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# The social impact of the University of Deusto

**People who transform themselves in order to transform society.  
An overview focused on learning processes (part 3).  
Contribution to employment and employability.**

Víctor Urcelay, María Lambarri, Elvira Arrondo, José Luis Larrea





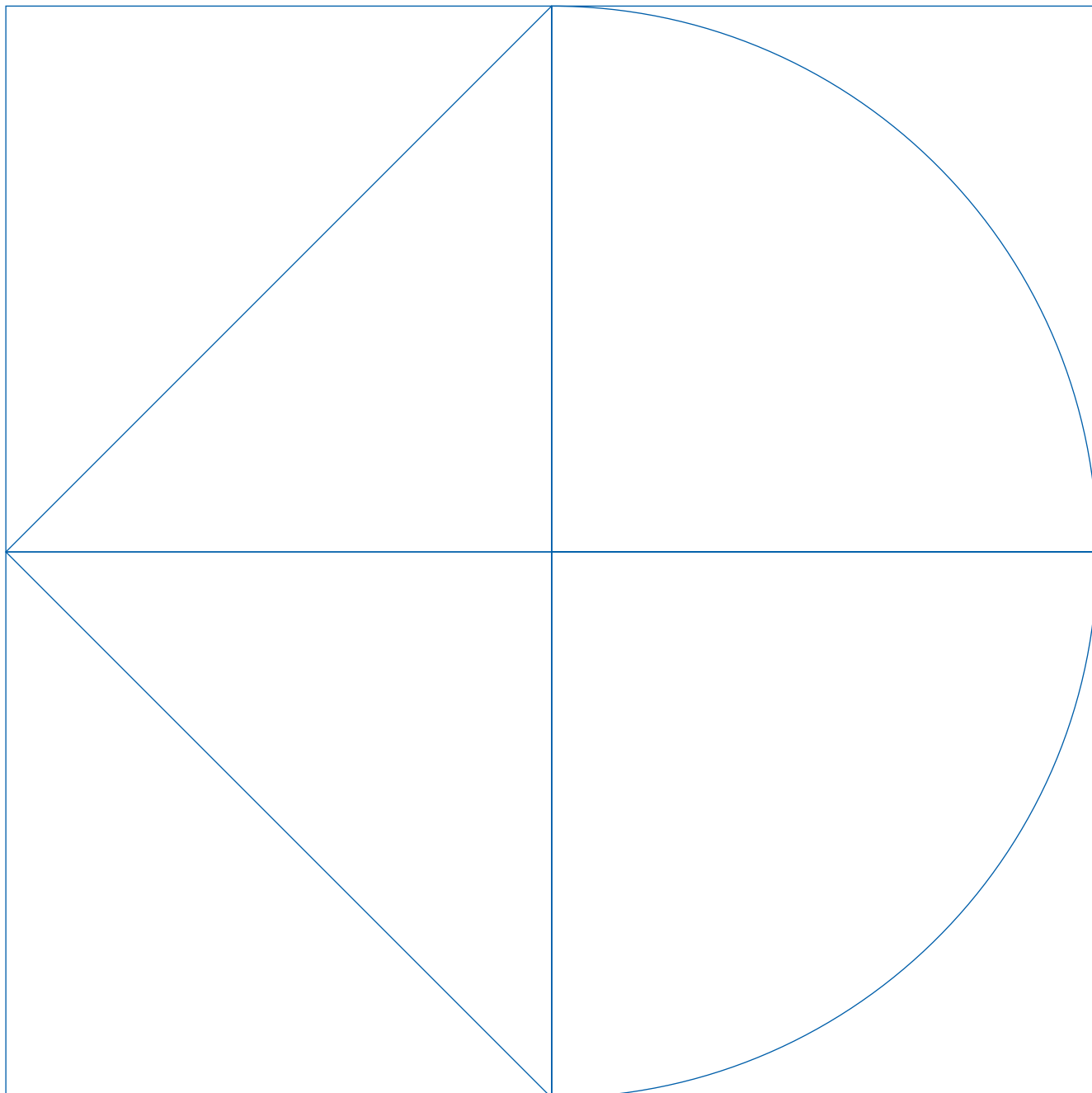
Deusto Social Lab Reports. No. **5(2025)**

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The different projects, studies and pieces of research carried out by Deusto Social Lab every year form the basis for the publication of the so-called *Deusto Social Lab Reports*.

These monographs are aimed at all the economic and social actors that make up the open cooperation ecosystem in which the mission of Deusto Social Lab operates (companies and organisations, public administration, educational institutions, social and cultural bodies, among others) and, ultimately, at society at large. Using non-academic language, these monographs showcase the transformative power of research and enable Deusto's research results to be shared with social actors. This is intended to help them meet the challenges that they face in connection with social transformation by offering them examples of good practice, as well as guidelines and recommendations that can be useful in their work.

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# Foreword

Deusto Social Lab has been launched to meet the challenges posed by society in the 21st century. Providing people with the lifelong support they need so that they can be active agents of transformation is at the heart and core of what we do at the University.

This approach involves promoting the development of the person as an agent of change and transformation throughout life, and goes hand in hand with a process of ongoing training and learning. It also considers that the desired transformation must have a purpose: we want people to be agents of change at the service of well-being, we want our society to be characterised by inclusive and sustainable well-being, in which people play a leading role.

Similarly, we recognise that knowledge does not only reside in the university. It is therefore essential to generate an ecosystem for open learning, which links the various areas of knowledge to economic and social actors. In this ecosystem, the relationship model must be based on cooperation, recognising that the worlds of business, government and any type of social organisation must work together to face the challenges that exist within the new context.

Through the Deusto Social Lab Reports, we seek to transfer and share with our entire ecosystem the results of selected projects, initiatives and studies conducted in order to contribute to addressing the new challenges faced in our society.

Víctor Urcelay Yarza  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Entrepreneurship and Business  
Relations and Head of the Deusto Social Lab Initiative

Deusto Social Lab aspires to build a space for cooperative learning that fosters the co-generation of knowledge at the service of progress, while transforming the day-to-day work that we do. This learning space is committed to stimulus, discussion, reflection, action, recognition and dissemination, which need to be constantly developed to ensure sustained and sustainable learning processes over time. Processes that are useful and bring recognised value to society in terms of social impact.

In this context, these Reports are intended to be a sound instrument not only for dissemination, but also for stimulating and provoking a type of discussion that leads to reflection, action and the recognition of what we do, turning the process into a creative spiral that unfolds over time.

Stimulation is important in triggering any learning process and achieving cooperation in working at the service of an envisaged common future. An envisaged common future that serves to stimulate us; that lead us to share by engaging dialogue and conversation; and that demands individual and collective reflection and challenges us to take cooperative action. An action that needs to be evaluated and recognised as part of the construction of the common embodied narrative in every learning process. This is aimed at disseminating and socialising shared learning, which is the best way to stimulate a new stage of knowledge generation through learning. It involves working hand in hand with people, who are always at the core of the process.

José Luis Larrea Jiménez de Vicuña  
Chairman of the Advisory Board of Deusto Social Lab





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# Chapter one

## Introduction



# 1. Introduction

The University of Deusto has met one of the commitments identified in its strategic plan Deusto 2022 by engaging in a line of work started in 2019 aimed at providing a model to comprehensively understand, analyse and assess its social impact. Strategic line 18 (L18) of the 2022 Deusto strategic plan, entitled 'Assessing the University's social impact and its contribution to sustainable development', specifically addressed this issue, was devoted to this objective until 2023. This line of work continues under the new 2026 Strategic Plan through the initiative 'Promoting networking and its social impact', particularly via the project 'Development of the University's Social Impact Model and its contribution to the SDGs'. To date, this initiative has been implemented through the publication of three previous reports:

- 'The social impact of the University of Deusto. An entrepreneurship-based overview', from 2019, was the result of the process carried out in the first year of work within this strategic line (Deusto Social Lab Report Number 3).

This document was an initial overview of the University of Deusto's social impact model and was based on a process of internal and external co-generation that was subsequently applied to the specific activities that the university conducted in the field of entrepreneurship. An action-research standpoint was used to develop a theoretical-conceptual framework of the social impact model. This was later specifically applied to the activities promoted by the UD in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship during the 2015-2018 period.

As described in this 2019 Report, the impact of the University of Deusto has been inherently related to its essence, the fulfilment of its mission through its university project. The impact is made by the individuals whom the University supports in their educational journeys, through the knowledge it generates in partnership with other stakeholders, and as a result of Deusto's commitment to society. All these impacts converge at a single, fundamental point: people. People who form a relationship with the University of Deusto may do so at different times in their lives, and are guided by different motivations to transform themselves in order to likewise transform their environment. They take on an active, conscious, critical and committed role in society. In the words of Pedro Arrupe (Superior General of the Society of Jesus, SJ), they become 'people for others' (Kolvenbach, 2001). The report goes further in voicing the specific transformations to which the UD

aspires in the field of entrepreneurship and proposes a battery of impact indicators throughout the transformation process, which have been (partly) measured.

The University is also an agent that is in turn transformed as a result of its multiple relationships. Therefore, it has an impact in two directions: as people are transformed, so is the institution itself transformed. The University is an active social agent that aims to make a contribution by finding answers to the social challenges that arise. It does so directly, by using its capabilities, and, above all, by also making these available to people.

In short, the work carried out in the first phase made it possible to confirm the validity of the proposed model and to obtain the first social impact indicators applied to a specific area. Since then, work has continued on its deployment in the area of entrepreneurship by systematising processes and tools, while also sharing and disseminating the results to society.

- 'The social impact of the University of Deusto. An overview focused on learning processes', from 2020, was a result of the implementation of the second phase of work. It continued the research begun the previous year, while also recognising the crucial role played by the companies and organisations that host Deusto students for internships and/or employ its graduates (Deusto Social Lab Report No. 4).

This second phase took place in 2020. It further expounded on the global concept, moving forward by reflecting on the so-called first mission of the university, the learning processes. What is important for our purposes is that learning takes place in a variety of settings (not only in the university, but also within the family environment, in the community, and in the world of work) and requires different stakeholders to be involved (in addition to the university, the organisations and companies that work in partnership with it in the learning processes, for example). This analysis was therefore approached with humility, since the people who come to the University of Deusto with the objective of learning (whether through undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral or lifelong learning programmes) also do so in those other spheres in which formal, non-formal or informal learning takes place as well. Taking into account the scope and complexity of the subject in question, this report conceptually structured the social impact model derived from the learn-



ing processes and took a step forward by reaching out to one of the main stakeholders (companies and organisations that host trainees and graduates).

The study confirmed that the logic of the conceptual model of social impact proposed in the first phase was fully applicable to the learning processes: the UD supports people in their learning processes by placing the all-round education of the person at the centre of the university project (i.e. seeking to shape students into people who are educated, competent, just and hope-inducing professionals). The UD encourages people to acquire knowledge (as a result of these learning processes) that is manifested as competencies, both transversal (necessary for and common to all programmes of study) and specific (tailored to each profession). The acquisition and development of these competencies is thus a process of personal transformation. This logic leads us to see competencies as those transformations to which the UD aspires, which are conveyed through people, the real agents of social transformation. These will thus be people's transformation processes in this impact model; as in the previous case, a battery of impact indicators was proposed for them, which, in this case, were applied to one of the most important UD stakeholders: the companies and organisations that offer our students internships and/or employ our graduates.

This work showed that the values of the individual, how they work and how they behave are increasingly important. Companies and organisations demand people with a specific attitude and motivation, who have the ability to adapt to the changes that society requires. Thus, those who have more transversal competencies will be more likely to find and keep a job because of their ability to provide added value to their company; but, above all, they will become more employable. In this sense, UD people are highly prized for these transversal competencies, which the UD continues to reinforce and boost through new projects and proposals for the future.

- 'The impact of the University of Deusto on society. An overview focused on learning processes', from 2021, concerned the implementation of the third phase, which focuses on the collective *raison d'être* of the University: The student body (Deusto Social Lab Report number 5).

On the one hand, this study enabled a review and update of the set of transformations identified in the previous phase that were related to learning processes. Throughout 2021, the University of Deusto continued to advance and strengthen the transversal competencies that all students are expected to acquire, regardless of their chosen degree. On the other hand, it made it possible to start this comparative analysis of the im-

pact as assessed by students and by the companies and organisations that host and employ our students and/or graduates (a detailed analysis of which is provided in the Deusto Social Lab Report No. 4). With regard to this latter aspect, it is particularly pertinent to underscore the alignment between the competences most highly valued by employers and those in which our students indicate having achieved the greatest degree of proficiency.

In addition to the assessment of the different transversal competences in terms of the importance given to them and the level of proficiency achieved, final year students were also able to assess the activities carried out during their learning process. The majority believed that activities with a stronger practical component, a closer connection to real-world contexts (both local and international) and a focus on business or sector-specific knowledge—such as curricular and extra-curricular placements, final projects/dissertations, coursework and international experiences—make the strongest contribution to the development of the aforementioned competences. Moreover, it is these activities that are most in demand for the future.

For this fourth report, it was considered relevant to examine an area of great significance to the University—not only because it lies at the core of our identity, but also because it is of considerable interest to our key stakeholders: the employability of our graduates. In keeping with the University of Deusto's commitment to supporting individuals throughout their lives, this report reflects on and analyses the University's social impact through its contribution to one of the most vital aspects of any society: employment—specifically, the quality and sustainability of employment among its graduates (former students).

As was the case in the previous phases, the work process maintained and observed the basic premises established at the beginning of this strategic project. To remind readers, they are listed below:

- The project has been conceived and conducted using an action-research or transformative research approach, so that the conceptual model can be validated and corrected if necessary. It also generates joint learning among the different project participants, which promotes the co-generation of knowledge.
- The research project was therefore structured as a space to generate knowledge to be shared with institutional, economic and social stakeholders. Identifying them and involving them at the right time is thus important to ensure a successful process.
- The project used different combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies, which were applied using

different existing methodologies and models on social impact. The most appropriate for each case have been selected and proposed.

- The research project did not seek to merely derive value from its assessment, nor did it seek to monetise all contributions.

The structure of the study is outlined below:

## CHAPTER ONE

This consists of a single section specifically aimed at contextualising the scope of the work undertaken in this third phase, focused on the learning processes at the University of Deusto and their impact on the employability of its graduates throughout their lives.

### 1. Introduction

## CHAPTER TWO: EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

### 2. Employability and employment: An in-depth discussion of both concepts

The significance of both terms is due to their relevance to and impact on the nature of the activities undertaken by higher education institutions. It is therefore essential to provide a detailed conceptualisation of them. This is particularly pertinent in light of the profound transformation currently taking place in the labour market, which, like many other areas of society, calls for a new understanding of learning processes.

One key consequence of this transformation is that securing and retaining desirable employment no longer depends primarily on the knowledge a person possesses at the time of recruitment. Instead, it increasingly hinges on their capacity to continue learning and applying new knowledge, with adaptability becoming a crucial factor. It is thus necessary to distinguish between the concepts of employment and employability, the latter of which has gained prominence in terms of research and analysis in recent years. Employability is a complex, social, multidimensional and dynamic construct which can be understood as a 'macro-competence'. This encompasses a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable individuals to access employment and retain or change jobs in line with their needs in professional and economic terms, as well as regarding opportunities for promotion and career development at any given stage in life.

### 3. The role of the University in relation to employability

Numerous studies have pointed to higher education as one of the most important factors influencing em-

ployment rates through increased employability. The role of the university is therefore fundamental, as it promotes the employability of students through the part that it plays in their training. The continuously evolving understanding of the scope of this training process is the object of analysis in this section.

### 4. Trends with an impact on employability and employment

The labour market is evolving towards a new paradigm under the influence of various trends that are transforming the nature and conception of work and defining the professional profiles of the future. Given the relevance of these concepts to the aims of this study, section 4 reviews them and explores their implications. This analysis focuses on the changing motivational factors influencing workers, alongside the evolving skill sets and professional profiles demanded by employers.

### 5. Challenges for universities

This section summarises the challenges faced by universities in the light of their constantly evolving context, specifically derived from the changes in current ways of working and in the competences and profiles required for employment.

## CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DEUSTO. IMPACT MODEL

Building on the conceptual foundation of the impact model developed and applied in previous phases, this chapter sets out the University of Deusto's own proposals—both in terms of its understanding of the teaching and learning processes and the University's role in supporting individuals to acquire competencies that enhance their employability. It also specifically addresses the UD's societal impact through these learning processes and how they contribute to ensuring that Deusto graduates maintain adequate levels of employability, enabling them to access quality employment throughout their professional lives.

### 6. Employability and employment at the UD

To properly contextualise the focus of this analysis, this section outlines both the University of Deusto's competency-based teaching and learning model (summarising the transversal competencies, which represent a strategic commitment of the institution) and the specific approach taken to acquiring competencies related to job search.

## 7. Model of the UD's impact on society through its learning processes and its contribution to the employment and employability of graduates

This section describes the ad hoc model designed to understand and measure the impact of the UD learning processes and expands on previous phases of the work to include the contribution of these processes to employment, a key social variable. It is based on the fact that learning process outcomes are measured in terms of competences, which are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable individuals' personal and professional development. These competences therefore reflect the transformations which the UD aspires to achieve in its learning processes. Analysing them will make it possible to discover the scope of the transformation, and thus the impact generated. In this report, the model is complemented by a perspective on how these competencies contribute to providing individuals with a certain level of employability, which in turn enables them to navigate various jobs throughout their professional lives while maintaining consistent standards.

The analysis focuses on the follow-up of graduates from UD undergraduate degree programmes (including any further education they have undertaken), considering three key segments for this study: recent graduates, 'junior' graduates with three to five years' work experience and 'senior' graduates (with over ten years of professional experience).

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE APPLICATION OF THE MODEL. DISCOVERING OUR IMPACT

This chapter includes both the specific measurement of a part of the proposed impact model for learning processes, as well as identifying areas of work to be further de-

veloped in order to broaden and extend the application of the model in the coming months.

## 8. Our operational context

Given that context is an essential and necessary element in the social impact model designed, this section analyses the specific context that affects the UD and specifically, those variables that are most relevant to learning processes and their impact on employment and individuals' employability.

## 9. The impact of the UD through the employment and employability of its graduates

This section reports on and analyses the results of measuring the indicators of the specific model. This report contains a detailed analysis of the individual dimension (competencies and career path). Future reports will assess the social dimension involved (a more macro assessment of employment-related indicators).

## 10. Future lines of work

Several lessons were learnt during the course of this fourth phase of the impact model, in addition to those derived from the previous phases of the project. This section summarises the main lines of work proposed to extend and further expound on the proposed model in the coming years.

## ANNEXES

This is a series of annexes aimed at complementing the information related to the transformative research process undergone in 2023. It also lays the foundations for a shared language to be used. Additionally, it includes other methodological and referential information of interest that broadens and complements the analyses contained in the main body of the document.

# Chapter two

## Employability and employment





## 2. Employability and employment. An in-depth discussion of both concepts

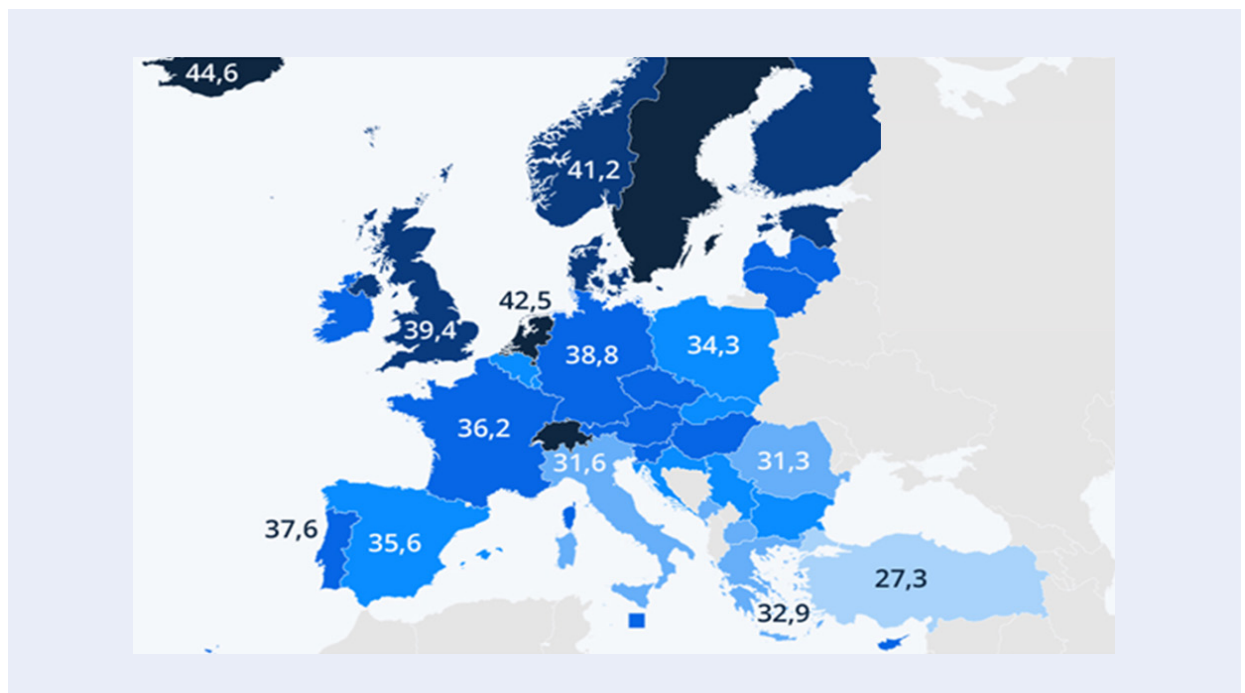
### 2.1. Employability and employment

The terms 'employment' and 'employability' are widely used by different groups and in diverse settings, with varying content and scope, although they are both linked to employment and unemployment. The following sections will address the main aspects related to their conceptualisation and the factors that influence them, with particular emphasis on professional competencies.

