

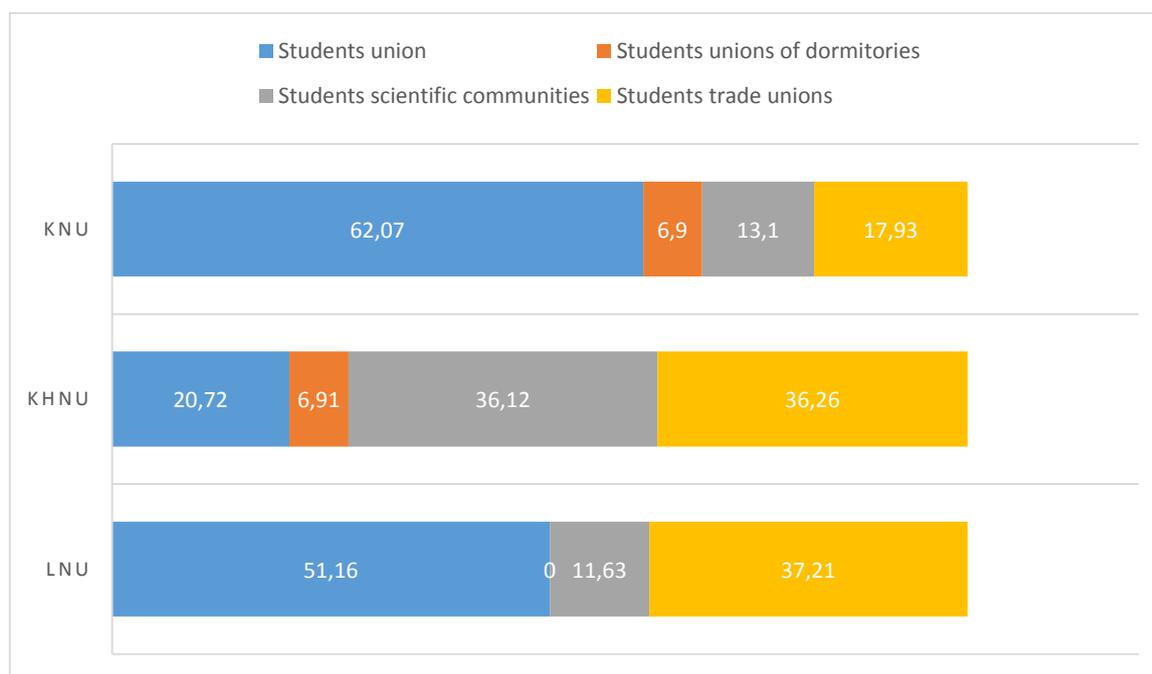
IMPRESS students activities report

By the Ukrainian Association of Students Self-government

During spring of 2014 as decided in the first project year UASS experts have visited partner-universities, met with their local students organizations and a study of students needs and interests was conducted in Ivan Franko Lviv National University, Taras Shevchenko National Universities, and Vasyl Karazin Kharkiv National University. Project coordinator, UASS and ESU saw the study as an instrument that would help to develop foreseen in the project students activities in Ukrainian higher educational institutions, that would reflect needs of students, therefore the study has addressed students preferences on activities, communities and etc. to be developed in partner universities in Ukraine.

Total number of participants reached 1245 students. Overall 55% have experience participating in work of the students organizations, and if looking at the university level Taras Shevchenko National Universities has the highest percentage of responders with students activists background (over 73%). However, only about 20% of students who have participated in the study have been active in NGOs. Experience of students participation vary among the study participants as well and includes participation in work of students union, students unions of dormitories, students scientific communities and students trade unions in a ratio that is reflected on the Pic 1.

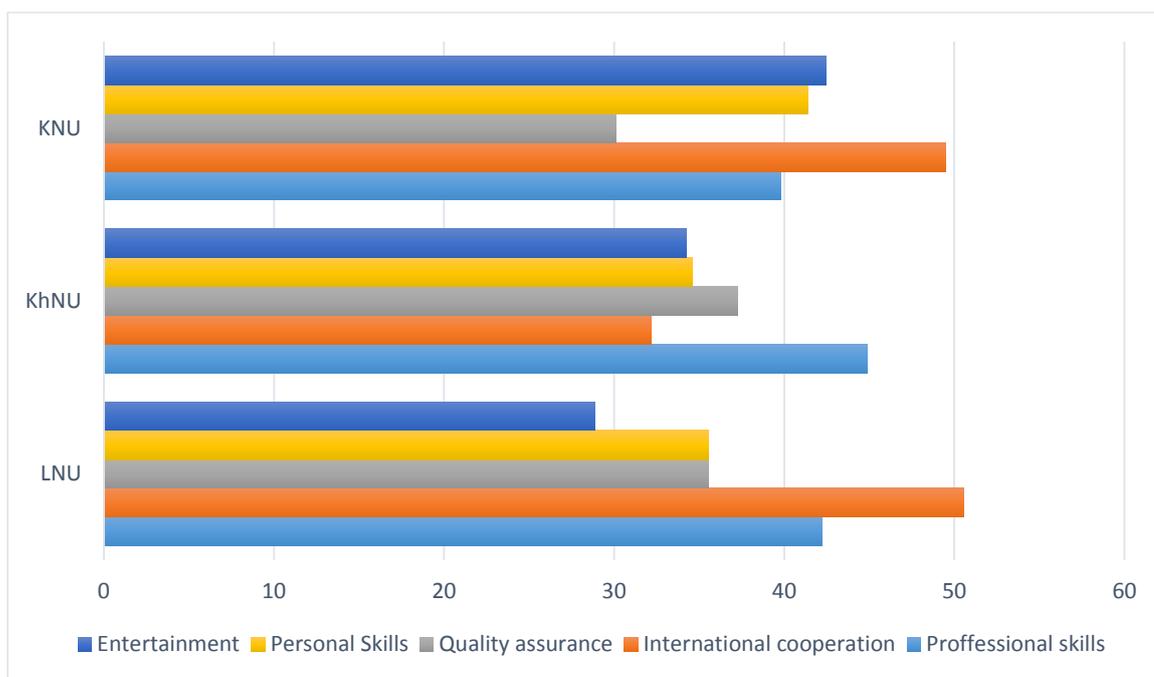
Pic 1. Students participation in different organizations



