students, staff and the wider community, in order to maintain and develop democracy and healthy levels of social capital within the European context. **Keywords**: civic university; civic engagement; democracy.	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2014-1-ES01-KA203-004798
Countries Covered: 🇪🇸 Spain 🇳🇱 Netherlands 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇵🇹 Portugal 🇮🇹 Italy 🇬🇧 United Kingdom 🇭🇷 Croatia 🇱🇹 Lithuania 🇫🇮 Finland 🇦🇹 Austria 🇮🇪 Ireland 🇩🇪 Germany			

5. Discussion

The Erasmus+ selected projects are under the Key Action 2 (KA2), Cooperation among organisations and institutions, and are expected to bring positive and long-lasting effects on the participating organisations, on the policy systems as well as on the organisations and people directly or indirectly involved in the activities. Particularly, this Key Action supports: Partnerships for Cooperation, Partnerships for Excellence, Mundus Action, Partnerships for Innovation, Capacity Building projects and Not-for-profit European sport events. Erasmus+ projects on service-learning cover specific actions under the KA2 as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. KA2 Action types
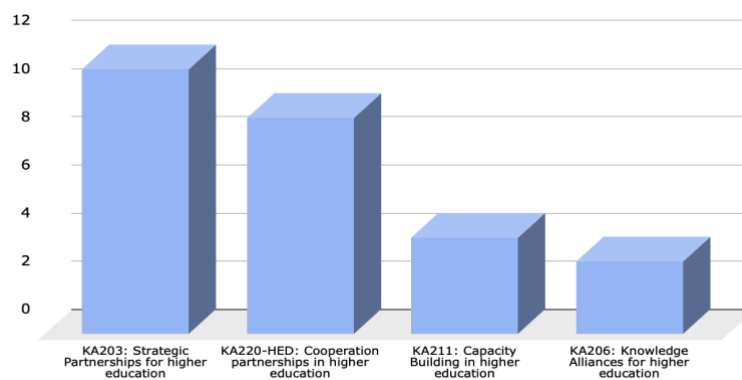
Of the 27 selected projects, Spain is the country with the largest leadership role, followed by Austria and Germany. In terms of participating countries, the largest distribution includes Spain (with 17 projects), Italy (15 projects), Germany (13 projects), Austria (11 projects), Portugal (11 projects) and Belgium (10 project), for a total of 25 European countries involved. It should be considered that Erasmus+ projects may include partners outside the European Union. Taking into account the SL projects there are 9 non-European countries involved in the partnerships: Angola, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Tanzania, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

In terms of Erasmus+ project funding on SL, the years 2020 and 2021 record the most amount of funding on this topic (Figure 3). These are also the years of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which contextually sees a growth of interest in e-Service-Learning and the issue of digital empowerment. Indeed, since 2020 there are 7 Erasmus+ projects on this topic, indicating that in an era driven by technology and interconnectedness, education has undergone remarkable transformations, adapting to the demands of a digital age (Culcasi et al., 2023). It is important to mention that digital is the topic that most links the selected projects. Indeed, 11 out of 27 projects cover aspects such as digital empowerment, digital skills,

accessibility and technologies, blended learning, innovative online learning environments, virtual and blended mobility, and digital civic engagement.

Another relevant theme is that of sustainability, which is found in 9 of the 27 projects and is declined in different ways, such as: sustainable local growth, nature-based solutions for cities, food sustainability profile, forest fire management, climate change and Amazon environmental challenges, sustainable business education, urban diversity challenges, rural community development and green economy.

Other topics include university social responsibility, international mobility, quality of teacher training, new perspectives in social economy, soft skills development, transdisciplinary curricula, global citizenship, democracy and inclusion in terms of disability, linguistic diversity, gender-balanced employability, cultural integration and intergenerational relations.

In recent years, due to increasing war conflicts around the world, it has been creating a necessity to focus on peace and conflict resolution issues by creating new SL models. These Erasmus+ projects include: servU (2021-2024) which is a capacity building project for the Ukraine recovery and INCOPS (2020-2023) which is related to the Peace, Conflict & Security Studies field.

Figure 5. Founding years distribution
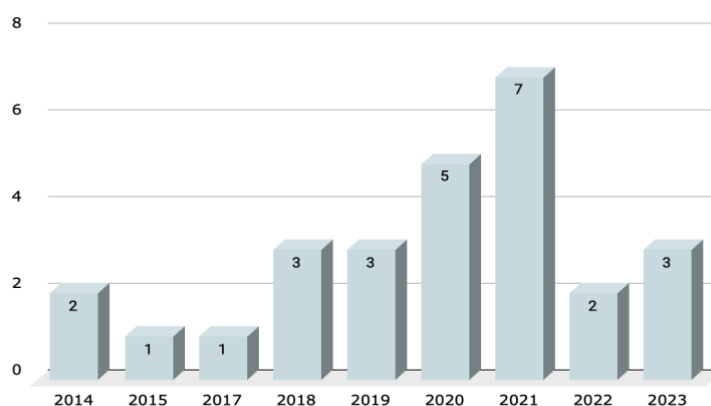
6. Conclusion

The Erasmus+ projects give visibility to the possibilities of higher education to impact society. EU funding seems then crucial to spread the social dimension of education together with the societal transformation. Indeed, the expansion of service-learning at the European level is directly linked to the growth of EU Erasmus+ projects that have enabled several universities to establish networks, map existing experiences, promote research, reflect on institutionalization processes, create instruments for training, monitoring and evaluation. Moreover,

the transnational approach of Erasmus+ can be enhanced by international organizations. This is the case of EASLHE that has been fundamental to facilitate networking and dynamize existing collaboration structures and create new ones.

This study aimed at presenting a systematic mapping of SL related Erasmus+ projects. As far as we know, if there are mapping studies on SL experiences, this is the first effort in which the object of analysis in the field of SL is the Erasmus+. Particularly, the study reveals significant trends, notably the focus on digital empowerment and sustainability, reflecting broader societal and educational priorities. The findings suggest that SL not only enhances student engagement but also aligns with the European Union's strategic goals for higher education, particularly in promoting civic responsibility and social justice.

The study highlights the pivotal role of SL in fostering active citizenship and embedding democratic values within European higher education. The establishment of the European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education and the growing number of Erasmus+ projects dedicated to SL underscore the increasing institutional and policy support for this pedagogical approach.

While this study provides valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the mapping of Erasmus+ projects relied exclusively on secondary data sources. This approach, while useful for obtaining a broad overview, may have limited the depth of analysis. Second, the study focused on projects funded under the Erasmus+ program, which, although comprehensive, does not capture all SL initiatives in Europe. Consequently, the findings may not fully represent the diversity of SL practices across different contexts and funding mechanisms.

Future research should aim to continuously monitor and analyze the development of SL to ensure that conclusions remain relevant and reflective of current trends. Moreover, working on Primary data collection through direct engagement with institutions and project coordinators could provide more detailed insights into the implementation processes and challenges faced by individual projects.

At an educational level, to further amplify the impact of SL, ongoing efforts are needed to integrate SL more deeply into educational policies and to foster stronger collaboration among European institutions. The emphasis on digitalization and sustainability in SL projects indicates that this approach is well-positioned to address contemporary global challenges, making it a crucial component in the evolution of higher education towards a more equitable and inclusive society.

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