The average working life of employees in Spain is taken as a reference to contextualise both concepts. According to Statista, this is projected to be 35.6 years, based on Eurostat estimates from 2022 (using data for individuals aged 15 in 2021). This period differs across EU countries,

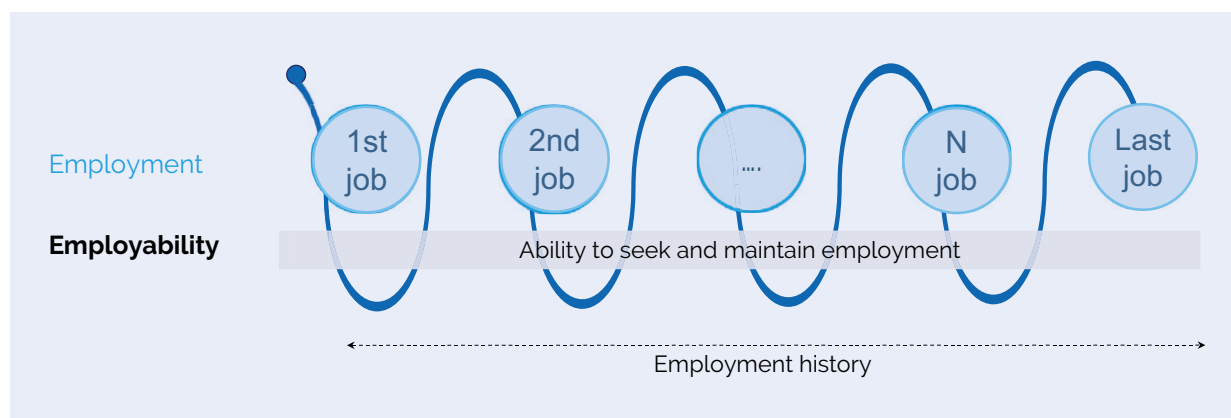
with the longest working lives being reported in the Nordic countries, as shown in Figure 1.

People have a variety of jobs over the course of a long working life. An average of 5-7 career changes has been estimated, although the trend is increasing and around a third of the workforce will change jobs every 12 months (Human Potential, 2017). Once an individual has secured their first job, they may either stay on and perform different roles within the same organisation, or find a new job. This process is known as the 'working life cycle' (HAYS, 2019), which simplistically identifies three sequential phases (search, join and stay) and is repeated each time an individual changes jobs. At each cycle and stage the requirements and the processes involved change, both from the perspective of the employee and the employer. Employability plays a key role in facilitating the transition between different work cycles and jobs, as shown in Figure 2.



Source: Statista (based on Eurostat data)

**Figure 1.** Estimated duration of the working life of an individual aged 15 in 2021 (in years)



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 2.** Understanding the concept of employability

Employment generates wealth for society and provides the basis for people to live decent lives and enjoy other human rights. The Spanish Constitution (1978) recognises it as a right, defined in Article 35 as: ‘All Spaniards have the duty to work and the right to employment, to free choice of profession or trade, to advancement through their work, and to sufficient remuneration for the satisfaction of their needs and those of their families; under no circumstances may they be discriminated against on account of their gender’.

The Royal Academy for the Spanish Language (RAE) defines employment as ‘the act of employing’, ‘occupation or trade’ (‘acción de emplear’, ‘ocupación u oficio’). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), employment is ‘work done for pay. It also refers to the number of persons in self-employment or paid employment’.

Other definitions consider employment as the creation of value from the work produced by an individual. From the employee’s perspective, this value means that they are remunerated in exchange for the work, skills and abilities they provide to the employer. This consists mainly of financial compensation (salary) and other possible contributions such as a benefits package, training and career planning. For the employer, the benefits obtained are the employee’s contributions, for which they bear some costs. This relationship is governed by a contract.

In our understanding, employment is a **LINK** that is established between the employed person and the employer at a specific point in time to carry out a productive value-creating activity.

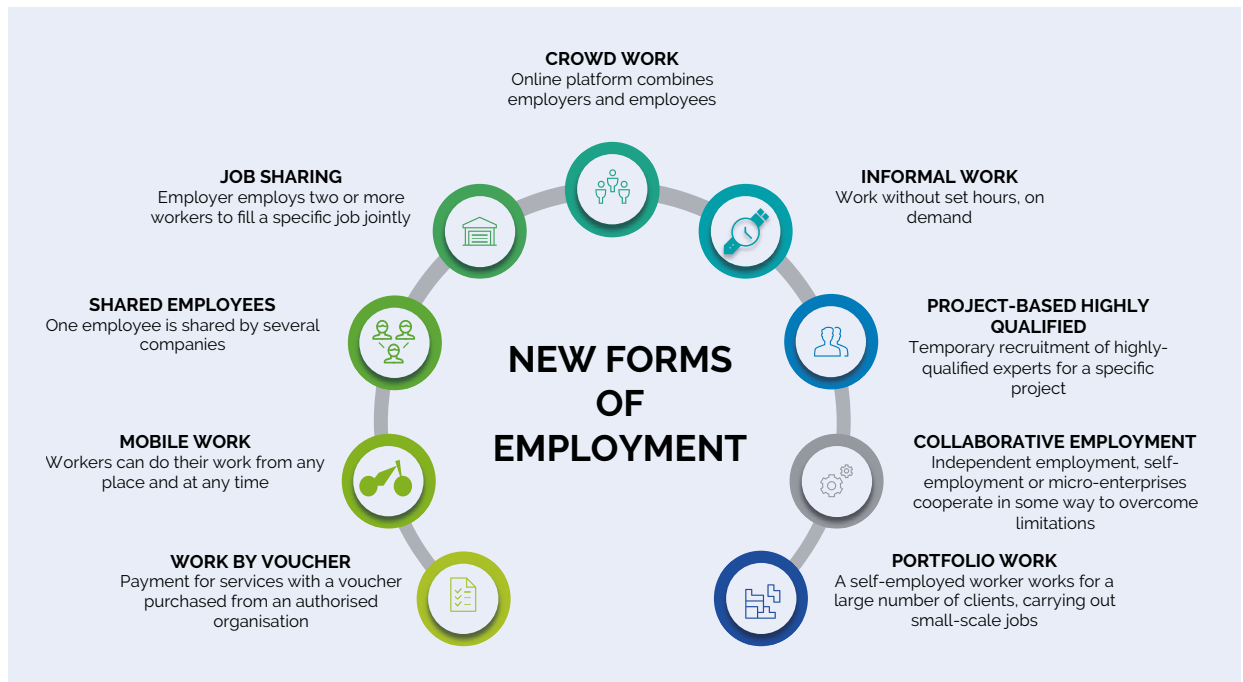
The nature and understanding of employment are evolving. This shift is driven by several factors: the globalisation of the labour market; the changing skill sets and competencies demanded by companies, which increasingly prioritise generic over specific skills; and the shifting preferences of employees, who now often value flexibility more highly

than job security or salary. These developments call for an appropriate response. Companies, for their part, have yet to offer fully coherent or adequate solutions—something reflected in phenomena such as ‘the Great Resignation’ and ‘Quiet Quitting’, which are explored further in Section 4 of this report. Governments and institutions, including educational institutions, must also adapt their labour, social and educational policies to promote employment opportunities and safeguard individuals’ right to work.

As stated in Deusto Social Lab Report No. 2, the forms of employment are now increasingly diverse, the options gaining prominence being those that prioritise modalities that promote freedom and autonomy (see illustrative graph in Figure 3).

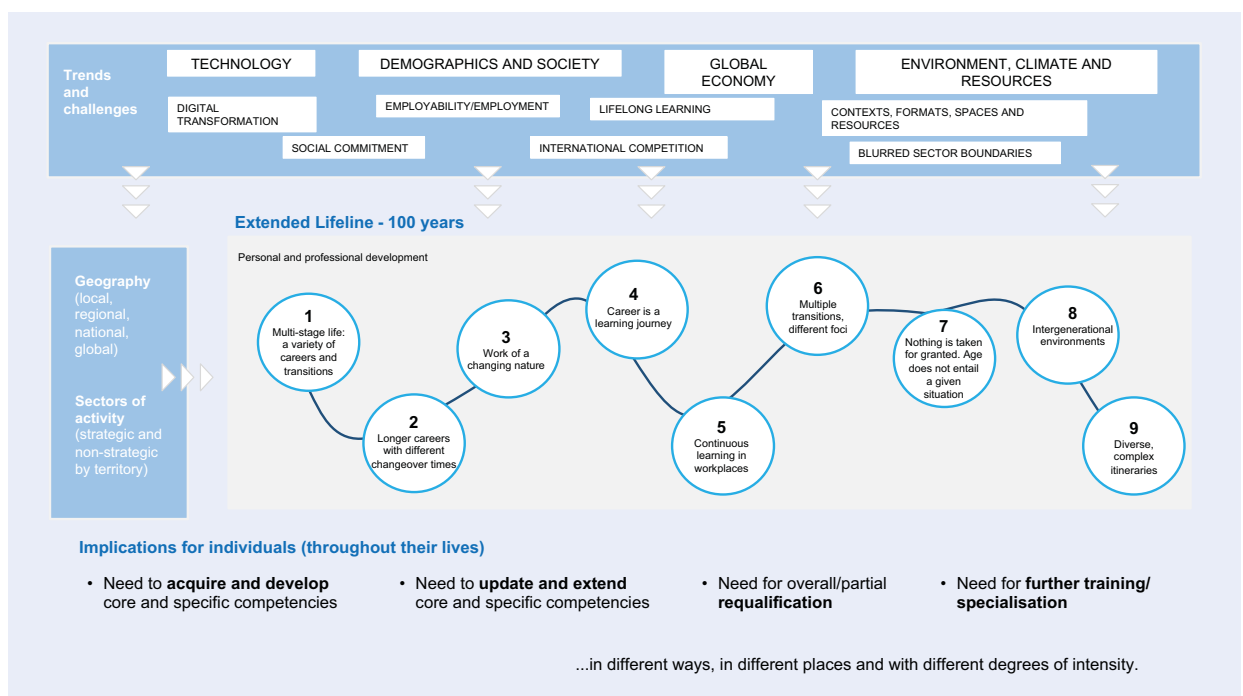
Lifelong employment has given way to the permanent development of employability through a process of orientation and continuous training (Echeverría Samanes and Martínez Clares, 2018; Busso et al., 2014). Enhanced employability increases job opportunities for individuals and, consequently, makes it possible for them to achieve long-term career stability that goes beyond a specific job. It makes it easier to decide on one’s future career, change jobs or stay in one’s current job, which justifies the interest in its analysis and management.

Today, there is an undeniable need to take personal responsibility for one’s own lifelong learning for both professional and personal growth. This need becomes imperative as life expectancy grows (which results in extended working years), and as employment and socio-occupational dynamics continue to change. This also clearly implies that many people will have a lifelong need for support during periods of work transition or in phases of re-qualification and/or further training (which is already clearly needed at present). As stated in previous paragraphs, this responsibility must also be shared among all actors involved (employers, governments and the education sector). It is reflected graphically in Figure 4.



Source: Prepared by the authors (Orkestra)

**Figure 3.** New forms of employment.



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 4.** An individual's life cycle development. Professional implications

Employability is a complex, social, multidimensional and dynamic construct which has evolved and changed over time; this is why it is difficult to define (Berntson, 2008; Gamboa, 2013; Lowden et al., 2011). There is no single or universally accepted definition, but rather a wide range of meanings (Gamboa et al., 2007), depending on

the perspective taken and the area of knowledge within which it is considered (economics, political science, sociology, psychology, labour sciences, education, etc.). By its very nature, associated with improved opportunities to enter the job market over time, it defines a relationship between organisations, work and learning. It is

mainly linked to various social actors in the labour and learning spheres (Suárez Lantarón, 2018), including companies and employers, workers, academics, students, economists, government and society. But its complexity is also increased by the fact that it is influenced by different individual and contextual factors, which change over time.

Before discussing the various definitions found in the many reports that have addressed the concept of employability, it should be noted that there are also different views on the origin of employability. For most authors, however, it results from the confluence of the words 'employ' and 'ability', and is attributed the meaning of 'ability to obtain and keep a job' (Campos Ríos, 2003).

Along these lines, the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (RAE) defines employability as the 'set of aptitudes and attitudes that enable a person to obtain and keep a job'. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) expands on the purposes of employability, considering it to be 'a person's ability to find and keep a job, to progress in work and to adapt to change over the course of a working life'.<sup>d</sup>

In academia, one of the most widely used definitions of employability is that by Hillage & Pollard (1998), who simplistically conceptualised it as the ability to obtain and maintain a satisfactory job and to obtain a new one if required. They considered that an individual's employability consists of their knowledge, skills and attitudes, and recognised that being in possession of these does not guarantee that they will be able to move in the labour market and fulfil their potential.

Yorke & Knight (2007) introduced new elements and recognised a range of beneficiaries by defining employability as a set of achievements (skills, knowledge and personal attributes) that make an individual more likely to secure and be successful in their chosen occupation to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

As the definitions vary according to the different perspectives from which the concept is considered, we present the conceptualisations related to the general, individual, labour market and political perspectives.

- At a general level, employability is considered to be the set of variables that explain a person's employment or unemployment status, with self-employment being included within employment.
- An individual perspective considers that employability refers to the set of competencies that a person possesses, which allow them to access and maintain employment, satisfying their professional, economic, pro-

motion and development needs (Suárez Lantarón, 2018). Gamboa et al. (2007) conceptualised it from the perspective of employees, viewing employability as the individual's perception of their opportunities to secure a job of their choice or improve their current one, recognising that these opportunities would depend both on their own characteristics and behaviour, and on the contextual factors surrounding them.

- From a labour market perspective, Trevor (2001) conceptualised it as the perceived ease of movement in the labour market. For García Manjón (2009), it is defined as the degree of attractiveness an individual holds for the labour market over time, reflected in the assessment of the value they contribute to an employer or to society as a whole.
- At the political level, it is seen as an obligation to society, as well as a justification for the investment made by public and private bodies in social, economic and human capital.

The concept of employability is dynamic, having evolved from a static and non-interactive understanding to a more fluid one, interlinked with personal, economic, labour, political and educational factors through which it can be fostered. Employability has shifted 'from being a social and organisational concept that defined the employment opportunities in a society or organisation, to a psychosocial construct that indicates a person's probability of securing or keeping an attractive job in a specific socio-occupational context' (Hernández-Fernaud et al., 2011 p.132).

McQuaid & Lindsay (2005) differentiated between two types of definitions, depending on the factors to which employability is linked. Some are described as 'narrow', and identify employability with the possession by individuals of a set of skills; others are labelled as 'broad', and also include other dimensions such as personal aspects, social aspects, the production structure, the labour market and the institutional and regulatory framework. Other authors (Berntson, 2008; Clarke, 2018; Okay-Somerville & Scholarios, 2017) also referred to these factors influencing employability, for which no single proposal has been made. Holmes (2013) also included relevant credentials, referring to the university degree.

For the purposes of this report, given the diversity of existing conceptions of employability, according to our understanding and the most current definitions, employability is the **ABILITY** of people to adapt to the needs of the labour market at any given moment and to keep an updated contact network by relying on their professional and personal circumstances, skills and knowledge, thereby making informed decisions about their professional future.

## 2.2. Factors that influence employability.

Figure 5 outlines the conceptualisation of employability from a broad or interactive perspective, which includes the individual and contextual factors or dimensions influencing it.

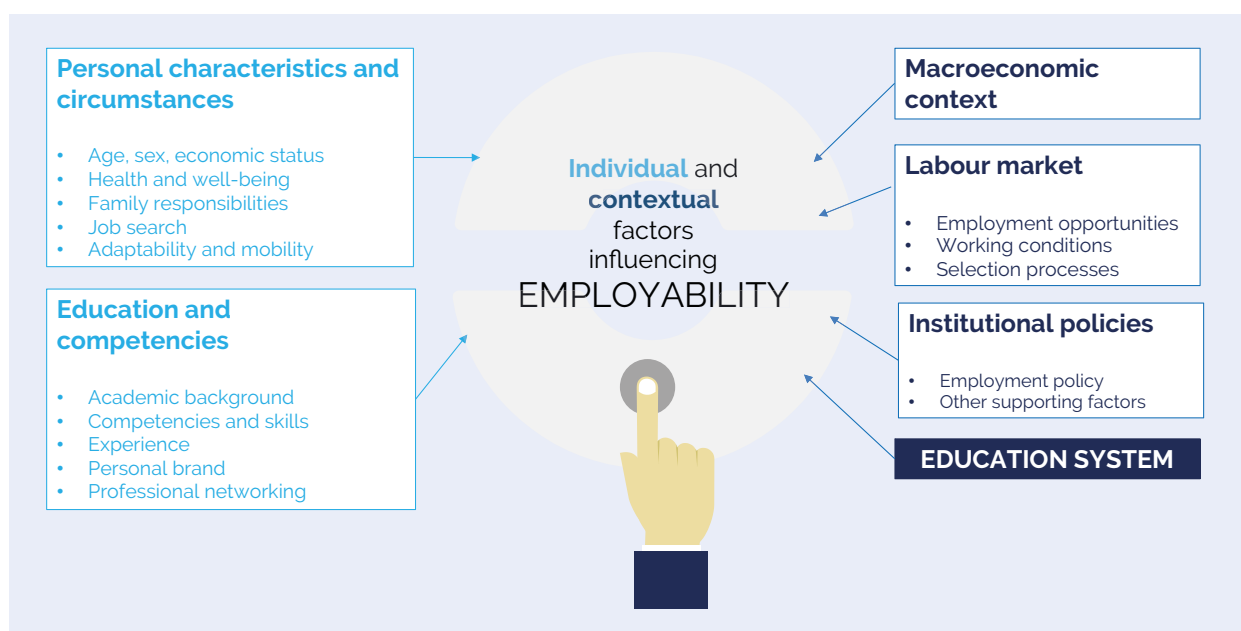
Based on the above framework, individual factors include socio-demographic characteristics (such as age, gender and economic background), health, well-being and personal circumstances, all of which influence an individual's job search behaviour and availability for work. Another key set of individual factors that strongly influence employability relates to academic education (type of degree or field of study, given the varying levels of employability and labour market integration they entail); knowledge and general skills relevant to job performance; job search skills; work experience; and attitude towards work. Professional networking also affects individual employability.

External factors related to demand include economic conditions and aspects of the labour market, such as changes in supply, working conditions and recruitment processes. Instruments designed to promote individuals' integration into the labour market—such as employment policies—also fall into this category. In addition, the education system, including the provision of training, is identified as a key mechanism in this report. Enhancing and optimising employability requires addressing both the individual var-

iables over which people have greater control and the external factors, which are the responsibility of various social actors and institutions.

Based on the conceptualisation of employability and employment, as well as on the relationship between these two constructs and the dimensions that influence employability, the following key considerations emerge:

- Employment reflects a link between employer and employee associated with a contribution of value. This corresponds to a specific situation at a given point in time. Employability, however, refers to the ability to remain employed throughout life; it reflects a dynamic situation, a sense of flow.
- To enhance and optimise employability, those individual variables over which the person has greater control, as well as the external variables which fall under the responsibility of various social agents and institutions, need to be addressed.
- Skills are a key determinant of employability, although they are affected by a variety of factors. This is reflected in most definitions of employability, which refer to three aspects: the first is the match between the training received (understood as knowledge, competences and skills) and that required by the labour market; the second relates to employability and working conditions; and the third is linked to the acquisition of job-seeking skills.
- Achieving high employability calls for a long-term perspective that involves not only developing the skills



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 5.** Factors that influence employability.

necessary for entering the labour market, but also those that support ongoing adaptation and transitions in line with changes within the professional sphere (García Manjón, 2009). For the latter purpose, García-Martínez et al. (2023) stressed the importance of competencies linked to lifelong learning.

- The labour market exerts a strong influence on employability, which for some authors is even stronger than the skills of individuals (Brown et al., 2003). Consequently, individuals who are employable may be unemployed.
- The indicators used for analysing labour market access and job quality are expanding. Other indicators related to the conditions and characteristics of work have been added to the traditional employment rate (Corminas et al., 2012; Pineda Herrero et al., 2016). Thus the fit between the training received (level of knowledge and skills attained) and the requirements of the job, called vertical fit, becomes a leading indicator. The horizontal fit is also considered but to a lesser extent, which reflects the match between the field of activity or subject area of employment and that of the studies undertaken. Others include job satisfaction, remuneration, success and career development, fulfilment of expectations and personal development (Michavila et al., 2018).
- The promotion of employability, or the ability to be employed, should be considered a responsibility shared between individuals, educational institutions, businesses and public administrations (Suárez Lantarón, 2012; Michavila et al., 2018; Rodríguez Mora, 2010). Individuals are responsible for their ongoing education and active career management, which today requires lifelong learning. Companies, in addition to representing job opportunities (including entrepreneurship), should also encourage the continuous updating and learning of their team through strategies such as upskilling or reskilling of profiles. The promotion of economic, social or educational policies to promote employability is the responsibility of the institutions. Specifically, the role of the university in relation to employability, within the framework of the education system, is addressed in Section 3 of this report.

## 2.3. Skills and employability.

It is widely accepted that competencies are the most influential factor in employability, and that they consist of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes. But how can people maintain their employability throughout their lives

in an ever-changing employment context? Having an education, especially higher education qualifications, facilitates the transition to working life. But it is not the only factor, even if possession of a degree is sometimes a mandatory requirement for access to employment. Therefore, education does not imply automatic employability. Having knowledge and skills does not guarantee that an individual will be able to move in the labour market and develop their potential (García Manjón, 2009). Individuals also need to be able to demonstrate inter- and intra-personal skills, enabling them to adapt and move through different jobs while adding value to the company.

According to the report *The Future of Jobs* (World Economic Forum (WEF, 2023)), six out of ten workers will need training by 2027, but today only half of workers are considered to have access to adequate training opportunities, whether they intend to change jobs or remain in their current job. In particular, the latter are experiencing that 44% of the basic skills needed for their employment are already changing. Over the period being considered, 85 million jobs as we know them are expected to disappear, while 97 million new jobs are expected to be created. In this context, individuals—whether seeking their first job, changing roles or progressing in their current position—must adapt and update their professional skills in line with labour market demands, in order to avoid missing opportunities and expand their career prospects.

Although there is a broad consensus on the need to develop transferable and dynamic skills and competencies to foster employability, no single, widely accepted list has been provided, but they vary according to the socio-economic context, among other factors. Among the various ways of classifying them, one commonly used in the field of education distinguishes between two types: specific skills, and generic or transversal skills. The former are related to an area of knowledge or a specific occupation; and the latter are of a cross-cutting nature, regardless of the position, company or sector. Generic or transversal skills, taking as a reference the division envisaged in the Tuning Project, are classified as instrumental, interpersonal and systemic. A more detailed and in-depth study of this subject can be found in Deusto Social Lab Reports No. 3 and No. 4.