Nevertheless, great number of responders who have not been active before provides an overview of interests that have not been address by student organizations properly so far. Study participants consider that student organizations should prioritize working on development of students professional skills, development of international cooperation between universities and students, quality assurance of higher education, development of students personal skills and entertainment (listed in the priority order). During the meetings with students organizations of partner-universities it has been discussed and decided that developing two to three first priority areas that study would reflect for each institutions would be the most suitable, considering resources available in the project. As priorities differ at the Universities, it can be seen that students of both Kyiv and Lviv National

Universities identify development of international cooperation as the number one priority, whereas for Kharkiv University students' professional skills development is of the greatest need. These skills are identified as second priority by Lviv students, and their third choice was for personal skills development and quality assurance. Study participants in KNU put entertainment on the second position and personal skills development on third. Finally, KhNU students recognize quality assurance and personal skills development as second and third preferences respectively. Data on each of the Universities reflected in Pic 2.

Pic 2. Preferences division among five most popular priorities



In order to narrow down possible range of personal and professional skills that can be developed in work of student organizations survey participants were asked to prioritize those. Study reflects that in all three universities students would like to develop their skills of public speaking, projects and events management. Responders from both Kyiv and Lviv National Universities outline speaking foreign language as their third and second priority respectively, whereas in Kharkiv National University development of team-work skills has been recognized as needed by students. Table 1 shows detailed deviation of responders priorities in skills development (participants of the study were able to prioritize three skills they find the most interesting).

Table 1. Preferences division in skills to be developed

Name of the skill/%	KNU	KhNU	LNU
Public speaking	48,39	29,98	50,00
Projects and events management	44,62	31,94	41,67
Team-work	20,43	32,18	37,22
Conflict management	13,98	21,41	23,89
Entrepreneurship	19,35	21,88	27,78
Civic journalism	18,82	21,76	23,33
Time-management	12,90	14,93	20,56
Foreign language speaking	36,02	28,13	43,33
Career management	26,34	23,73	38,89
Fundraising	3,76	5,09	11,67

Finally, in order to identify motivation of students to become organizers of these student activities themselves they were asked to identify in management of which activities they are ready to get involved. In all three universities there is a reasonable number of students who are ready to participate in organization of international students exchanges (KNU – 20%, KhNU – 26%, LNU – 47%) and management of cultural activities (KNU – 16%, KhNU – 25%, LNU – 41%). Responders from Kyiv National University are also most likely to manage scientific activities and civic journalism initiatives (12% and 13%). At Kharkiv National University analysis has shown that organization of scientific and quality assurance activities is of the interest to students (19% and 15%), and in Lviv National University students are most likely to get involved in running ecological and civic journalism activities (45% and 27%).

Thus, students' organizations were asked to start a discussion among themselves on what kind of students activities they are ready to develop in the framework of the given project and based on the outcomes of the study. It was also proposed to them to organize a round table event in each of their universities to present study outcomes, discuss priorities and involve greater number of students in the activities development. Further, as agreed previously between project-partners and coordinator a study visit to Northumbria University is to be organized, and it is of a great importance to include in the program visit opportunities for students activists to interact with their UK colleagues from the areas of student activities that have been seen as a priority for the Ukrainian students. It is also clear from the study that there are soft skills required by the students that can be provided to them by the development of student activities and cooperation with the group working on the soft skills development in partner-universities, as those become complementary. Thus, UASS proposes to conduct a joined meeting of groups working on students activities development and soft skills development to identify the most effective methods of synchronizing efforts within the project. Finally, UASS proposes to ESU to construct a training for students organization leaders in Ukrainian universities based on the study outcomes, and students decision of activities to be developed in each of the higher educational institution participating in the project.