At a more general level, the most widely used classification differentiates competencies into hard and soft skills, the characteristics of which are set out below:

- Hard skills, also called technical occupational skills, are the competencies specific to a job or occupational activity that are acquired through training and professional experience. They constitute technical, methodological or business knowledge and are essential for workers to effectively perform the specific activities of their job.

- Soft skills, also known as soft work skills, refer to the transversal competencies that employees acquire in a more personal way throughout their lives. They are associated with abilities, skills and attitudes such as taking responsibility, discipline, perseverance, teamwork, adaptability, organisational skills, autonomous and lifelong learning, as well as proactivity, resilience and the ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written form in different languages, among others.

Soft skills are currently the most valued by companies. They are transversal to any job and professional discipline and not linked to any specific employment. But they must be coordinated with hard skills (Sebastião et al., 2023). Consequently, in order to promote people's employability, it is essential to prioritise their development through

learning processes in the education system. But they also need to be worked on beyond the education system.

However, due to the focus on employability adopted in this study, the development of so-called job-seeking skills is also of particular importance. Although this group of competencies have not traditionally been part of those acquired in university classrooms, the trend towards all-round education and providing support for students has meant that they are also increasingly present in the university environment, in most cases included within the specific services of the university itself. In this way, different sets of activities are offered so that future graduates acquire the necessary skills to identify job opportunities, prepare their applications and successfully pass the selection processes.



### 3. The role of the University in relation to employability

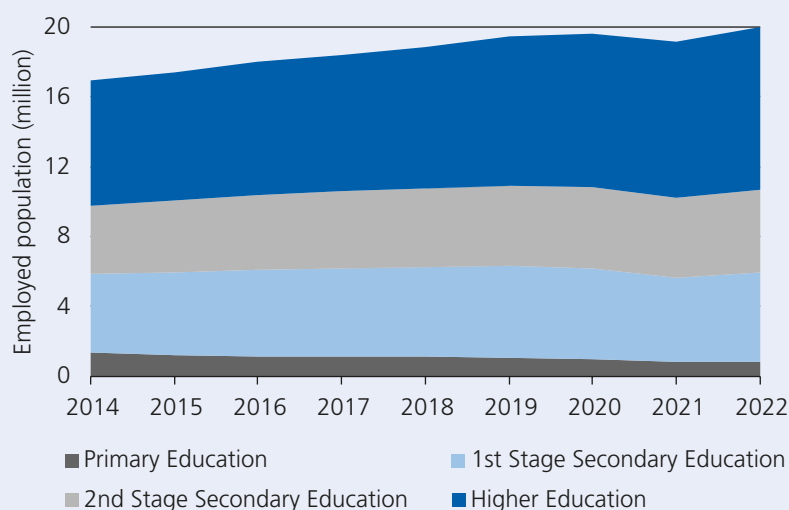
Numerous studies have pointed to education as one of the most important factors influencing employment rates through increased employability. The higher the level of education, the higher the employability and labour market entry rates. Salary levels are also increased accordingly. These aspects are discussed below as a preamble to the discussion of role played by the university in this issue.

Although university education does not guarantee employment, it increases the chances of being more employable and competitive. The group of employed individuals with higher education exhibits the strongest outcomes in terms of securing employment, as stated in The Adecco Group Institute's Mercado de Trabajo 2023 (Labour Market Yearbook 2023 (based on INE data)). For six years in a row employees with tertiary education have been the fastest growing group, although in 2022 those with secondary education qualifications who were in employment showed similar rates. However, the share of total employment captured by tertiary educated people increased for another year, totalling 46.4% of the employed population in 2022. This was almost 10 percentage points higher than in 2010. Since 2021, this group now has reached over 9 million employed individuals, as shown in Figure 6. From the perspective of unemployment, while the overall

rate in the second quarter of 2023 was 11.8%, it fell to 7.5% among those with higher education.

However, the previous Yearbook also noted that a higher proportion of individuals with tertiary education in Spain were employed in medium- or low-skilled occupations, compared to other European countries. At the EU-27 level, this group represented 8.2% of all employed people with tertiary education in 2022, while in Spain the figure stood at 14.4%. The Instituto EY-Sagardoy (2023) considered this occupational-educational mismatch to be a structural issue and emphasised that 'in addition to leading the European rankings for unemployment and job insecurity, Spain has also recorded the highest rate of over-qualification among employed individuals with higher education qualifications since the mid-1990s'.

Another perspective was provided by the report entitled Retos empresariales y competencias profesionales necesarias después de la COVID—19: el impacto sobre el empleo juvenil (Business challenges and skills needed after COVID-19: the impact on youth employment (Blázquez et al., 2022)), which pointed to the progressive increase in the gap in employment rates of young people (aged 16-24) with high and low levels of education. Whereas in



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Adecco Group and INE.

**Figure 6.** Employed population by education and training level (2014-2023. 1st quarter).



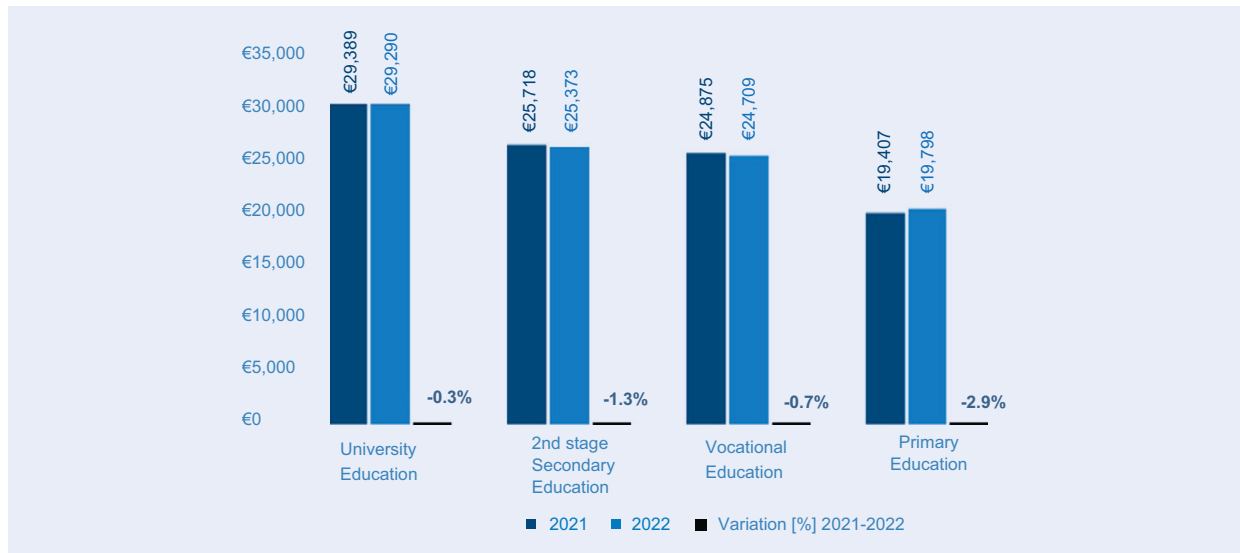
2007 the gap was 16.3 percentage points in favour of higher levels of education, in 2021 the difference had doubled, reaching 33.7%.

In relation to salaries in 2022, InfoJobs (2022) noted in the report *El estado del mercado laboral en España* (The situation of the labour market in Spain) that vacancies aimed at people with university degrees offered the highest average gross annual salary, amounting to 29,290 euros. This amount was €99 lower than in 2021, confirming the downward trend that started in 2020, when a peak of €29,711 was reached. Compared to vacancies in the lowest paid group, the basic education group, the difference was 32%, as the salary of the latter was 19,798 euros gross per year, as shown in Figure 7. The

remuneration offered in job advertisements for graduates was 13% higher than that of vacancies for candidates with Baccalaureate qualifications and 16% higher than those requiring vocational training.

Salary differences were also evident at the university level, with the highest salary being €38,263 gross per annum for candidates with a postgraduate degree, as shown in Figure 8.

In this context, employability—as a pathway to employment—is a subject of considerable interest in higher education. Numerous national and international studies have explored this topic, offering various interpretations of the university's role in fostering the employability of its grad-



Source: Prepared by the authors based on InfoJobs.

**Figure 7.** Gross annual salary of vacancies by level of education. 2021 and 2022 (average in €)



Source: Prepared by the authors based on data provided by InfoJobs.

**Figure 8.** Gross annual salary of vacancies requiring university qualifications (average in €)

uates (Beaumont et al., 2016; Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Helyer & Lee, 2014; Oliver, 2015). Other important projects such as DESECO, CHEERS and REFLEX have also been promoted by the OECD and the European Commission, in addition to the so-called occupational observatories promoted by universities, such as the Observatorio de Empleabilidad y Empleo Universitarios (University Employability and Employment Observatory (OEEU)), carried out in 2012 by the UNESCO Chair in University Management and Policy and the CRUE, which was first conducted in 2015.

Within the context of integration into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the development of the knowledge society, Spanish universities are embracing a new mission, from which their commitment to the employability of their graduates stems. Promoting this has been one of the general objectives in the construction of the EHEA, and has become one of the pillars of the new educational paradigm (García Manjón, 2009).

Organic Law 4/2007 laid the foundations for a new university model. Its preamble stated that the reform aimed to 'involve universities in meeting the demands of society and the production fabric (...) Universities, in addition to being a driving force for the advancement of knowledge, must be a driving force for the social and economic development of the country'. Consequently, in addition to the two traditional roles of the university, teaching and research and transfer, the 'third mission' has been included, which encompasses all activities oriented towards its social and productive environment, especially actions linked to the promotion of employability and entrepreneurship. Other authors have argued that the university's two fundamental missions are those aimed at transforming the world into a fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable place, and at improving social well-being—an area in which graduate employability fits naturally. Regardless of the approach, both perspectives lead to the same considerations and highlight the key part that people play in the transformation process. This current mission has been made possible and strengthened by an ongoing adaptation of the university's role throughout its historical mission.

However, the debate on whether it is the role of universities to promote employability is ongoing. Eco (2013) considered employability to be one of the instrumental benefits of the university, which gives it some of its meaning and value, although this is not its main *raison d'être* (McCowan, 2015). Although employability (understood as job placement rates) is used by governments, employers and students as an indicator of university quality (Teichler, 2007), it should not be regarded as a measure of institutional performance, as it may constrain the university's academic goals and freedom (Caballero et al., 2014). Adopting an employability-oriented approach is compatible with other goals not directly related to the labour

market (Greenbank, 2012). This does not imply a departure from the university's fundamental mission and objectives; rather, it enhances its ability to respond to changes in its environment.

According to the above, an employability-oriented university makes it easier for students to face their professional future with the greatest assurance of success, due to the role it plays in their training. The use of a competency-based approach guarantees the acquisition of the knowledge and know-how necessary for the workplace, providing students with the skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to seamlessly enter the labour market (Rodríguez Espinar et al., 2010; Rodríguez Mora, 2010; Suárez Lantarón, 2014). It guides and advises them in the process of transition and integration. Once incorporated into the labour market, it supports their progression and career development throughout their professional life by promoting transition and adaptation processes.

The appropriate timing for addressing employability management within universities remains a subject of ongoing debate. It is generally considered once students have completed their studies and are in the process of entering, or have already entered, the labour market. Nevertheless, there is a growing demand to work on employability prior to students' entry into working life, as they make decisions about their professional future from the first year of their degree courses.

Having discussed when to promote employability, the next question to be addressed is how to work on it. Basically, three strategies can be distinguished in the following areas:

- Teaching. Two areas can be identified: one relating to the competencies included in the curricula and the teaching strategies used to develop them, and the other concerning the updating of the educational offering.
- Job placement. This is developed through services focused on providing vocational guidance and facilitating the transition to the world of work.
- Promoting an entrepreneurial culture.

Teaching is a main function of the university, as students must be provided with an education that fosters their critical thinking skills and offers them the tools to understand and transform the world. Through the acquisition of specific and generic competencies, the aim is to provide an all-round education, which equips individuals to adapt to and address the demands of an ever-evolving labour market and society, thereby fostering successful professional and personal outcomes. This requires efficient and innovative teaching-learning processes and

methodologies, linked to real environments, in which students take a leading role in their own learning. These include work placements, dual training, apprenticeships, service learning, as well as participation in exchange programmes.

From a more strategic perspective, universities periodically revise and adapt their course offerings to align with labour market needs and social demands, ensuring that the training provided remains professionally relevant (Teichler, 2007; Vieira, 2009). This process entails introducing programmes in emerging areas or disciplines of interest to both business and society, as well as modifying or discontinuing those deemed to be no longer appropriate. These changes in educational provision are not limited to Bachelor's and Master's degrees, but also encompass ongoing learning initiatives, reflecting the principle that learning is a continuous process throughout life.

A second area of management focuses on the promotion of employability skills and career management (Suárez Lantarón, 2012). The growing involvement of the university in this area stems from the specific requirements for and difficulties in accessing working life. Vocational guid-

ance services provide information about essential training aspects for students' professional careers. These include itineraries, complementary training, professional experience and professional opportunities. This process should increasingly take into account learners' self-knowledge of their characteristics, abilities and interests, in order to achieve greater personal and professional self-fulfilment.

According to Suárez Lantarón (2014), the majority of universities (84%) offer career guidance services through a variety of channels, whether through a dedicated office or unit, or as a service. They focus on guidance and information, management of academic internships, provision of an employment exchange, promotion of training activities (such as identification of job opportunities, preparation of CVs and interviews), and some even have an occupational observatory.

The third area of employability management revolves around the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture, which is addressed in the curricula through competences linked to innovation and entrepreneurship and implemented by means of education programmes and teaching-learning strategies of varying focus and scope.

## 4. Trends with an impact on employability and employment

The labour market is evolving towards a new paradigm under the influence of various trends that are transforming the nature and conception of work and defining the professional profiles of the future. These include: the globalisation of the economy; digitalisation and automation resulting from technological evolution; the ageing of the population; changes in the values and conception of employment of the younger generations, known as Millennials or Generation Y, and Centennials or Generation Z; as well as the management of sustainability and climate change. All of this is taking place within a complex, volatile and uncertain context, shaped by recent unforeseen events, including the Covid-19 pandemic, the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, and current geopolitical tensions.

The consequences they trigger are diverse; the most immediate and distinctly economic impacts have been reflected in progressively deteriorating forecasts for Spain and the European Union since late 2021. They predict a scenario of limited growth by the end of 2023 due to inflation and changes in interest rates. Beyond that, however, according to FUNCAS, 'the stabilisation of interest rates, together with a slight improvement in real wages (as a result of wage agreements) will lead to a gradual economic recovery', although there are different opinions regarding the expected evolution. This situation has had a negative impact on employment, aggravating one of the main problems of Spanish society, namely the high level of unemployment. According to the Labour Force Survey in the second quarter of 2023, unemployment reached 11.6% of the population, a rate that rose to 27.9% among young people under 25 years of age. Among graduates, this was reduced to 6.64%.

There are other circumstances that have an impact on companies, primarily in the areas of talent management, organisation and corporate culture, but also on employees, educational institutions and policies. These include:

- Talent expands geographically; distance is no longer a limit, it is accessible remotely from anywhere in the world. This gives employers access to a greater quantity and quality of candidates, promoting inclusion and diversity; it also expands employees' career opportuni-

ties, but reduces their commitment to stay with their organisations. Attracting and retaining talent in a multigenerational environment is therefore a challenge for companies.

- The working life of workers has become more expansive than before. They are not looking for a job for life but will hold a variety of jobs. This requires lifelong learning to adapt to changing professional demands.
- Workers have changed how they conceive job quality and now prioritise motivating factors. Those linked to personal well-being, such as flexibility and available time, are gaining importance. But they also increasingly value the social commitment of employers.
- Companies are demanding new professional and personal competencies, skills and abilities. Technology has changed the way we work and transformed our relationship with work tools and processes. In parallel, new jobs are constantly emerging (some of which do not yet exist). New competencies are also needed to cope with the complexity, uncertainty and volatility of current and future contexts.
- Employability may or may not translate into employment, influenced by the labour market situation and the increasing decision-making power of workers. This is reflected in the 'Great Resignation', a social phenomenon that has shaken the United States and recently caused 47 million people to leave their jobs voluntarily.

The 'Big Resignation' involves leaving a job, while the phenomenon that emerged subsequently (known as 'Quiet Quitting') describes workers who stay in their job, fully comply with their contract and do their job well, but have a minimum level of commitment. It also means that many workers are actively seeking new job opportunities. Both phenomena are evidence of workers' increasing power and awareness of their priorities. This may lead to a war for talent in companies, which highlights the importance of caring for the well-being of employees. The USA is affected by the 'Big Resignation' to a greater extent than other countries, including Spain, due to the fact

that the American labour market is much more flexible, dynamic and has lower exit barriers. In Spain, the predominant trend to date has been one of work relocation rather than outright resignations.

Most experts believe that the triggering factors existed before the Covid-19 pandemic, although the pandemic was a turning point. The need to work remotely 100% of the time put some pressure on people, but it also gave them more time to reflect on different aspects, causing many workers to change their priorities in life. The starting point was their dissatisfaction with pay due to precarious conditions in the labour market, which later was compounded by a sense of not being valued by employers, even of disenchantment with their profession or job, or stress-related exhaustion resulting from the pandemic (a phenomenon known as 'burnout'). Some authors have called this situation a 'toxic corporate culture' (Sull and Sull, 2022). These factors have been exacerbated by reduced fear of losing one's job, in some cases because of savings made during the pandemic and because post-pandemic economic recovery has provided interesting job opportunities (increased salaries, especially in lower-skilled jobs). An additional factor is the growing interest in project work, which reflects the change in the way people relate to each other professionally.

Two aspects are particularly relevant to the transformation of the labour market, namely changes in the motivating factors of employment; and changes in the skills and profiles demanded by companies. Both will be analysed in detail below.

## 4.1. Factors motivating workers to change employment

Employees' priorities and values are changing, including but not limited to those of young people (Millennials and Centennials). They are more proactive in deciding their occupational fit and changing the factors they associate with job quality. These population groups show a high level of demotivation and job dissatisfaction, which led 77% of employed people to say that they would change jobs if they could, according to the Guía del Mercado Laboral 2022 (Labour Market Guide 2022), a survey conducted by HAYS Spain in late 2019. Of these, 37% indicated that they wanted to look for a more purposeful job, 'which is evidence of a growing interest in social and emotional values and not just career advancement when considering a job'. The same source reported that almost half of the workers (52%) were actively looking for a job change. Thirty-five per cent stated salary and benefits as

the main reason, while 23% cited lack of future opportunities, and 12% adduced their role in the company.

Salaries in Spain are 40% lower than European salaries in mid-level job profiles, which means that many organisations are not competitive in terms of salary conditions, according to InfoJobs (2022).

In addition to salary, the aspects valued by workers in order of importance are work-life balance, job stability, career development, a good atmosphere and flexible working hours (HAYS Spain, 2022), which partly justifies the growing demand for 100% online or hybrid work models, as they have discovered their advantages after their experience during the pandemic.

Michael Page's report Remuneración en España 2023 (Remuneration in Spain 2023) used data from over 9,800 completed recruitment processes and approximately 90,000 interviews conducted in 2022. The report highlighted a growing and increasingly visible trend among candidates that reflected shifting professional priorities when considering new job opportunities. It observed that 'when professionals start a new role, salary is becoming less of a priority, while factors linked to well-being are gaining prominence, such as flexibility, work-life balance, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and concern for sustainability'. However, salaries are rising in sectors experiencing a shortage of qualified professionals—such as technology—and companies are offering additional benefits to attract and retain talent. Finally, the report noted a high level of confidence among respondents regarding their career prospects: 78% expected to enhance their skills and 54% anticipated improvements in both their career progression and compensation.

Randstad's Workmonitor 2023 study (based on more than 13,500 surveys of employed professionals in 33 countries) also reinforced the desire of workers, especially 18-34 year olds, for work to match and support their work-life balance, despite economic uncertainty. More than half of the respondents (61%) would not accept a job that disrupted this balance, 34% would resign if they found themselves in a toxic work environment and 48% would leave a job if it prevented them from enjoying their life. This rose to 58% among younger people. The report stated that 66% of respondents in Spain would not accept a job if they thought it might negatively affect their work-life balance, 31% had left a job because it did not offer enough flexibility, 56% were worried about losing their job, and 38% would not accept a job in a company that did not share their social and environmental values.

According to InfoJobs (2022) 'the new generation of workers value continuous learning and flexible working and understands their career development as the sum of experiences in different roles and sectors in which they acquire transversal and transferable skills. In short, this is

the first generation with unique profiles, because each candidate has a specific skill set.’

From the perspective of businesses, the Asociación Española de Dirección y Desarrollo de Personas (AEDIPE) (Spanish Association for People Management and Development (AEDIPE)) conducted a study entitled *Las (nuevas) formas de trabajar, 9 tendencias en España (2022)* (The (New) Ways of Working: 9 Trends in Spain (2022)). It was the first national study based on 527 quantitative interviews with CEOs and HR managers from leading Spanish companies. The findings showed that organisations are prioritising flexibility as a key strategy to address the challenges posed by the transformation of the world of work. In terms of working practices, the new landscape includes the adoption of extended working hours and hybrid models. Notably, the use of hybrid work models has increased by a factor of 2.5 across the corporate sector compared to the pre-pandemic period. Another significant development has been the shift towards collaborative and sustainable workspaces. From an organisational standpoint, a project-based structure—promoting greater autonomy in the workplace—is seen as an effective response to the current context. This approach also necessitates the implementation of processes to manage and unify hybrid teams, comprising employees working both on site and remotely. Regarding workplace well-being—deemed the major priority in the post-COVID era—six out of ten companies have introduced improvement measures.

## 4.2. Competencies and professional profiles demanded by companies

A large number of companies (83%, according to HAYS Spain (2022)) are having difficulties in finding qualified profiles for certain positions. Fifty percent of the companies surveyed said that the main challenge in the labour market was the gap between the supply of professionals and available vacancies. Among the most frequently cited reasons for the mismatch were the lack of professionals with the right skills (44%), the high demand for the profiles sought (32%) and candidates seeking a salary that was too high (29%). A similar snapshot was provided by the report *Retos empresariales y competencias profesionales necesarias después de la COVID-19: el impacto sobre el empleo juvenil* (Business challenges and professional skills needed after COVID-19: the impact on youth employment) (Blázquez et al., 2022), in which 75% of the companies surveyed (senior managers of 83 important companies in the Spanish economy), have encountered

difficulties in filling jobs as a result of a lack of skills in the candidates. As a result, there is a significant skills gap in Spain that needs to be addressed in order to boost employment, especially for young people.

The Human Capital Outlook 2 (2022) report by the EY-Sagardoy Abogados Institute noted that the technology area was the one with the biggest skills gap: ‘HR professionals spend almost 40% more time than they did in 2018 recruiting and filling vacancies for STEM profiles’. The report *El estado del mercado laboral en España* (The state of the labour market in Spain (InfoJobs, 2022)) also confirmed that the search for professional profiles linked to technology and data, the customer-centric approach to product and service development, the implementation of more flexible organisational models and new ways of working and sustainability and social impact (Business Analyst, Associate Strategy Consultant, Product and Project Manager, Business Development Manager, Supply Chain Manager and Digital marketing Manager, among others) had increased in 2021.

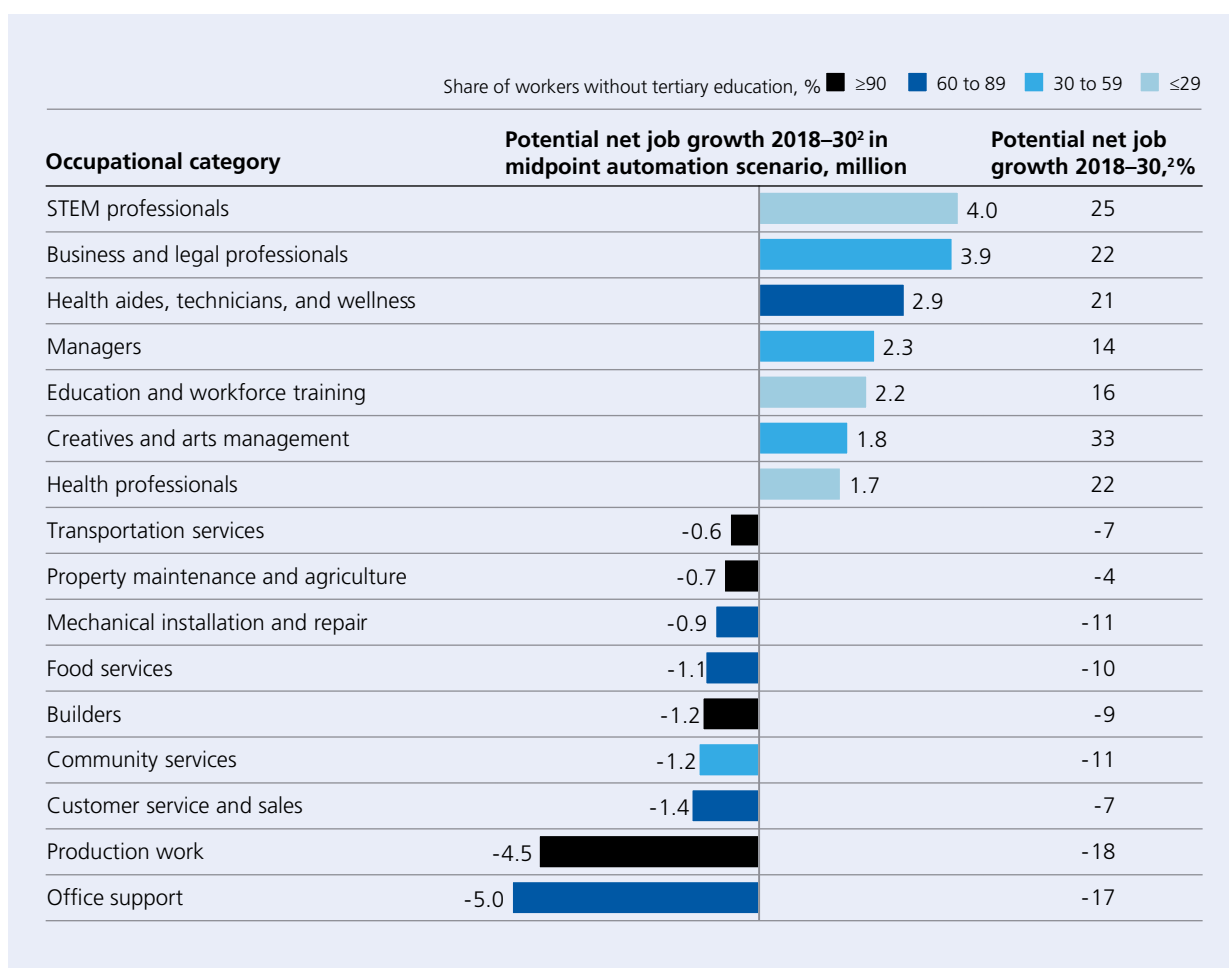
Forecasts for the next decade generally suggest that STEM occupational categories will be among the fastest growing. In particular, the McKinsey Global Institute study *The future of work in Europe* (2020) estimated a potential net STEM employment growth of 25% for the period 2018-2030, representing some 4 million jobs in the EU (Smith, S. et al., 2020) (see Figure 9). To cope with this growth, Spain’s starting base is at a disadvantage compared to the European average because, according to the *Anuario del Mercado de Trabajo 2023* (Labour Market Yearbook 2023) by The Adecco Group Institute, there are fewer students enrolled in engineering and STEM disciplines.

According to the Gartner (2023) report *Las 5 tendencias y Prioridades para Recursos Humanos* (The 5 Trends and Priorities for Human Resources), based on a survey of more than 500 HR leaders from 60 countries and major industries, HR leaders’ top five priorities for 2024 included change and career management and internal mobility, organisational culture, HR technology, and leader and manager development, with the latter topping the list.

In general, companies attached more importance to the development of soft skills (transversal personal and interpersonal skills and attitudes) than to hard skills (specific technical knowledge and skills), although both were deemed to play a relevant role. Soft skills are in increasing demand, as shown by the *Guía del mercado laboral 2022* (Labour Market Guide 2022) by HAYS Spain, which stated that 55% of companies considered soft skills a priority in 2019, a rate that had increased to 70% in 2022.

The most in-demand soft skills were linked to cognitive skills (analytical thinking and creativity occupy the first two places), according to a report entitled *The Future of*





Source: McKinsey Global Institute (Smith, S. et al, 2020)

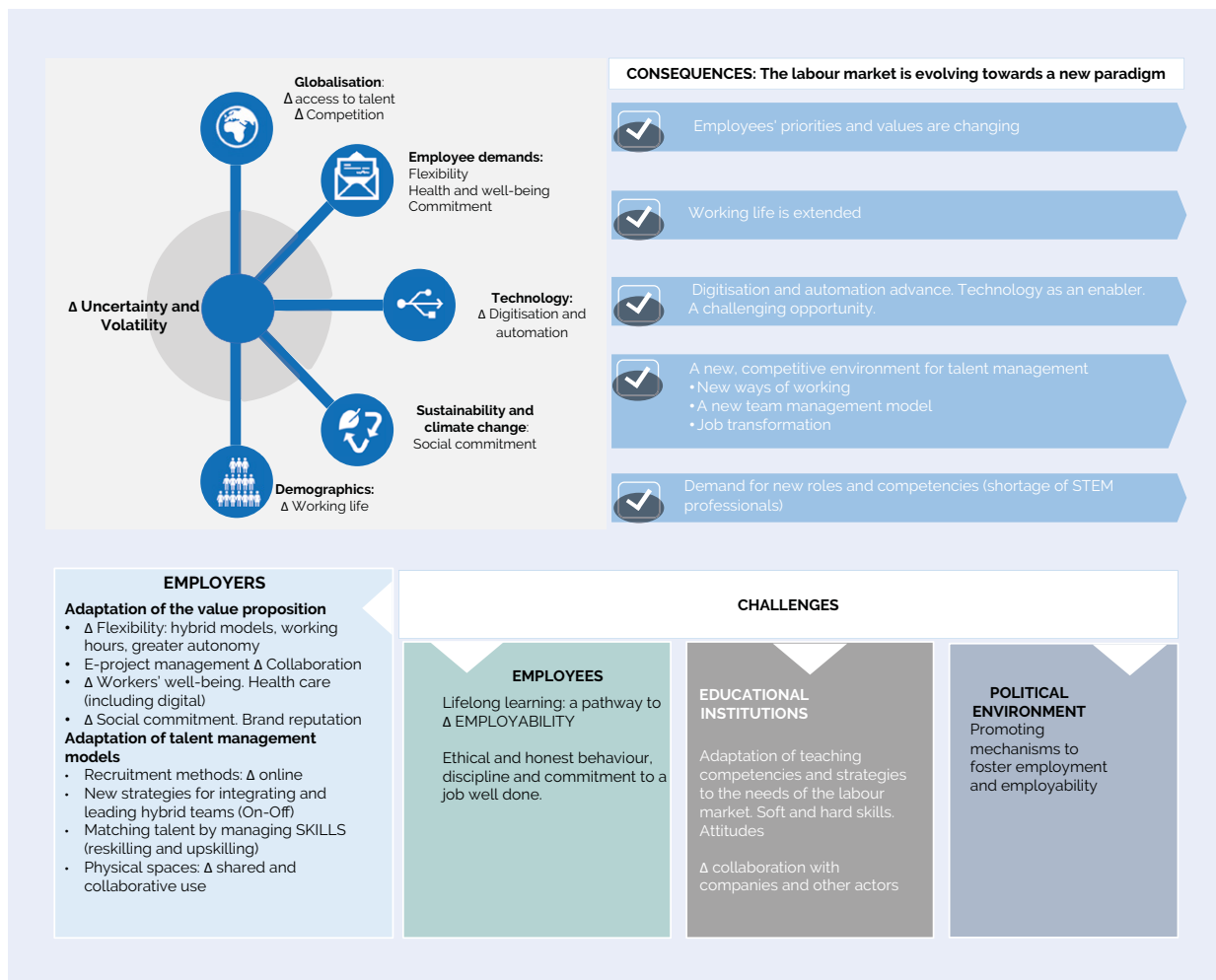
**Figure 9.** Development of net employment by category. Europe (2018-2030)

Jobs (WEF, 2023). A second area was self-management, which includes active learning and learning strategies, as well as resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility, and curiosity and lifelong learning. Finally, teamwork and the use and development of technology were also highlighted. It also stressed the growing significance of interpersonal skills such as empathy, listening and communication.

Turning now to the professional skills gap of university graduates (based on the differentiation of knowledge, skills and attitudes), the report *Retos empresariales y competencias profesionales necesarias después de la COVID-19: el impacto sobre el empleo juvenil* (Business challenges and professional skills needed after COVID-19: the impact on youth employment (Blázquez et al., 2022)) indicated that 65% of companies considered that there was a significant gap in knowledge, particularly those in the technological field (big data, artificial intelligence, digital marketing,...). Seventy-five per cent of the respondents also felt the same about skills, with leadership, negotiation, innovation/creativity at the top of the list. In terms of attitudes, 78% of the companies believed that there were important mismatches, especially in commit-

ment, as well as responsiveness, initiative and resilience, among others. In order to reduce the skills gap, companies relied mainly on further training. The report also noted that companies attached more importance to skills and attitudes than to knowledge. The ability to learn was considered to be the most valuable, followed by leadership and teamwork. Among the attitudes, in order of importance, were ethical values, respect, commitment and resilience.

The reports *El impacto de la Universidad de Deusto. Una mirada desde el aprendizaje* (The impact of the University of Deusto. An overview focused on learning processes (Deusto Social Lab Report No. 4, 2021 and Deusto Social Lab Report No. 5, 2022)) analysed the importance of various competencies from the perspective of companies (169 companies surveyed) and final year UD students (267 students surveyed), respectively, as well as the performance of students in these competencies. The findings indicated that the five competencies prioritised by companies related to attitudes and skills: ethical and honest commitment, discipline and commitment to a job well done, ability to sustain hard work, teamwork in any envi-



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 10.** Summary of factors influencing employability and employment. Consequences and challenges

ronment and the ability to engage in lifelong learning. There was a high level of performance in all of them, both according to the assessment of the companies and students themselves.

Figure 10 provides a summary of the main aspects considered in this section on Trends with an impact on employability and employment.

In conclusion, the challenges arising from the new emerging employment scenario due to changes in employment and the need for new skills can be seen as a threat, but also as an opportunity. This requires adaptation and a co-

ordinated response from all parties involved, focusing on personal and social well-being. In order to attract and engage talent, companies must therefore create differentiated value propositions that are of interest to workers. These include fostering technological skills and the required training, with upskilling and reskilling being key elements of the digital transformation (AEDIPE, 2022); as well as enhancing hybrid work models and fostering people-centred corporate cultures. Workers' professional (and personal) success will depend to a large extent on their adaptation and continuous training, in short, on their employability. The challenges facing universities are discussed in the following section.



## 5. Challenges for universities

The considerations highlighted in the preceding sections underpin the challenges currently faced by universities. On the one hand, they can see that the labour market is in a state of flux as a result of various factors and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which have triggered changes in the way people work and in the skills and profiles required for employment. But there is a significant mismatch between the knowledge and skills required by businesses and the skills offered by the university system. On the other hand, employability is a multidimensional construct, whose growing relevance derives from its influence on the employment success of individuals. It increases as people's educational attainment rises and its promotion involves a variety of actors, including individuals, enterprises, families, educational and other institutions, as well as policies.

In this context, the University expands its commitment to social welfare, as stated in the third mission statement. It does this mainly through its main activity, providing students with quality education, promoting the development of knowledge, skills and competencies that foster their employability, and improving employment.

Consequently, the challenges for the University are as follows:

- Taking greater responsibility for promoting employability, in line with the following timeframe and collaboration framework:

- i. From the beginning of students' education, and moving through various stages in which they start to make decisions about their professional future.
- ii. Increasingly engaging in structured cooperation with other actors involved, notably companies, given their extensive knowledge of the labour market and its trends.
- Adopting a new way of understanding education, which meets the demands of continuous change, volatility and uncertainty. Reducing, and if possible, eliminating the current and projected skills gap, which will continue to grow unless action is taken to mitigate it. To achieve this goal, the University's capacity for innovation is a key factor. This involves:
  - iii. Designing the education offering to meet labour market demands for new knowledge and improve transversal competencies related to employability. This is done by modifying existing programmes or introducing new programmes to provide multi-disciplinarity and flexibility, involving actors from within and outside of teaching.
  - iv. Promoting lifelong learning, which is increasingly necessary and has a strong social impact.
  - v. Adopting a more practical approach to teaching-learning methods.
  - vi. Advising on and guiding skills profiles that align with the demand of the labour market.
  - vii. Providing students with knowledge of their personal potential and the ability to design their own professional project, within the framework of employability skills.

# Chapter three

Overview of employability and employment at the University of Deusto. Social impact model



## 6. Employability and employment at the UD

As stated in the UD's mission statement, the University strives to educate free individuals who are also responsible citizens and competent professionals, equipped with the knowledge, values and skills that will enable them to commit themselves to promoting knowledge and transforming society. One of the avenues for transformation is undoubtedly employment, as it enables individuals to realise their potential. This is why the employability of graduates is one of the University of Deusto's key priorities—an objective pursued across various areas, with a clear focus on maximising employability.

### 6.1. UD Teaching-learning model. Focus on competence acquisition

The University of Deusto was founded at the end of the 19th century and has constantly adapted to meet the educational needs of society, remaining true to its principles and vocation of service to the community. It has successfully faced the challenges posed by technology, internationalisation and innovation processes, and become a pioneering institution in remarkable fields of knowledge, including law, business and the humanities.

It has its own pedagogical framework based on Ignatian pedagogy, which focuses on the process of transformation of the individual based on experience, reflection and action. It prioritises competency-based learning, applying an innovative and recognised education model (MAUD) which promotes an all-round, autonomous and supported education, in which each student is placed at the core of the process. Person-centredness is the cornerstone of the model.

The most prominent features of Ignatian pedagogy are as follows (Gil Coria, 2002):

- It sees learners as all-round individuals and seeks their overall development.
- It conceives education as being a process of personal transformation through experience, reflection and ac-

tion: it starts from the context of the learner, promotes experience, demands reflection to understand the deeper implications and is oriented towards commitment to faith and justice. Reflection is key for students to gain a depth of thought that helps them to overcome the difficulties in reaching critical truthfulness about reality and their life.

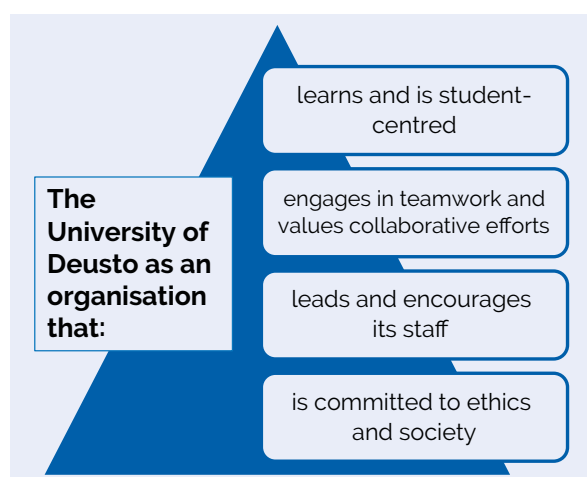
- It underlines the importance of assessment, including the evaluation of the progress of human attitudes.
- It provides value-based learning.
- It understands the teacher-student relationship as being key to education: teachers support students in their growth and development. This requires that they are approachable and accessible to students.
- This involves having an overall vision that unifies and helps crystallise criteria based on Ignatian principles common to all teaching.

At the turn of the 20th to the 21st century, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach revisited the traditional Ignatian model of learning and identified four essential dimensions integral to all Jesuit education—particularly in higher education. He referred to these dimensions using Latin terms: *utilitas*, *iustitia*, *humanitas* and *fides*, which correspond to the practical, social, humanistic, and religious or meaning-oriented dimensions, respectively. The map of the four dimensions of the Ledesma-Kolvenbach model starts from a personal profile; it does not include (academically assessable) 'competencies' in a strict sense; rather, it points to 'orientations, sensitivities, attitudes, values...', which serve as a basis for personal choices and constitute guidelines and guides for personal and professional behaviour; in this sense, they are presented as extensions of the competencies in a strict sense, at a higher level. To preserve this affinity, it would perhaps not be an abuse of either the concept or the language to designate them as being 'Meta-Competencies' (Agúndez, 2008).

The Ledesma-Kolvenbach paradigm helps to understand the mission of the universities managed by the Society of Jesus, in which, in addition to the professional profile, other aspects are considered, such as the importance of the social dimension in students' education. Based on this paradigm, in addition to seeking excellence in research

and teaching in order to educate people to be competent professionals (*utilitas*), we must also educate free people who uphold ethical and humanist values, who are self-aware and have a consciousness of the world in which they live, and are sensitive to the aspirations and concerns of their contemporaries (*humanitas*); people sensitive to the Gospel and Christianity (*fides*), who are committed to building a fairer world and compassionate enough to feel the joy and pain of others as their own (*iustitia*). Within this framework, the UD emphasises the development of ethical and humanist values, with the aim of educating free people, responsible citizens and competent professionals equipped with the knowledge, values and skills that will enable them to commit themselves to the promotion of knowledge and the transformation of society. It also highlights a strong commitment to social and cultural change in society and solidarity towards those who are disadvantaged.

In 2000, the UD developed its own pedagogical framework, which is still in force today. It provides pedagogical underpinning for the overall teaching process. This pedagogical framework is implemented through the UD Education Model (MFUD) and the UD Learning Model (MAUD), supported by competency-based learning, consistently with the guidelines of the European Higher Education Area (Poblete and Villa, 2008). Its objectives are set out in Figure 11.



Source: University of Deusto Learning Model.

**Figure 11.** Objectives of the Deusto Learning Model.

The pedagogical framework of UD teaching is based on the following eight principles:

- Person-centred education.
- Values-based learning.
- Encouraging the creation of personal and social attitudes.
- Fostering autonomous and meaningful learning.
- Promoting thought development.
- Enhancing the acquisition of academic and professional competencies.
- Including ICTs.
- Becoming a learning organisation.

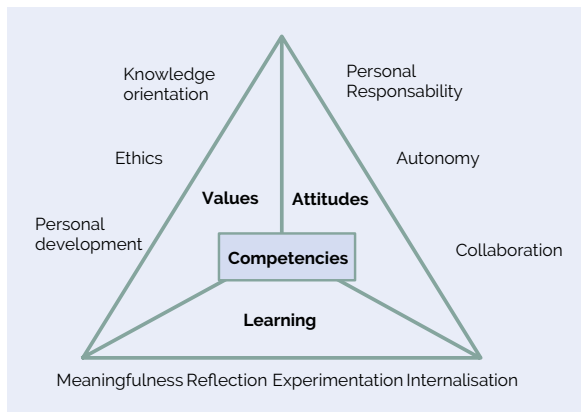
Based on these principles, the MAUD model promotes Competency-Based Learning, which consists of the integration and mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, demonstrated by appropriate performance in diverse and real contexts. Based on the competencies that students must develop in their professional and personal spheres, the knowledge required in each education area is specified, as well as the attitudes and values to be developed. This results in students gaining the wisdom derived from knowledge, and the attitudes and values that enable them to both be wise and willing to put their knowledge into practice, in order to achieve appropriate outcomes from their actions. The proposed learning model, MAUD, is based on the experiential learning of Kolb et al., (1976) and Ignatian pedagogy (Gil Coria, 2002).

Competency-Based Learning therefore is aligned with an all-round education model oriented towards social and personal transformation, helping the learner to develop as a person. The UD aims not only to transmit specialised knowledge to students and prepare them to engage in a specific profession, but also to support them in their process of personal growth and development, so that they can develop their own (intellectual, personal, social...) potential in order to provide creative solutions to society's problems.

The pyramid in Figure 12 is composed of four sides, namely, learning, attitudes, values and competencies. It presents the main elements of the model, which contribute to the all-round development of individuals. The combination of all these elements promotes overall learning and helps the learner to develop as a person.

A number of aspects are particularly important in relation to the four components of the pyramid:

- The learning model (at the bottom of the pyramid) combines the different learning styles and aims to apply different types of intellectual thinking. Meaningful learning involves applying thought by combining reflective activities and observation, with conceptualisation, experimentation and evaluation of process and outcome.
- Attitudes towards learning help to set and systematise habits and behaviours according to personal choices



Source: UD Pedagogical framework.

**Figure 12.** Main elements of the UD Learning Model.

which become values. For learning to be autonomous and meaningful, students should take personal responsibility and develop a positive attitude towards study and learning, and do so as part of a collaborative process in which they are supported, and they share and cooperate with their fellow students, teaching staff and other people in their environment.

- Individual values are a consequence of each student's personal and social background. They are linked to their experience, environmental responses, ideals and expectations, among other factors. Regarding values, consistently with the University's mission, the type of person it seeks to educate and the learning model, efforts focus on three key areas:
  - Personal and social development: values are firstly focused on the person. Values such as personal dignity, right to life, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-fulfilment are included. All human rights are linked to this area.
  - Knowledge orientation: this involves seeking the truth, engaging in study and knowledge. This value applies throughout life.
  - Ethical-social responsibility: this means taking responsibility for financial resources, structure and human capital, creating a stimulating work environment, as well as making a contribution to the community. In short, it requires reflecting on the consequences and effects that their decisions have on others, especially those that contribute to social justice.
- A differentiating factor of the UD model is the prominent role given to values education and ethical commitment. Since the 2009 academic year, all students have taken two subjects in a module entitled 'Humanistic Values Education' as part of interdisciplinary groups, which showcases the value of coexistence between different people. This approach will be extend-

ed in the near future by including an additional subject that will complete a overall pathway.

- The third side of the pyramid corresponds to competencies, which are defined as 'acquired knowledge, abilities, skills or abilities which results in a good level of development and performance' in the UD Pedagogical Framework. Although there are various models for grouping competencies, the UD classifies generic or transversal competencies into three categories.
  - Instrumental: these are a combination of manual skills and cognitive abilities that make professional competency possible.
  - Interpersonal: these refer to the abilities and skills that enable people to have appropriate social interactions with others, promoting the development and application of certain values in social life.
  - Systemic competencies: these entail skills related to understanding a system as a whole.

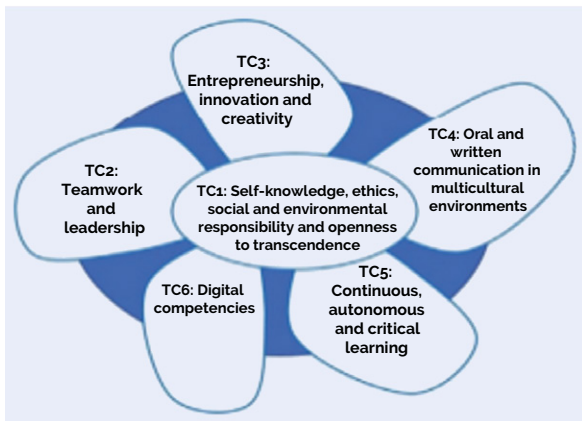
The University of Deusto has been reflecting on, updating and simplifying its model of transversal competencies for a number of years now, based on the conviction that transversal competencies are the hallmark of its graduates in line with the University's mission. This is a strategic project for the UD that is mobilising a wide range of experts from within the University.

These competencies are those that all students, whatever their degree, will have to develop during their undergraduate or postgraduate studies. This reflection concerns how the University of Deusto seeks to fulfil its mission as a project of the Society of Jesus, aiming to educate individuals who are free, responsible citizens and competent professionals; equipped with the necessary knowledge, values, and skills, these individuals will be able to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the transformation of society.

Thus, the UD is committed to six key transversal competencies (see Figure 13). The proposed definition and scope presented below is a summary of the work conducted by the different expert groups to date. The following descriptions are part of that synthesis:

- TC1. Self-knowledge, ethics, social and environmental responsibility and openness to transcendence. This is the UD's hallmark competence which has a two-pronged approach:
  - Acknowledging and taking responsibility for the inclusion of human communities and vulnerable people, adopting the perspectives and engaging in the procedures of their academic discipline. This is a social responsibility.





Source: Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Organisation, Teaching Innovation and Quality.

**Figure 13.** UD transversal competencies. 2018.

- Safeguarding natural resources and the environment as a whole, ensuring that they can be enjoyed both by present and future generations, utilising the expertise and capacities provided by their specialised areas of knowledge. This is an ecological responsibility.

This competency encompasses a range of components and fosters all-round human growth, since the different aspects of the person cannot be ‘compartmentalised’. These elements are:

- Social responsibility for the most disadvantaged people and human communities and protection of the common good.
- Environmental responsibility for the protection of natural assets and nature as a whole.
- Professional ethics, which sets moral limits and brings a horizon for a good life and the protection of the common good.
- A personal form of spirituality that gives meaning to one’s own life and provides guidance in the choices to be made, based on one’s own personal knowledge and the aspiration to have more solidarity among human beings.

It has been defined as follows: Behaving in an ethical, egalitarian, inclusive, responsible and sustainable way in different realms: regarding oneself, others (men and women for others), society (social justice), and the planet as a whole (environment), asking the big life questions.

- TC2. Leadership and teamwork. This competency is defined as working with a group of people to achieve common goals by contributing one’s own knowledge and skills, assuming shared responsibility and leader-

ship, integrating different points of view and striving for collective development.

This is based on a conception of the person as a relational being, who cannot develop fully unless it is in relation to other people and at the service of others (Guardini, 2004). Research has shown that people learn and develop in interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Teamwork, therefore, offers the opportunity to learn and grow individually, as a group and socially; leadership is identified as an essential dimension when working with others.

- TC3. Entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity. Entrepreneurship is a process that starts with the individual. It is individuals who innovate and undertake new projects (whether within or outside an organisation). What characterises these individuals, according to Timmons, is that they have and/or develop the ability to create and build something out of virtually nothing, which involves initiating, doing, achieving and building.

Our society needs people with a high degree of initiative and critical thinking, who are in control of their own professional and personal development and have the ability and vision to carry out projects that add value to society, which are ultimately transformative projects. From the perspective of the University of Deusto, these are individuals who can meet the challenges we face as a society from a humanist point of view.

Thus, this competency has been defined as developing new ideas, actions and projects with a positive impact on the environment, turning ideas into actions, making decisions and taking risks.

- TC4. Oral and written communication in multicultural environments. This refers to the ability to communicate both orally and in writing in order to interact effectively with others; to listen to, express and convey feelings, knowledge, ideas and arguments clearly, rigorously and convincingly; to use a variety of expressive resources, both orally and in writing; to use appropriate linguistic resources and formats and adapting to circumstances, types of audience and diverse cultural contexts, using different languages.

Multilingual communication also requires intercultural understanding, an appreciation of cultural diversity and an interest in and curiosity about languages and intercultural communication.

- TC5. Lifelong, autonomous and critical learning. This competency is defined as updating the lessons learnt, transforming one’s way of thinking and acting, taking responsibility for one’s decisions and achieving ever greater autonomy in the acquisition of learning.

In the learning processes at the University, it is essential for students to articulate their prior conceptions, critically examine them, and actively develop more scientific or advanced ideas and criteria to approach the challenges and situations in their field of study rigorously. Constructive and deep learning is therefore to be encouraged, and is fostered by learner self-regulation.

- TC6: Digital competency. This is defined as working effectively and efficiently with technology to process information, as well as communicating in the digital world in a critical and responsible way.

This ranges from issues related to information and data, communication, interaction and understanding for appropriate use, to the creation of content, security features and mechanisms for the use of digital tools or resources for problem solving.

Further details of the University of Deusto's Teaching and Learning Model and the new models that are emerging to meet the challenges of these new times can be found in the Deusto Social Lab Reports No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5, as well as on the UD's website (among them, the UD's commitment to dual university education and the Deusto online learning model are discussed in greater depth).

## 6.2. Employability from within the university, not after graduation

The University of Deusto approaches its learning processes with the conviction that the employability of its graduates should not be addressed only in the period immediately before their entry into the labour market; rather, it is believed that it should be a focal point from the earliest stages—right from the beginning of undergraduate learning processes.

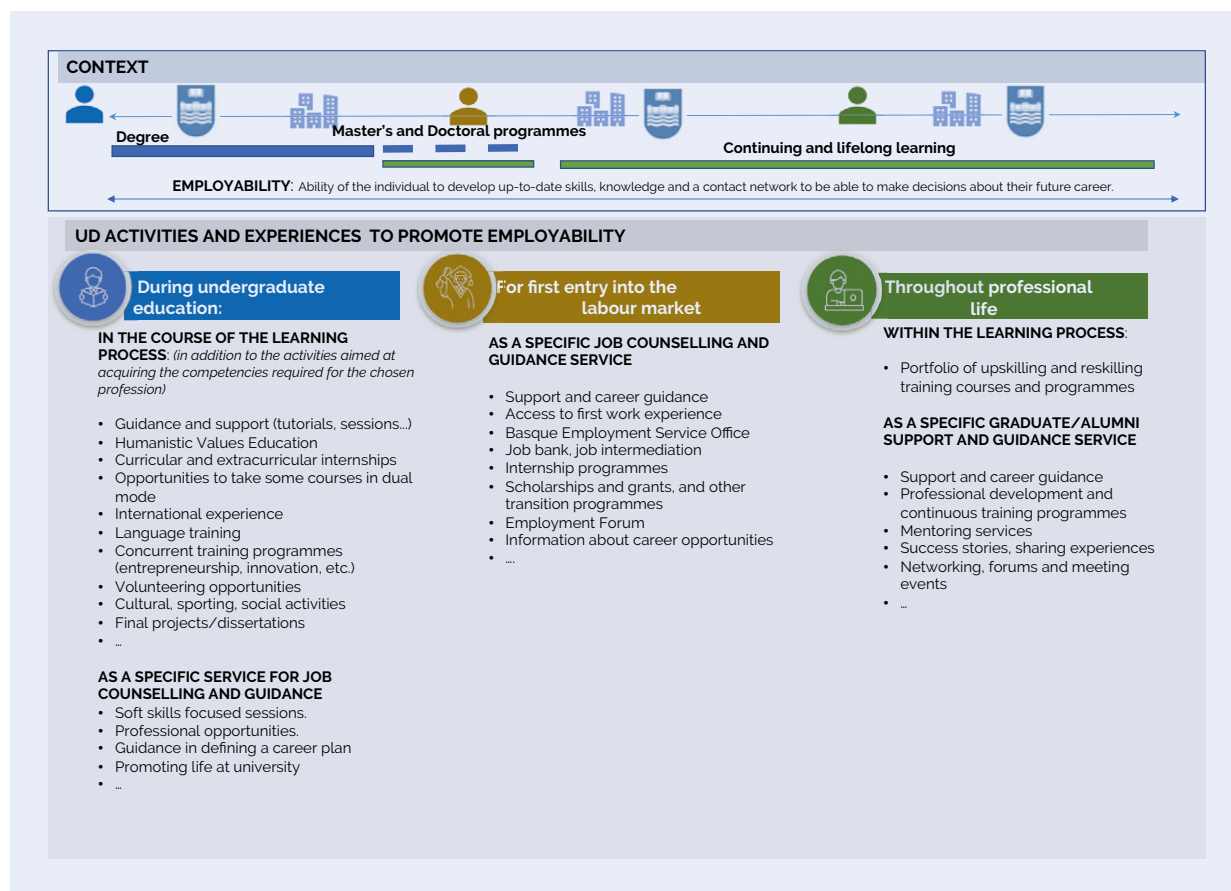
As has been discussed in previous chapters and sections, the skills that help to develop and sustain high levels of employability throughout one's professional life are those related to transversal competencies or soft skills. This is especially relevant in the current context, characterised by a rapid pace of change and a corresponding need not only for adaptation but also for anticipatory responses. The UD places these transversal competencies at the core of its activity, and all students, whatever their learning process, work on, develop and acquire these competencies from the earliest years of their degrees.

In addition to developing this fundamental set of competencies, the UD is aware that students must also acquire essential competencies that will best prepare them to enter and navigate the world of work throughout their professional life. This life journey is already characterised today by the fact that it is no longer linear, and there are many paths and changes along the way. For this reason, the UD offers a set of experiences and activities, directly linked to the curriculum or complementary to it, which are aimed at meeting this objective. Efforts are therefore made to ensure that students are able to understand the opportunities arising from the labour market (depending on their specific professional field), position themselves appropriately within it, and have the tools necessary to access and navigate it in line with their needs, choices, and personal and professional preferences at any given time.

The support provided by the University's employment services plays a highly significant role in this area, as their objective is to contribute (in collaboration with the Faculties and other UD services) to ensuring that people educated in Deusto can develop a high-quality professional project throughout their lives, enhancing both their current and future employability.

Figure 14 provides a non-exhaustive summary of the overall set of activities and experiences which, in a comprehensive and integrated manner, are offered to students to support the acquisition of all the competencies needed not only to acquire a solid vocational education, but also to be well prepared for employment. To present them in a more structured manner, three specific moments in time have been identified:

- a) During the undergraduate learning process. A more detailed account of the activities carried out within undergraduate studies can be found in Deusto Social Lab Reports No. 4 and 5. However, in this case, it is particularly relevant to note the activities and experiences specifically aimed at developing competencies related to employability and career management, most of which are offered through the University's employment services.
- b) Upon first entering the labour market after completing undergraduate studies. The University of Deusto implements a range of highly targeted activities with a view to supporting and guiding students through these initial transitions into the world of work.
- c) Throughout the individual's professional life. The University of Deusto also offers an increasingly broad range of activities and services designed to support and facilitate the professional development of its graduates, in addition to its own portfolio of continuing and lifelong learning programmes that support upskilling and/or reskilling.



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 14.** UD experiences and activities for improving the employability of graduates



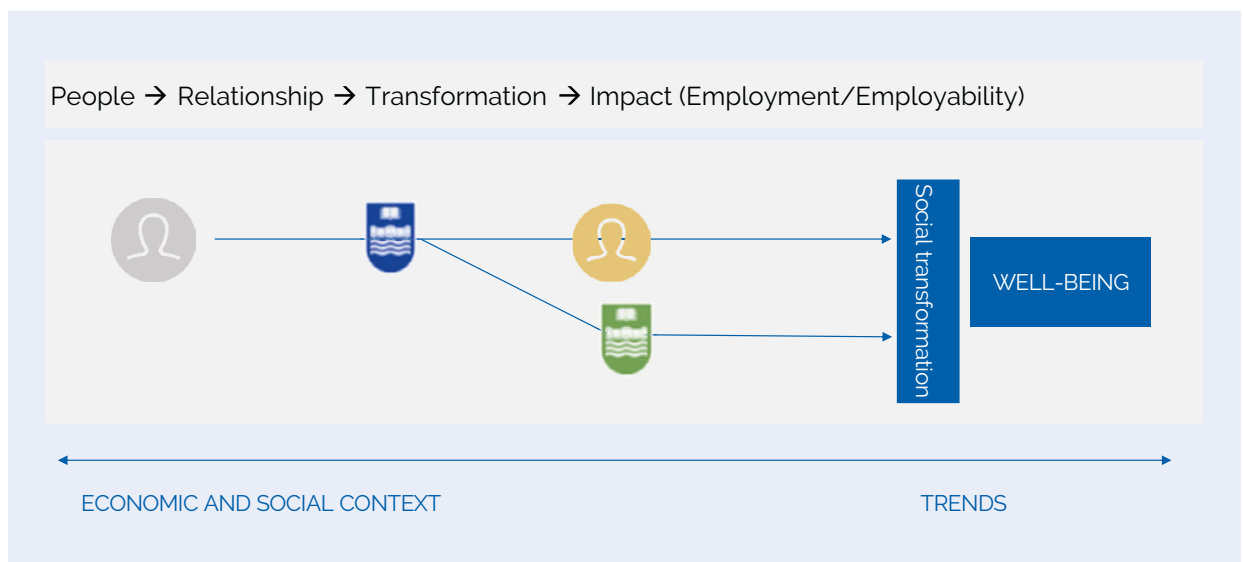
## 7. The UD's Social Impact Model through its learning processes

### 7.1. Global framework

The University of Deusto's conceptual model of social impact is strategically anchored in three pillars: people, the relationship they have with each other (and with the University of Deusto), and the transformation undergone by people as a result of their relationship with the UD. A description of how this was developed can be found in the Deusto Social Lab Reports No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5. And it also meets the UD's mission: 'Today, the UD aims to serve society through a specifically university-based

contribution, based on a Christian vision of reality. It therefore strives for excellence in research and teaching. It simultaneously aims to cultivate individuals who are free, responsible citizens and competent professionals. These individuals should possess the knowledge, values, skills, abilities, and capacities necessary to actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the transformation of society'.

The conceptual model of the UD's impact on society is built on these three pillars, which can be graphically represented and summarised as follows:



Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Figure 15.** Core Elements of the Impact Model.

For the UD, people (we) play the main role in achieving change, transformation. Hence, the objective is for anyone engaging with the University of Deusto through its numerous activities and services to potentially undergo a transformation or change through reflection. In other words, a transformation or change at the societal level may also ensue by enhancing the personal dimension.

We must therefore get to know these people well and understand how their relationship with the UD is enacted. Reflecting on the kind of changes, innovations or transformations to which the UD aspires to contribute is not a trivial endeavour. In general terms, the aim is to move towards a fairer, more humane and sustainable world. On this path of transformation, each person is the

guiding thread to follow and move forward with, and the enabler of specific social contributions as they are expressed.

Thus, having established the rationale behind the impact model, and taking into account the commonly accepted definition of impact (any change brought about by the implementation of a set of services or activities), we must look at the activities that the UD uses to carry out its mission and purpose. The University of Deusto initiates these changes by performing activities or services guided by a systemic and sustained process over time. The UD's objective is to instigate transformations that are valuable to society and, ultimately, contribute to inclusive and sustainable well-being within its role as a Jesuit university. All this from the exercise of its role as a Jesuit university.

In conclusion, as transformation is a process, the model enables us to identify the various impacts occurring at different stages over time. Thus, this process will culminate in us being able to talk about the University of Deusto's impact on societal transformation. This approach is shaped by humility, as we recognise that the University is one of the agents that people come into contact with at specific moments in their lives; consequently, it is each of those people who should inform and substantiate (to a large extent) their contribution to society and how this may have changed after building a relationship with the UD.

Naturally, this process places the individual at the centre. All the people who are part of the university community and the wider ecosystem of people (as part of their organisations or institutions or from other areas) who relate to the UD are agents of social transformation. The model aims to capture their contributions to society.

## 7.2. Conceptual framework specific to the social impact of learning processes and their contribution to employability and employment

The logic underpinning the conceptual impact model adopted by the University of Deusto is based on supporting individuals throughout their learning journey and beyond. It seeks to depict the transformations they undergo from the moment they begin their relationship with the University through to the completion of their educational

pathway—whether at undergraduate, postgraduate or other levels. But it does not stop there, as it also aims to capture the contributions that these people make to society as a result of their personal transformation. One of the most significant social contributions is that generated through employment—a key source of wealth and social well-being. For this reason, this section revisits the core elements of the learning impact model and complements them with the components needed to reflect the contribution of UD graduates through employment and its long-term sustainability, underpinned by the continued assurance of relevant and adaptable employability.

### 7.2.1 Basic elements of the conceptual framework

Following the overall conceptual framework defined, the specific model of the social impact of learning process activities is based on these four elements:

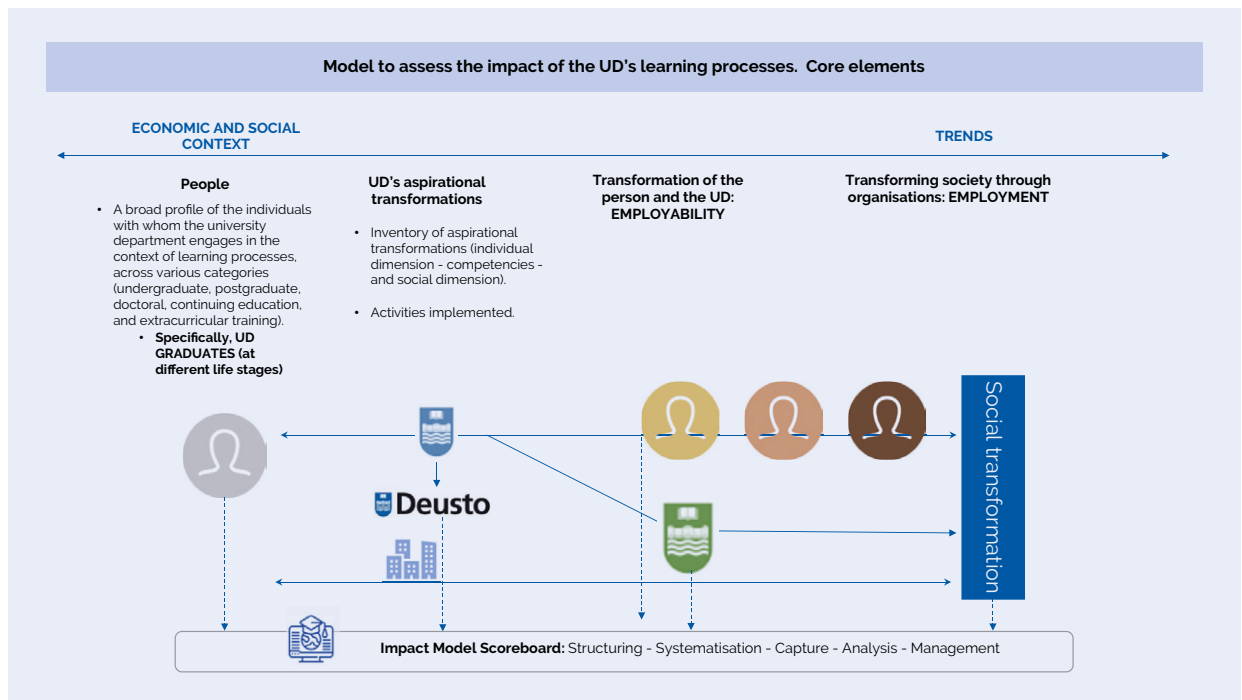
- Economic and social context and trends, which specifically includes the most important context variables for this case.
- People with whom the UD has a relationship, firstly identifying the complete map of stakeholders and secondly focusing on the priority groups: students, alumni and partner businesses.
  - In the initial report, in order to further the examination of the UD's impact, the research was assisted by the University's partner companies (those which host students on internships and/or hire UD graduates).
  - Subsequently, the analysis considered students in undergraduate learning processes in general, and students in the final years of undergraduate studies in particular.
  - The focus of the current study is on graduates once they are fully active in the labour market; it is centred on understanding their career pathways in order to assess the importance of maintaining adequate levels of employability and the contribution made by the UD.
- Aspirational transformations: the previous phases of the model identified the aspirational transformations that the UD intends to achieve with its learning processes. These transformations are now being complemented and broadened to meet the need to view employability as a lifelong ability to be cultivated and

maintained, with particular emphasis on how its impact is manifested in terms of employment.

- The table of indicators proposed in the previous phase of the project, following the stages defined in the the-

ory of change, runs from input to impact for each transformation.

This is shown graphically in Figure 16.



Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Figure 16.** Core elements of the impact model of the UD learning processes.

## 7.2.2. Extension of the model: Contributing to employment and employability through learning processes

As stated in previous sections, the UD aims for those who engage with it to undergo personal transformation, which may subsequently be transferred to the social domain, thereby generating an impact on a larger scale. Thus, the acquisition and cultivation of knowledge is a transformative process that begins with the individual. They acquire and develop specific competencies which have an amplifying effect when applied in a more social dimension. The competencies that are most needed and sought after by society today to meet the challenges we face have also been outlined above; these competencies help address challenges by providing solutions through lifelong work, whether within companies and organisa-

tions or by driving their own projects. Employment is therefore a means of generating value through an individual's activity. A society's relationship to employment is one of the main indicators by which its development and level of progress have traditionally been measured.

Among the most relevant competencies, aside from those specific to a given profession, particular emphasis has been placed on soft skills or transversal competencies. Employability skills are increasingly recognised as essential in a context where job changes are becoming more frequent.

In light of the above, the University of Deusto's Social Impact Model has been expanded beyond its earlier versions to illustrate how the University's learning processes, through which individuals develop both specific and transversal competencies, contribute to the employability of UD graduates throughout their lives. This, in turn, supports their ability to move between jobs in accordance with their changing needs and interests. Therefore:

- From an individual perspective, people acquire and develop the aforementioned competencies during their

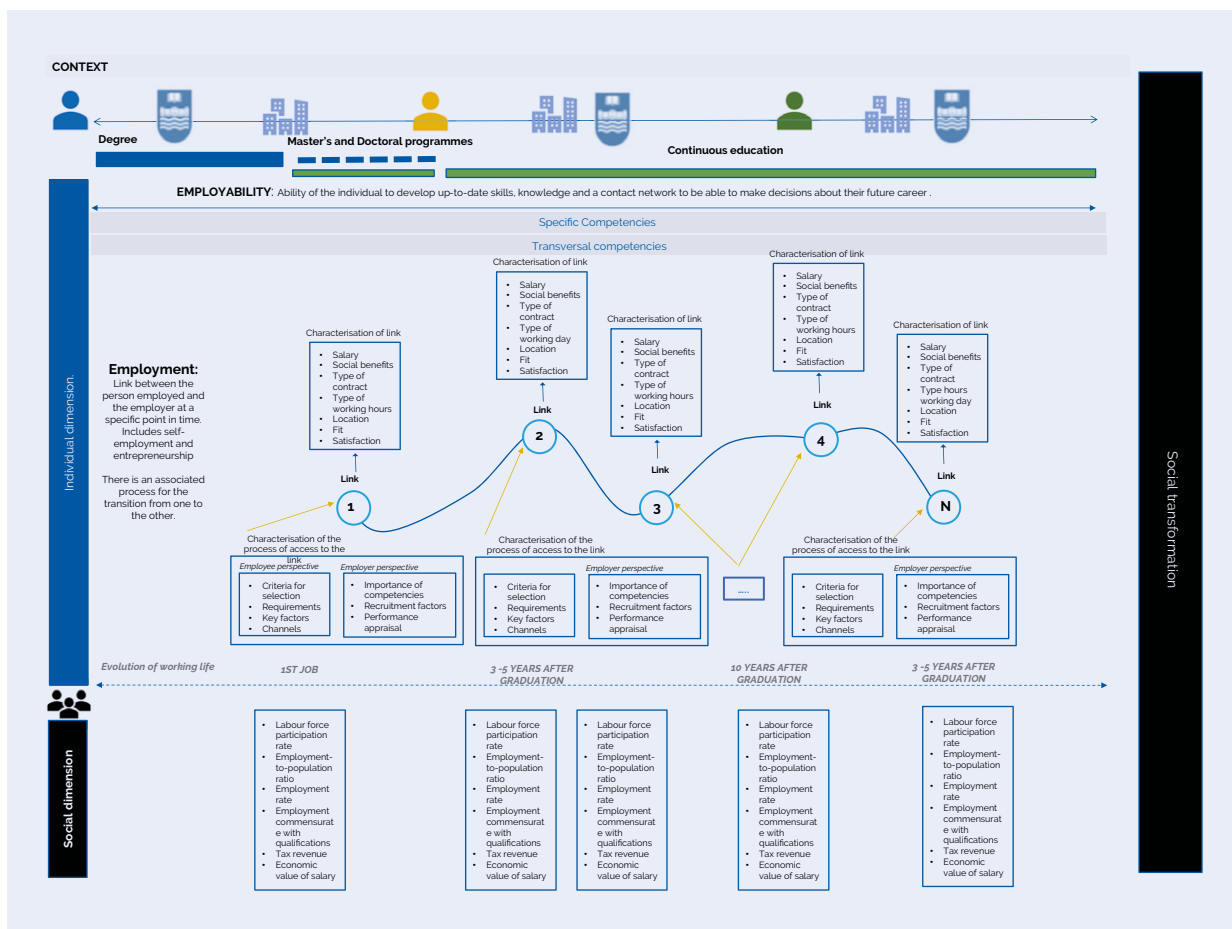
undergraduate and/or postgraduate studies, etc., which enables them to secure their first job and their later employment opportunities. In this approach, the characteristics of employment serve as indicators for assessing the status and quality of the relationship to employment at any given time. It therefore encompasses a set of indicators traditionally used to measure this concept, ranging from more conventional ones—such as salary, type of working hours or contract type—to others that have become important more recently, such as whether the job aligns with the individual's studies or their level of satisfaction with it, which has become particularly relevant in recent times.

- Moreover, access to employment at any given time involves a process that requires the candidate to be aware of the available opportunities, the channels through which they are advertised and the requirements for applying to the position, among other things. They must also have a clear understanding of the main criteria on which they will base their decision

to apply for the position, and to eventually accept it, should they be successful in the selection process. Another set of indicators of relevance to the model is identified.

- From a more social perspective, UD graduates as a whole make a social contribution by maintaining levels of labour force participation and employment, thereby generating wealth that returns to society through their salaries, among other channels.

The model also takes into account the personal and professional development of UD graduates, presenting a continuum that reflects both the characteristics of employment relationships as they evolve over time, and the ongoing need to maintain suitable employability. This ensures that such transitions occur under the most suitable conditions, in line with each individual's needs and priorities. And in parallel, the model shows the aggregate social contribution produced. Figure 17 is intended to be a graphical reflection of this.



Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

Figure 17. Contribution to employment and employability of graduates UD

### 7.2.3.

## Deployment and extension of basic elements

### 7.2.3.1.

## Economic and social context. Trends

In line with the approach developed in the previous phase, the most important context-related aspects for an adequate understanding and subsequent analysis of the social impact of the UD are:

- The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the region in which the university operates. In this case (as in the others in this sub-section) the territorial vision is important, since the University operates within a specific area at a specific time. Its ability to make an impact will therefore be different depending on the characteristics of the society with which it interacts. Furthermore, this factor also affects the type of activities and services that the University provides in each geographical area.
- Given the specific object of analysis, it is particularly important to thoroughly examine both the educational characteristics of the population and the situation of the labour market in general and of people with university degrees in particular.
- In light of the aforementioned trends and the ensuing challenges involved for the University's work (and specifically, for learning processes), it is important to understand the educational and training needs as stated by employers in the Basque Country.

### 7.2.3.2.

## People with whom the UD engages

Building on the proposal outlined in the report on the work carried out in 2020, the University of Deusto engages with an extensive, varied, and heterogeneous network of stakeholders as a result of its learning processes. This networks includes:

- People who apply to the UD to study any of the degrees currently offered. These applicants are referred to as candidates throughout the report.

- Undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students. From all courses and all qualifications.
  - Students who additionally take part in the extracurricular training/education initiatives offered by the UD.
- Other continuing education students.
- Graduates in general and alumni in particular.
- Families (mainly parents of students).
- UD teaching and research staff.
- UD administrative and service staff.
- Lecturers from outside the UD who make a teaching contribution to some degrees.
- Business/social fabric, in their role as employers/hosts of trainees.
- Educational institutions (both public and private)
  - Public Administrations (Basque Government through the Department of Education)
  - Educational institutions
  - Vocational Training Centres
- Other institutions in the field of employment
  - Public (Basque Government through both the Department of Employment and Lanbide); Provincial Councils and City/Town Councils
  - Private. Business associations and chambers of commerce, among others.

Becoming acquainted with each of these actors must be the next step. The people with whom the DU has a relationship in terms of learning processes, their motivations and expectations of the relationship must be understood in order to contextualise the lessons learnt from the application of the social impact model.

Of all the aforementioned, the most important are the students, the people whom the UD directly supports in their learning processes, and who become our graduates and alumni when they complete their degrees. Students are involved in different learning processes, namely:

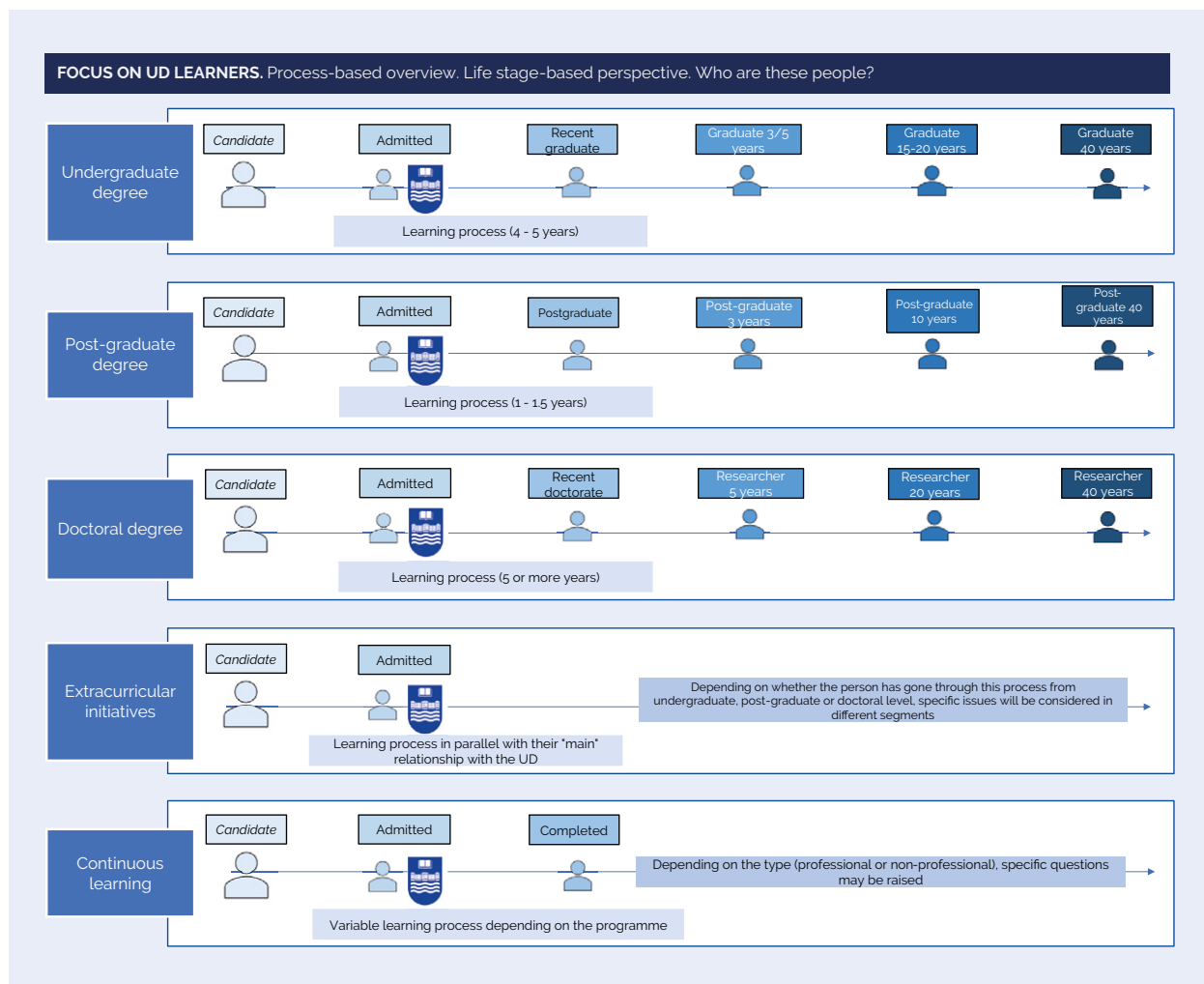
- People supported by the UD in degree learning processes.
- People supported by the UD in postgraduate learning processes.

- People supported by the UD in doctoral learning processes.
- People whom the UD supports in learning processes linked to extracurricular training initiatives. These processes run in parallel to the three previous ones.
- People whom the UD supports in learning processes linked to lifelong learning (whether related to professional life or not).

From the perspective of a lifelong itinerary, it is possible to gather knowledge about these people from the time they start their relationship with the UD and from then

onwards. In order to facilitate the knowledge gathering process and subsequent analysis, a series of milestones in the learning process for each group of people will be identified, which will make it possible to segment these groups into stages throughout their lives.

The figure below only shows the itinerary of the student and subsequent graduate (the key actor of learning processes). However, other groups of people must be mentioned again, with special emphasis on the teaching staff, as they 'revolve around' students and are essential for the learning process to unfold in optimal conditions, given the crucial importance of their role as teachers/facilitators.



Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Figure 18.** Learners at the UD. View by learning process and life course stage.

This approach is not only theoretical-conceptual but also practical. Gaining specific knowledge of people by prioritising the following segments should include the following information:

- First year undergraduate students The profiling of this group began in 2021. A decision was made to include, at the very least, the following variables (which may be expanded later):



- Gender
- Language skills
- Previous international experience
- Previous work experience
- Level of social commitment or involvement prior to joining UD
- Change of residence to study at UD
- Parents' education level
- Reasons for choosing the University of Deusto
- Reasons for choosing the degree in question
- Faculty, campus and degree

- Students in the final years of their degree programmes: In order to encourage this group to participate in the project, the student profile in this initial piece of field-work carried out during 2021 was simplified to include only the variables of gender, faculty, degree, campus, level of participation in UD activities and social commitment over time.

In the future, the following individualised information will be considered for inclusion in the analysis. These data already exist in aggregate form within the University of Deusto, which is why they have not been prioritised at this time.



- Gender
- Age
- Nationality
- Disability. Diversity.
- Usual place of residence
- Parents' education level
- Household income
- Scholarship recipient
- Other members of the household with an academic education
- Academic record on completion
- Language skills
- Level of participation in other UD activities. Specify
- Assessment of the learning process
- Short and medium-term job prospects
- Expectations to continue with further learning processes (in the short, medium and long term)
- Level of satisfaction
- Level of recommendation
- Level of social commitment or engagement over time
- Faculty, campus and degree

- Undergraduate teaching staff. A breakdown will be provided for this section in subsequent phases of the project. In addition to the socio-demographic profile, it will include other questions more closely related to teaching and supporting students.

- Businesses and organisations employing or hosting UD trainees. Profiled and analysed in the 2020 report and used for comparison purposes in the 2021 report, this

report takes into account certain characteristic elements of the process of access to employment for the purpose of comparison.



- General company information:
  - Work sector
  - Size (by number of employees)
  - Type of Ownership
  - Legal form
  - Location of headquarters
  - Geographical distribution of turnover
- Description of its relationship with the UD:
  - Length of relationship
  - Areas of expertise in which it recruits/hosts UD people
  - Volume of students hosted/graduates recruited in the last three years
- Assessment of people trained in the UD (referring to transversal competences). For each of them:
  - Importance in the decision to employ them
  - Performance appraisal
  - Comparative assessment
- Level of satisfaction
- Assessment of recruitment processes
  - Referred to different assessed elements
  - Importance in the recruitment decision
  - Comparative assessment of UD people
- Other aspects:
  - Previous internships
  - Preference in recruitment
  - Future recruitment intentions
  - Channels used
  - Assessment of UD services

- UD graduates: This phase of the study includes the profiling of UD graduates, with a special focus on 'senior' graduates, i.e. those who completed their degree studies a decade or more ago. This is the case because the existing mechanisms provides the University with information to identify recent graduates (which is further enriched by the profiling of final-year undergraduate students carried out in 2021). 'Junior' graduates have been identified through a study conducted by Lanbide (the Basque Employment Service) which encompasses all cohorts three years after completing their studies. This analysis aims to complement the information about this more experienced group derived from the previous segments:



- Personal data.
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Year studies completed
  - Campus and area of knowledge
  - Degree or undergraduate course undertaken
  - Frequency of training updates
  - Reasons for updating training
- Career paths and drivers of change
  - Career path



- Number of jobs
- Importance given to drivers of change
- Importance given to skills and factors for access to jobs
- Details of current employment status
  - Employment status
  - Gross salary
  - Type of contract
  - Type of working hours arrangement
  - Branch of activity
  - Company size
  - Current occupation
  - Relationship with education
  - Probability of change
  - Overall satisfaction and satisfaction by factor

### 7.2.3.3. Transformations that the UD aspires to achieve

The UD supports people in their learning processes, encouraging them to acquire knowledge (as a result of these learning processes) through the acquisition of both transversal competencies (necessary and common to all studies) and specific competencies (specific to each profession). The acquisition and development of these competencies is thus a process of personal transformation.

This logic leads us to understand competencies as those transformations to which the UD aspires, which are conveyed through people, the real agents of social transformation. As mentioned above, people become agents of social change through their individual transformation; one of the most significant forms of this is through access to quality employment. As noted by Jim Yong Kim (World Bank president until January 2019): 'A good job can change a person's life, and the right jobs can transform entire societies.'

Of particular interest in the proposed model is the focus on transversal competencies (which are the UD's hallmark and distinctive features, to which it is firmly committed). The process is completed in this phase of the study by discussing how to equip individuals with the skills required for job searching, based on the recognition that these are essential and complementary for sustaining high employability throughout an increasingly extended working life.

In addition, as stated in the 2020 analysis, the impact model also considers transformation processes in partnership with economic and social stakeholders (social dimension). These were already included in the first practical

approach to the social impact model in the field of entrepreneurship and are deemed to be valid for and applicable to learning processes.

Specifically, the transformations linked to the degree learning processes are expressed as follows (see Figure 19):

#### *From the individual dimension*

##### *• Related to transversal competences*

##### **– Self-awareness, ethics, social and environmental responsibility and openness to transcendence**

The University of Deusto seeks to enable people to act in an ethical, egalitarian, inclusive, responsible and sustainable way regarding themselves, others, society (social justice) and the planet as a whole (environment). The University uses a set of activities and applies different methodologies (notably including service learning and values training) that help people to acquire these skills.

##### **– Teamwork and leadership training**

The University of Deusto seeks to enable people to work collaboratively towards common goals by exchanging constructive contributions, mediating in conflicts, sharing knowledge and making commitments and taking responsibility, including taking the role of team leader when the occasion or context requires it.

##### **– Training in entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity**

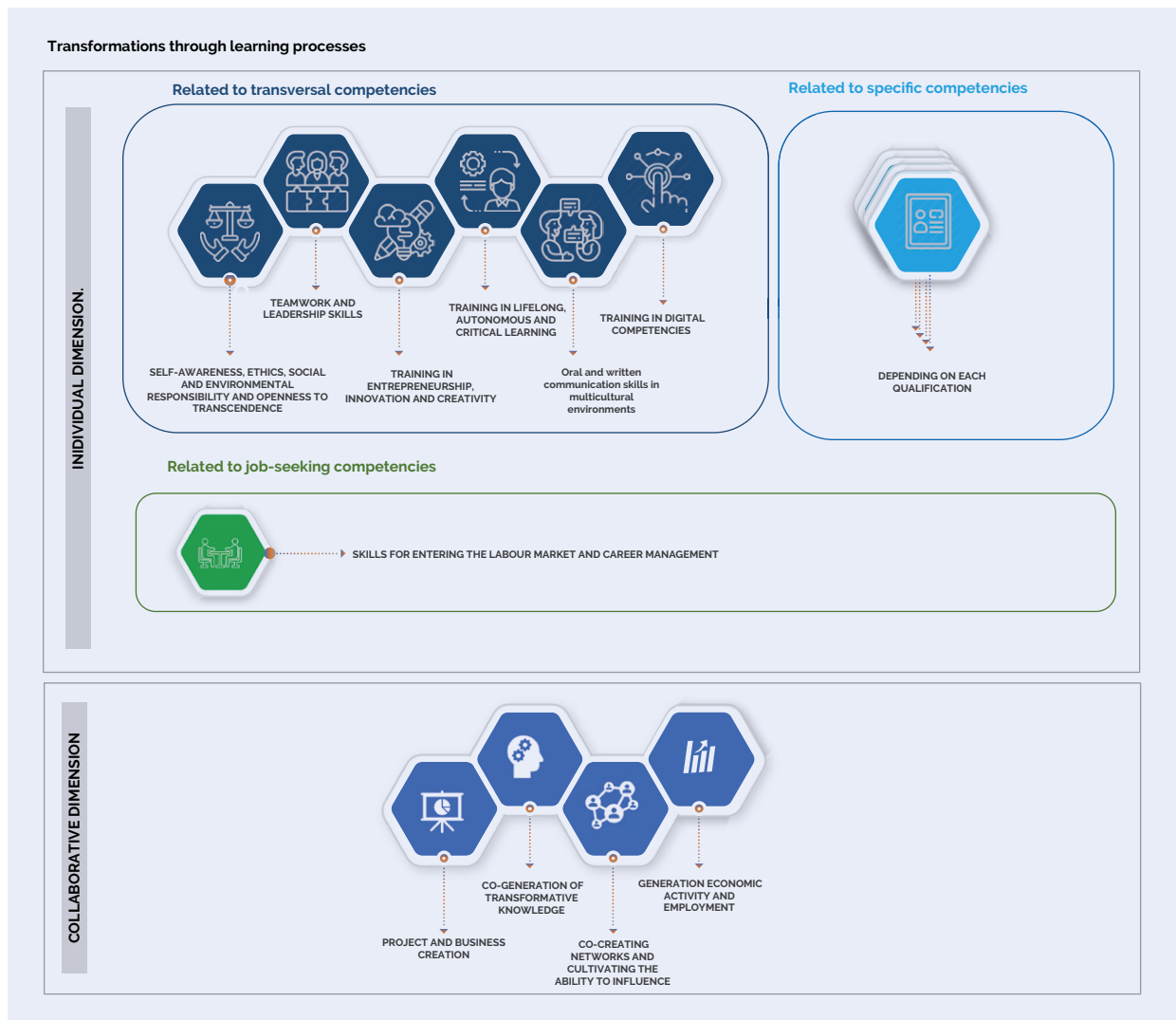
The UD seeks to enable people to develop new ideas, actions and projects which have a positive impact on the environment, turning ideas into actions, making both decisions and taking risks. To this end, it implements different actions in various forms to work from awareness-raising to training and start-up (both from the perspective of self-employment and intra-entrepreneurship).

##### **– Training in lifelong, autonomous and critical learning**

The University of Deusto seeks to help people update their learning, by questioning the usual ways of behaving and addressing issues from a critical perspective, reflecting on their own knowledge and learning styles.

##### **– Oral and written communication skills in multicultural environments**

The University of Deusto aims to equip individuals with the skills to communicate effectively with others, both orally and in writing, to express and convey feelings, knowledge, ideas, and arguments in a



Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Figure 19.** Transformations arising from learning processes. Overall view of degree processes.

clear, rigorous and convincing manner. This involves the use of various expressive resources, both spoken and written, employing appropriate linguistic tools and formats while adapting to different circumstances, audience types and diverse cultural contexts, as well as using different languages. Multilingual communication also requires intercultural understanding, an appreciation of cultural diversity and an interest in and curiosity about languages and intercultural communication.

#### – Training in Digital Competencies

The University of Deusto aims for people to use Information and Communication Technologies in a responsible, safe and critical manner both in the academic and professional spheres, in order to process information and communicate and participate in social media and groups ethically and responsibly.

#### • *Related to specific competencies*

The University of Deusto seeks to make people competent professionals in the different fields of knowledge that each person chooses. To this end, it offers a wide portfolio of qualifications (more than fifty undergraduate degrees, almost sixty postgraduate degrees) in which individuals are supported in developing specific competencies to acquire the knowledge they need for their professional practice, in addition to transversal competencies.

#### • *Related to job-seeking skills*

The University of Deusto aims to ensure that students possess the knowledge, tools and methods necessary to optimise their participation in the labour market. This includes helping them to understand and identify opportunities; access selection processes that align with their interests; succeed in those processes; and navigate transitions between jobs; all of which should

be guided by a clear understanding of their interests and priorities at each stage of their professional life.

*In terms of partnership with economic and social actors*

#### – Setting up projects and enterprises

The University of Deusto seeks to help people identify ideas and turn them into real projects with a purpose. Through their learning processes, particularly in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, individuals have a chance to work on their final projects or dissertations. These projects allow them to tackle current societal challenges by proposing specific solutions that could lead to future business ventures.

#### – Cogeneration of transforming knowledge

The University of Deusto seeks to provide solutions to social challenges in order to promote the improvement and transformation of society. This requires understanding the changes taking place in our society and being able to anticipate future scenarios, as well as designing projects that provide innovative solutions through co-creation and action research. In the case of learning processes, this co-generation is clearly enacted in the cooperative efforts between students and the organisations and companies involved in the completion of a final dissertation for both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

#### – Co-creation of networks and cultivation of the ability to be influential

The University of Deusto seeks to establish interrelationships and generate links between all those stakeholders with the capacity to enrich the learning experience. To do so, they must feel involved, have a shared vision and purpose. Mobilising stakeholders and weaving connections between actors in the learning ecosystem should contribute to the construction of the meaningful learning experience that the UD seeks. In learning processes, the relationship with external teaching staff and partner organisations is essential.

#### – Generation of economic activity and employment

As a result of the learning processes led and promoted by both the University of Deusto and its ecosystem, the UD also contributes to generating regional wealth and employment.

This is an indirect transformation that can be achieved provided that the previous transformations have been effected; both through joint action of all the stakeholders the UD engages with and in its role as a specific stakeholder that acts as an employer and an investor in these activities.

## 7.2.3.4.

### Actions carried out

The actions carried out by the University of Deusto to implement the Learning Model vary according to the fields of knowledge and the specific type of learning process (undergraduate degree, postgraduate, doctorate, lifelong learning, extracurricular initiatives). An overall graphical visualisation of the activities can be seen in Figure 14 (also appearing as Figure 20), which was collected in previous sections and has been recovered for this one. It also includes the activities and experiences that the UD offers students specifically aimed at developing job-seeking skills.

To achieve the transformations linked to transversal competencies (six in total, as defined within the Deusto brand) and specific competencies (linked to each specific degree), and the rest of the competencies linked to collaborative transformations (four, as identified and explained in the previous section), the UD implements different actions in line with the teaching methodologies selected as the best alternatives for attaining the corresponding learning outcomes in each case. In addition, there is a body of common activities that are implemented regardless of the degree selected (such as guidance and support, curricular and/or extracurricular practical experiences, human values education, or final projects/dissertations, among others).

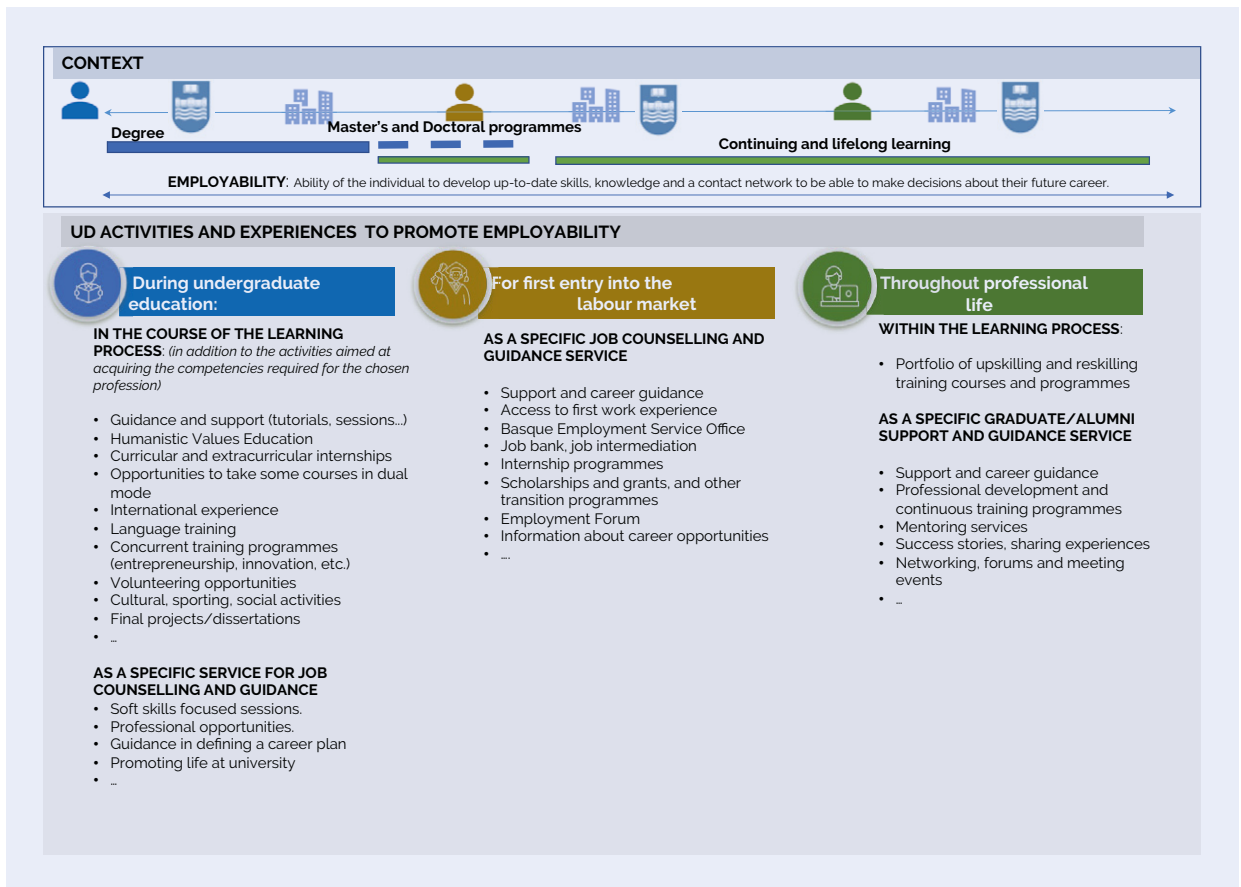
It is also important to highlight the range of activities and experiences offered for the development of specific skills related to employability and career management. These are provided mainly by the University's employment services and are aimed at students, recent graduates, and later, at Deusto alumni throughout their professional careers.

## 7.2.3.5.

### Impact Indicator Table. Key Impact Indicators

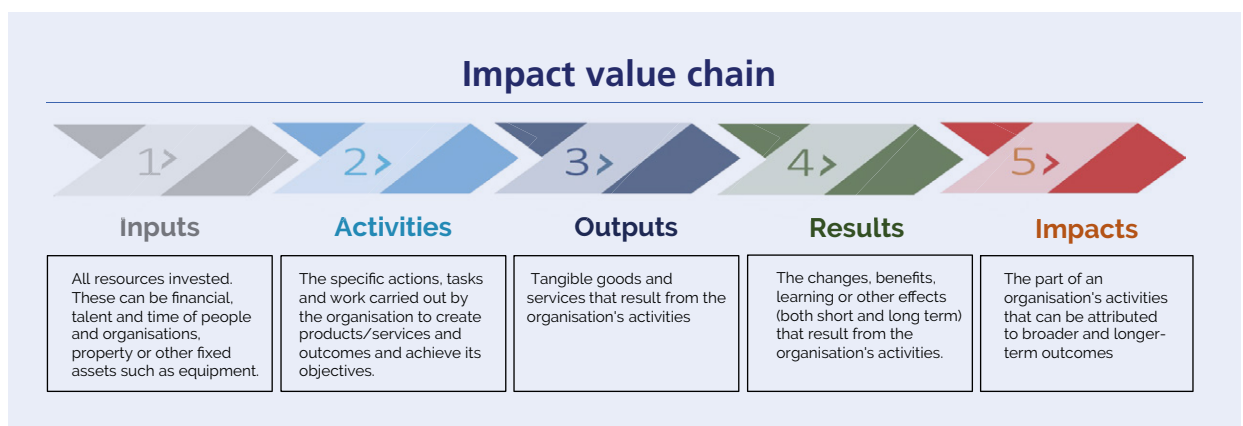
The structure of the indicator table follows the structure in the previous phases of the project and therefore contains the following information:

- Transformation to measure.
- Related dimension (both individual and collective dimension).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**Figure 20.** UD experiences and activities at the service of improving the employability of graduates



Fuente: European Commission, originating from the European Venture Philanthropy Association

**Figure 21.** Impact value chain

- Stage in which the proposed indicator is (within those included in the theory of change). As stated in section four of chapter two, the value chain is made up of five stages:
- Indicator typology. Indicators have been grouped in order to facilitate their structuring and conceptualis-

ation. The proposed types of indicators (by stage) can be outlined as follows:

- Inputs: Financial resources, personnel, among others.
- Activities: Characterisation (helps understand the nature of the activities carried out, according to different

parameters); internal and external mobilisation (identifies the third parties involved in the activity, whether from different areas within the university community or external); and indicators that collect data on volume (of activities, attendees, etc.).

- Product/Service (Output): Volume; coverage (with respect to target universe); take-up (of the total available supply).
- Results: Recommendation; interest; satisfaction; outreach; engagement; influence; volume; academic results; prestige/positioning; modelling and financial resources.
- Impact: Perception (of the target groups about the different relationships established with the UD); commitment; and macroeconomic indicators.
- Proposed indicator.

The following pages present the table of indicators in detail, with particular emphasis on transversal competences and the additional competence related to job searching, as these have been the specific focus of the work undertaken. The revision of the proposal from the previous phase—alongside a focus on learning processes—has enabled a refinement and further development of the proposed impact indicators. The structure presented here can be applied to each of the six transversal competences.

Within the work carried out in this phase, the indicators measured in relation to transversal competences pertain to their impact on the individual level, as the competencies themselves are captured through the analysis of the student body during the undergraduate learning process.

As this phase of the study has advanced our understanding of the impact these transformations have on the social dimension, the above indicators have been complemented by those that enable the characterisation of UD graduates' employment and their job transitions throughout their lives, from both individual and collective perspectives.

- From an individual point of view
- A general characterisation of the link
- An assessment of the link
- A characterisation of the access process
- From a social point of view
- Macroeconomic indicators

An overview of all the transformations in the learning processes and the proposed indicators can be found in Deusto Social Lab Report No. 4 and No. 5.

TRANSFORMATION	DIMENSION	TC STAGE	TYPE	DATA/INDICATOR
Transversal competency	Individual	Input	Resources/time used	Hours spent per competency in the 4 / 5 years. Overview for the UD // average per faculty /// average for the degree programmes.
	Individual	Input	Resources/time used	% of total degree/subject time spent per competency
	Individual	Input	Resources/time used	% of teaching staff supporting students per competency
	Individual	Activity	Characterisation	Innovative methodologies applied
	Individual	Activity	Characterisation	Types of actions carried out. Participation and assessment.
	Individual	Activity	Engagement of third parties	Involvement of third parties to deliver training in this competency
	Individual	Output	Volume	Students who acquired this competency. Overview for the UD // average per faculty /// average of the degree programmes
	Individual	Result	Teaching results	Academic performance // assessment
	Individual	Result	Satisfaction	Level of satisfaction
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of students who believed that it is important to acquire the competency
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of students who felt able to use the competency (by proficiency levels)
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of graduates who said that it was important to have this competency in their professional performance
	Individual	Impact	Volume	Level of importance given by graduates to this competency
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of people expressing that having this competency has had an impact on others (team members, etc.). Qualifying according to competency
	Individual	Impact	Volume	Level of importance attributed to this competency by employers
	Individual	Impact	Volume	Level of performance for this competency as rated by employers
	Individual	Impact	Perception	Level of comparative assessment UD- others
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of graduates who expressed the need for training in this competency in the future

Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Table 1.** Impact Indicator Table (transversal competences).

TRANSFORMATION	DIMENSION	TC STAGE	TYPE	DATA/INDICATOR
<b>Skills for entering the labour market and professional career management</b>	Individual	Input	Resources/time used	Hours spent during the undergraduate degree
	Individual	Activity	Characterisation	Type of actions carried out. Participation and assessment
	Individual	Output	Volume	Students who acquired this competency. Overview for the UD
	Individual	Result	Satisfaction	Level of satisfaction
	Individual	Impact	Perception	Level of importance attributed to this competency by graduates, by age bracket
	Individual	Impact	Perception	% of graduates who expressed the need for training in this competency in the future

Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Table 2.** Impact Indicator Scoreboard (Job-search Competence).

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION	DIMENSION	TYPE	DATA/INDICATOR
<b>UD graduates – Employment</b>	Individual	General characterisation	Salaries (average by segment)
	Individual	General characterisation	Social benefits
	Individual	General characterisation	Type of contract (%)
	Individual	General characterisation	Type of working hours (%)
	Individual	General characterisation	% by occupation
	Individual	General characterisation	Location (%)
	Individual	General characterisation	Employment commensurate with education (%)
	Individual	Assessment of link	Satisfaction (overall and by factors)
	Individual	Assessment of link	% of employed people who think that their job is FAIRLY or STRONGLY related to their university education
	Individual	Characterisation of job access process	Factors by importance in accessing their first job
	Individual	Characterisation of job access process	Factors by importance in accessing their last job
	Individual	Characterisation of job access process	Determining factors in decisions to make a professional change by importance in accessing first job
	Individual	Characterisation of job access process	Determining factors in decisions to make a professional change by importance in accessing first job
	Social	Macroeconomic	Labour force participation rate
	Social	Macroeconomic	Employment-to-population ratio or (employment rate)
	Social	Macroeconomic	Unemployment rate
	Social	Macroeconomic	Employed in job fitting their qualifications
	Social	Macroeconomic	% still studying
	Social	Macroeconomic	Tax revenue
	Social	Macroeconomic	Economic value of salaries

Source: Prepared by the authors (Deusto Social Lab)

**Table 3.** Impact Indicator Table: EMPLOYMENT of UD graduates



# Chapter four:

## The application of the model. Discovering our impact





## 8. Our operational context

### 8.1.

#### The Basque economy and social welfare

Economic forecasts for the Basque Country for 2024 are being revised downwards, in the context of a marked slowdown in the European economies. High interest rates and energy costs, together with geopolitical tensions, are among the main drivers of economic uncertainty, despite the trend towards more moderate inflation. This scenario triggers a negative impact on the competitiveness of Basque companies, which is further aggravated by the delay in the execution of the NextGenerationEU funding operations.

The Economía Vasca 2022 report (Basque Economy 2022) by Laboral Kutxa (published in June 2023) estimated that the Basque economy would grow by 1.7% in 2023. However, by 2024, growth was expected to slow to 1.4%. In this context, there is confidence that there can be an improvement in the industrial sector, which has been marked by 'weakness' since 2022.

The Basque Government's forecasts made in September 2023 also predicted a growth of 1.7% in the Basque economy for 2023, although the projections for the three main sectors was very different. Industry showed the greatest weakness, with a decline and a slight year-on-year reduction in its value added (-0.5%) following eight consecutive quarters of strong growth. Although growth in the services sector slowed, it remained above the economy-wide average, while construction regained its strong growth momentum. The growth forecast for 2024 was 2.1%, slightly higher than that estimated by Laboral Kutxa.

Despite the economic slowdown, positive growth is leading to a favourable evolution in employment, a factor that for the Basque Government considers to be one of the pillars of growth in this two-year period. Thus, around 13,000 jobs will be created in 2023 and a further 16,000 in 2024. As a result, the projected unemployment rate in 2023 is 7.7%, rising to 7.0% next year. In the same vein, Laboral Kutxa expects employment to increase by 1.1% in 2024.

In this context, Basque society has a high level of social welfare and maintains high rates of social integration, although situations of severe exclusion are on the increase.

The Basque Country is at the head of the regions with the best AROPE (At risk of poverty and/or exclusion) rate in 2022 and is in second position behind Navarre, according to the report The State of Poverty Basque Country 2023 (European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), 2023). It indicates that 15.7% of people living in the Basque Country are at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion, specifically some 347,000 people. This is the region with the highest average income per person in 2022 (€2,687 higher than the national average) and the region with the least severe material and social deprivation (3.7%).

### 8.2.

#### Educational characteristics of the population and the labour market

The population of the Basque Country has a high level of education. According to the Panorámica del sistema educativo vasco 2021 report (Overview of the Basque Education System 2021 (Basque Government, 2021)), the proportion of people with higher education exceeds the Spanish average and that of the EU-27 by far. Specifically, since 2016, when this rate was 48.6%, it has progressively increased to 53.4% in 2020. In comparison, this rate is 32.5% in the EU-27 and the Spanish average is 39.7%.

Despite the high level of education, the general unemployment rate in the Basque Autonomous Region stood at 7.5% in the third quarter of 2023, according to Eustat (2023). Compared to the third quarter of 2022, the number of employed people has increased by 0.9% (8,400 people) and the unemployment rate has decreased from 8% to 7.5% (4,700 people). However, the groups with the lowest levels of education have the highest unemployment rates. According to the Encuesta de Población en relación con la actividad IV/2023 (Survey of population in relation to activity IV/2023 (Eustat, 2023)), unemployment was 11.6% among people with primary or no education, and 10.3% among those with secondary and intermediate education, whereas it fell to 5% among those with higher education.

Our overview of the employment situation of graduates from the three universities in the Basque Country was based on the study Inserción laboral de personas egresa-

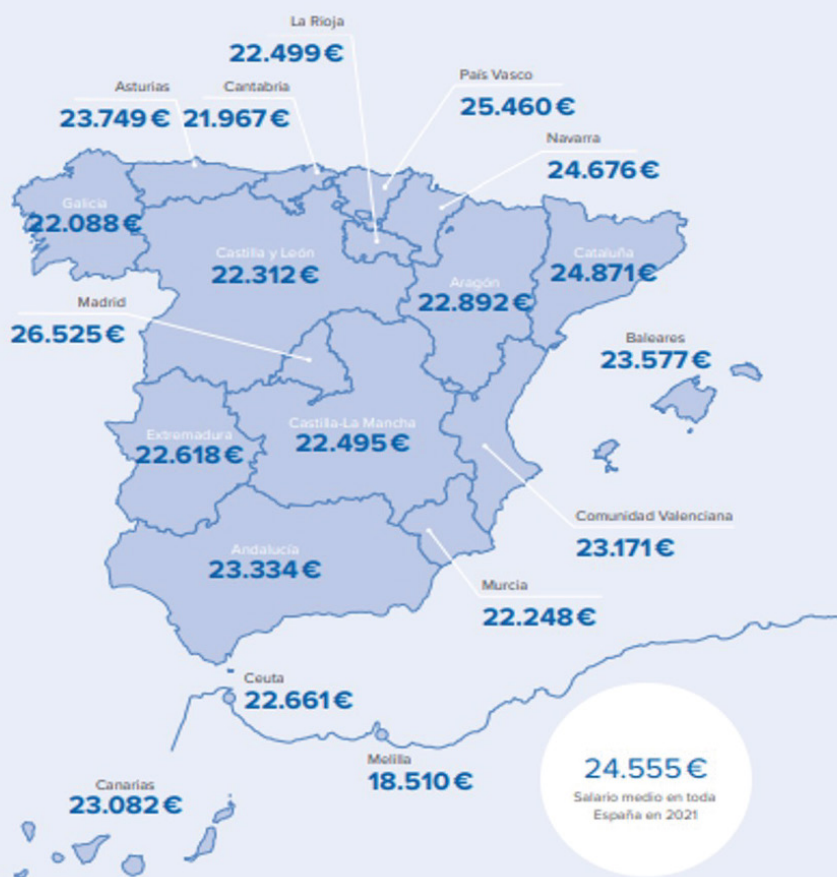
das del Sistema Universitario Vasco (Labour market entry of graduates from the Basque University System), carried out by Lanbide at the end of 2021, which analysed the graduating class of 2018. The conclusions were satisfactory, showing a student employment rate of 87% three years after finishing their degree and an unemployment rate of 13%, which reflects a very similar situation to that of the previous year. In terms of fields of knowledge, technical and health degrees, followed by economics and law degrees, had the highest employment rates. In relation to the quality of employment, 83% of students three years after completing their degree had a job commensurate with their university degree; 21.3% of jobs were part-time; satisfaction with job stability was 7 out of 10, a figure very similar to the overall satisfaction with employment, 7.1 out of 10. The lowest rated attributes were promotion opportunities (with 6.7 out of 10) and salary (with 6.8 out of 10). Specifically, the net monthly (full-time) salary paid over 14 instalments for the 2018 cohort was 1,602 euros. Finally, it should be pointed out that 13.8% of the graduates whose family home was in the

Basque Country worked abroad; 11% in another Spanish region; and 3% abroad.

In relation to salaries, the report Estado del mercado laboral en España (State of the labour market in Spain (InfoJobs, 2022)) pointed out that the Basque Country had the second highest salaries for vacancies offered in 2021. Madrid was the autonomous region in first place, with 26,525 euros gross per year, followed by the Basque Country (25,460 euros), Catalonia (24,871 euros) and Navarre (24,676 euros).

The same source (Infojobs, 2022) highlighted that the ranking of positions at national level that offered the best salaries were in the technological positions, including: embedded systems design, ICT business analyst, systems architecture, database design and software architecture. In this sense, the report 'Basque Talent Evolution & Trends 2022' (Bizkaia Talent, 2022) analysed 1,898 highly qualified job offers for digital profiles corresponding to 2021. The information presented suggests an improvement in

## Salaries by Autonomous Regions in Spain In 2021



Source: Infojobs

**Figure 22.** Salaries by Autonomous Region 2021

job quality compared to 2020, for several reasons, among others: the increase in the number of permanent contracts offered at the expense of temporary and internship positions; the rise in full-time job offers, totalling 95.7% of vacancies; and the increase in salaries offered. Although salary data were included in only 10.43% of job postings in 2021, there was a notable shift: while in 2020 positions offering less than €24,000 per year accounted for 63.9% of advertisements, this figure dropped to 46.5% in 2021. At the same time, offers with salaries between 30,000 and 66,000 euros per year increased from 15.5% in 2020 to 32.8% in 2021.

Regarding the level of education demanded by job offers, a university degree continued to be the most frequently required qualification (69.6%), followed by Higher Vocational Training, with an increase in demand to 22.3% in 2021.

Before concluding this section, in line with the social phenomena previously mentioned, namely 'The Great Resignation' and 'Quiet Quitting', we would like to point out some of the labour market-related concerns held by Basque youth, in line with global trends. Young people consider that the main problems in the Basque Country are, first and foremost, those related to the labour market, far ahead of the rest. This is followed by economic problems and healthcare, according to the report *Retratos de Juventud 25 (2022)* (Portraits of Youth 25 (2022) (Basque Government, 2023)). These same factors were confirmed in the study *Aurrera Begira 2022. Indicadores de expectativas juveniles* by the Observatorio Vasco de la Juventud (2023) (Aurrera Begira 2022. Indicators of youth expectations, Basque Youth Observatory, 2023)). It showed that in the balance of life aspects, young Basques showed their greatest deficits in the economic (money available monthly) and employment (employment situation and expectations) areas. However, leisure time and health were also factors that presented important gaps in terms of the difference between the importance given to them and the satisfaction achieved. These assessments confirmed that young people were concerned about employment issues and that they not only valued economic aspects in relation to employment, but other issues, such as leisure time, played a prominent role.

### 8.3. Qualifications demanded by Basque companies

The level of qualifications demanded by Basque companies was strongly linked to their level of digital transformation. In this sense, the recent *Encuesta sobre la socie-*

*dad de la información* (Information Society Survey) published by Eustat (2023) provided information that showed some progress, highlighting that 10.6% of people employed in Basque companies worked remotely in 2023, almost double the figure recorded at the beginning of the pandemic. Seventy-seven point nine percent of employees used ICT systems, with 10.2% of staff specialising in ICT systems.

From a business perspective, the same report noted that 53.4% employed social media for business purposes, 31% of companies paid to host IT services in the cloud (Cloud Computing) and 22.7% engaged in cybersecurity activities. The size of the company influenced the type of technological equipment required. Establishments with 10 or more employees reached high levels and, in contrast to smaller establishments, their scope for growth was considerably smaller.

According to the Report *Necesidades de empleo y cualificaciones de las empresas vascas para 2022* (Employment needs of, and qualifications demanded by, Basque Companies for 2022) prepared by Confebask, and in light of economic forecasts and the evolving labour market—shaped by technological developments and other social factors—Basque companies identified the following considerations and needs:

- They estimated that they will need to fill more than 45,000 jobs by 2022 (it should be remembered that the survey was conducted at the end of 2021 and is likely to be lower today). Sixty-four percent of the companies surveyed would hire some employees, both because of the expected growth in their activity and because of relief and replacement due to retirement (the types of contracts were not included due to changes resulting from the passing of the 2022 Labour Reform Act).
- The professional profile they planned to recruit the most was that of Technical Production Personnel and the one that was growing the most was that of Technical Scientific Personnel. Priority was given to engineering in terms of educational demands in the STEM fields. University education accounted for 35.1% of the total; higher vocational training (VET) for 22.4%; intermediate vocational training for 10.8%; basic vocational training for 6.2%; Baccalaureate for 10%; and basic level of education or no education for 15.5%.
- By sector, industry increasingly required higher educated profiles when it comes to recruitment. In 2022 industry demanded higher education (university or vocational training) from 64.8% of people, as opposed to 56% in 2020 and 53.7% in 2018. The services sector required that 57.2% of the people recruited had higher education. Construction was the sector which

had the lowest demand for qualified profiles, as higher education was demanded from 35.8% of those recruited.

- The requirements most valued by companies for recruitment were, in order of importance: personal attitude, education and previous work experience. Responsibility and perseverance, a proactive and positive attitude, versatility and adaptability and autonomy at work were still the most highly valued requirements. The increasing importance Basque companies placed on soft skills over hard skills for future recruitments was also reported by HAYS Spain (2022). It indicated

that 72% prioritised soft skills (personal skills, communication, problem solving, teamwork) and 28% hard skills (technical skills or job-specific knowledge).

- Recruitment difficulties: A total of 76% of companies planning to hire employees reported difficulties in doing so, compared to less than half of the companies in 2016. The main difficulties remained lack of training or specialisation, inappropriate attitude or lack of interest, and lack of experience.
- The most commonly used channel for recruitment was direct recruitment.

## 9. The social impact of the UD through employment and employability

This section presents the results of applying the University of Deusto's Social Impact Model, specifically in relation to activities centred on learning processes and their contribution to the employment and employability of its graduates, following the contextual framework outlined in the previous section. In this phase, the focus shifted to the group of UD graduates with work experience, considering a range of people between 25 and 59 years of age. In this way, a wide age range was covered that enabled us to identify and reflect on the evolution of the variables analysed throughout the professional life of Deusto graduates.

The assessment presented in this section of the indicators of the proposed model is mainly based on the following sources of information:

- An assessment made by the group of UD senior alumni (who graduated between 1987 and 2017) as the result of ad hoc fieldwork carried out between May and September 2023 through the Deusto Business Alumni and Deusto Alumni services of the University of Deusto. This was subsequently followed up through direct telephone contact with alumni. A total of 703 responses were received, of which 526 were considered valid for the survey.
- Internal information available at the University of Deusto.
- Information from official secondary sources (mainly statistical agencies)

The results of this application of the model have been structured as follows:

- 1) The analysis focuses on the transformations that have been identified, following the proposed impact model to the extent possible. This report is centred on understanding the individual dimension of the proposed model (Figure 17 in section 7).
  - a. Firstly, the participating graduates were profiled, in line with the general philosophy of the impact model, which involved understanding the individu-

al with whom the University of Deusto engages—in this case, through learning processes—so that the intended transformations and their impact could be properly contextualised and assessed.

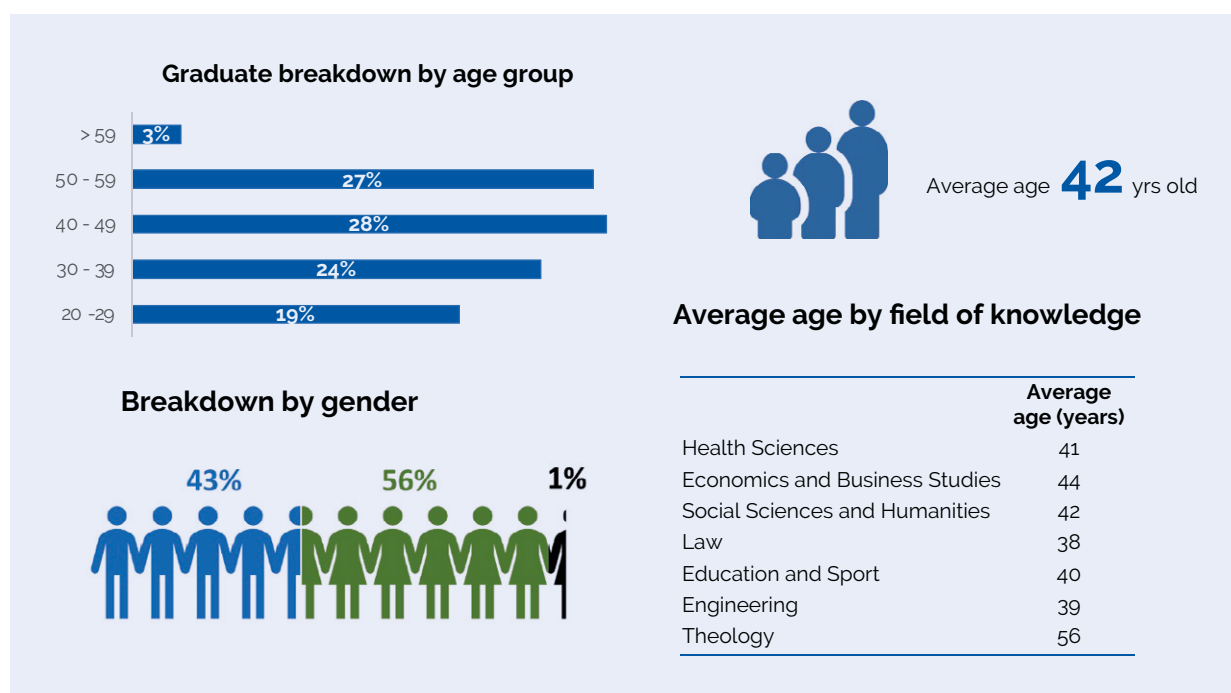
- b. Secondly, the analysis delved further into the factors that graduates consider important when facing a professional change, as well as those deemed most relevant for securing a job. All of these are factors that influence employability, as described in Section Two of this report. Their analysis identified the level of importance that UD graduates with work experience assign to them as key elements in the development of their employability.
- c. Thirdly, the focus was placed on the current employment status of the Deusto graduates at that time, with the aim of understanding and measuring the reality of the variables that describe their employment (current specific link).

### 9.1. UD senior graduates. Characterisation, interest in and frequency of pursuing their education further

Given that the evaluation of this impact analysis has been centred on fieldwork with Deusto alumni who graduated between 1987 and 2017, an overall profile of this highly significant group was created.

As indicated in the initial introductory section of this block, 703 responses were received, of which 526 were considered valid. These people were mostly women (56%) aged 42 years on average.

One of the key variables in the study was understanding the extent to which UD graduates had shown an interest in



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

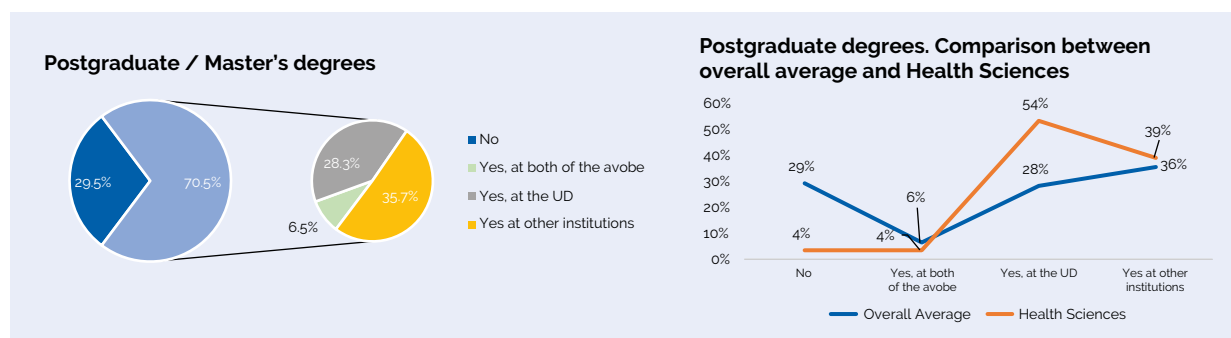
**Figure 23.** Characterisation by age and gender

continuing their education after completing their undergraduate degree (or licenciatura, i.e. a longer degree under older curricula). As stated in previous sections of the report, a person's capacity for lifelong learning is one of the factors that contribute to maintaining and/or improving their employability. Two different items were used to measure this: on the one hand, the possession of postgraduate/Master's degree qualifications, and on the other hand, the frequency with which they undertook training/educational activities for their professional development.

With regard to the first of the items indicated, as shown in Figure 24, 71% of the graduates who participated in the survey had postgraduate or Master's degrees. Furthermore, nearly one third had studied at the UD itself, while almost 4 out of 10 had continued their studies at other institutions.

The case of Health Sciences graduates deserves to be highlighted here, as 96% went on to pursue postgraduate studies (therefore, only 4% of Health Sciences graduates had no postgraduate qualifications, compared to the overall average of 29%). They were very loyal to the UD, as 54% had studied at the UD, 26 percentage points above the overall average.

No differentiated behaviour was observed in postgraduate education according to gender, where patterns were similar to the average for all options ('Yes, at the UD', 'Yes, at other institutions', 'Yes, at both of the above' and 'No'). However, the assessment of this variable was affected by the age of each graduate. Particularly noteworthy was the number of graduates who had continued their education in other institutions. Young people aged 25-29 were the range of people who had pursued their



Source: Prepared by the authors. Deusto Social Lab

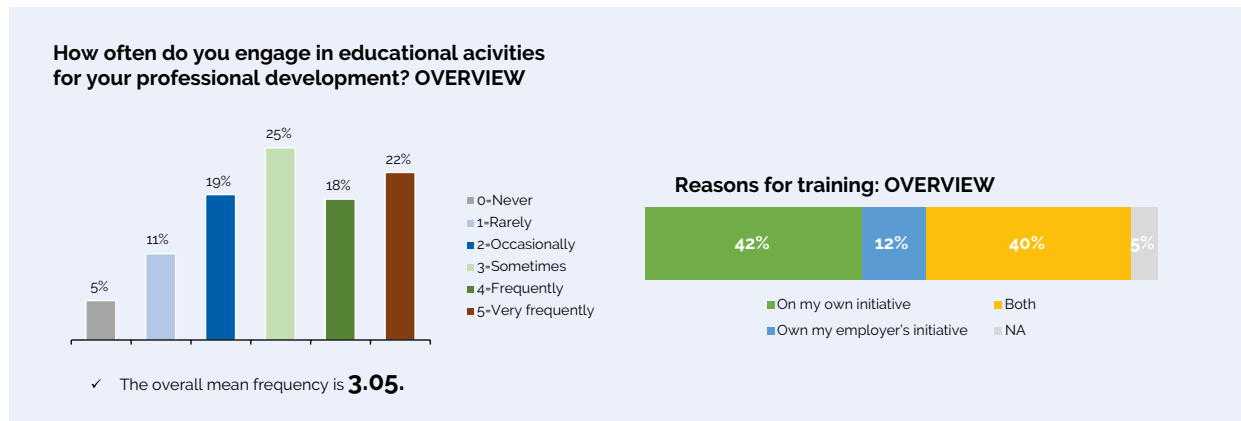
**Figure 24.** Continuation of postgraduate studies. Comparative overview Health Sciences



education further in other institutions (47% compared to the overall average of 36%).

With regard to the second item, namely the frequency of education for their professional development, the average value was 3.05 out of 5. Of the total number of graduates, 40% indicated that they updated their education frequently or very frequently.

If we look at the reasons for pursuing their education further, in 4 out of 10 cases this was purely on their own initiative. Another 4 out of 10 said that the decision to continue their education was an initiative from both the company they worked for and their own personal interest. Only 1 in 10 said that the initiative for their continuing education came solely from the company. These data are shown graphically in Figure 25.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 25.** Frequency and motivation for professional development training

A more focused look at the origin of the reasons for pursuing education by branch of knowledge showed a different set of circumstances:

- Although, on average, 12% of graduates identified their company as the sole driver of their educational advancement, the actual proportion was notably lower within certain fields of knowledge. This was the case for graduates in the Social and Human Sciences: the cases when the (exclusive) drivers for education were the companies in which they worked dropped to 4%. However, in Engineering the situation was reversed and rose to 20%.
- Graduates in the fields of Law and Education and Sport had the highest proportion of purely personal reasons for further engaging in education (56% and 53% respectively, compared to an average of 40%).

A gender-based perspective revealed that women pursued their education further more frequently than men. A total of 45% of women reported engaging in further educational pursuits quite often or very often, compared to 34% of men. Similarly, more women did so on their personal initiative (45%) than men (38%).

Finally, an age-based analysis revealed that two cohorts surpassed the average frequency of participation in further educational activities: younger individuals (aged 25 to 29), who predominantly pursued continued education

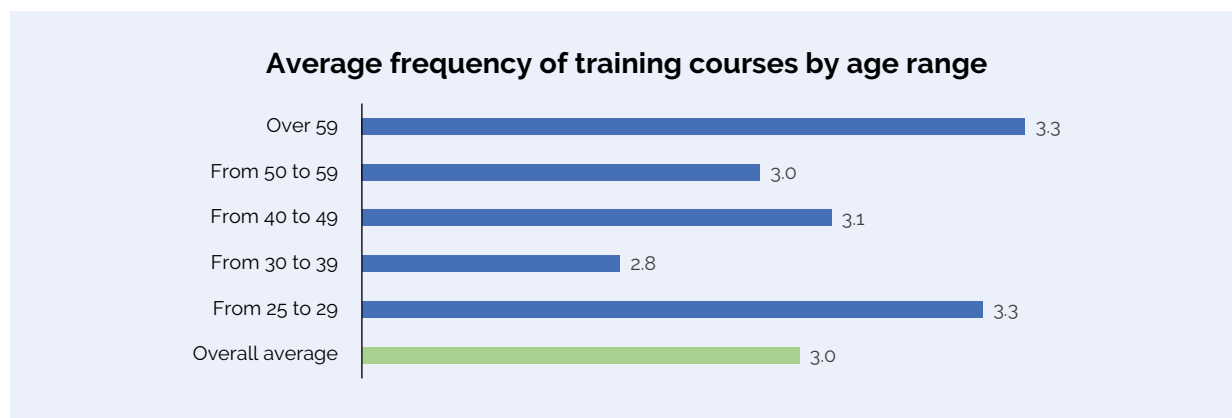
through personal initiative; and individuals over 59, whose participation was motivated by a combination of employer support and personal interest. Conversely, graduates aged 30 to 39 exhibited below-average engagement in further education (see Figure 26).

## 9.2. Analysis of individual factors influencing employability

As outlined in section seven of this report, the model proposed by the University of Deusto frames the personal and professional development of its graduates as a continuous process. This continuum reflects both the changing nature of the employment relationships graduates experience over time and the ongoing need to maintain suitable employability, ensuring that each transition occurs under conditions that are most suited to the individual's priorities and needs.

For these transitions to take place, it is important to understand the factors that individuals consider relevant when making these kinds of decisions. This includes both the skills and competencies they have acquired—those





Fuente: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 26.** Average frequency of further education by age group

that have proven essential for successfully navigating change—and the factors or conditions they prioritise or view as necessary for the change to occur. Particularly important are also employability skills themselves, i.e. the knowledge and skills that enable a person to identify, assess and discriminate job opportunities according to their own personal-professional profile. All of this will be discussed in this section.

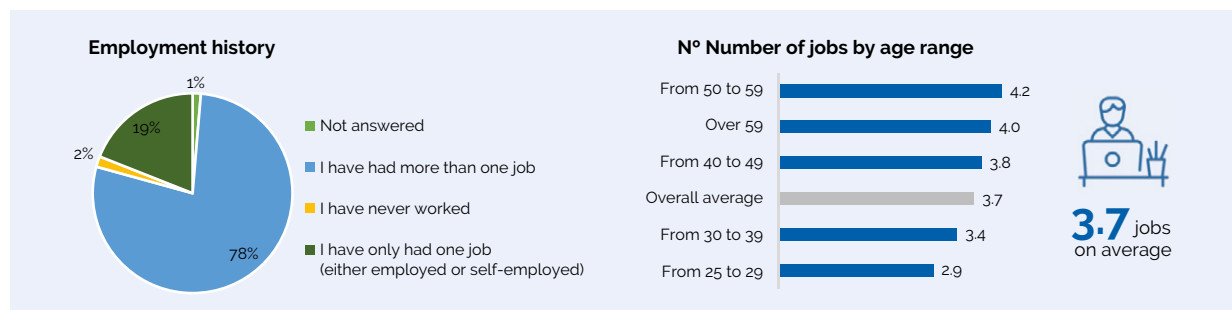
### 9.2.1. Career path

In order to situate and assess the individual factors influencing the employability of UD graduates, it would be useful to first provide an overall context for this group's career path.

The group of UD senior graduates who participated in the fieldwork had an employment history where almost 8 out of 10 people had had more than one job so far (3.7 jobs to date on average). Almost 2 out of every 10 senior graduates had had only one job in their working life and less than 2% of people said that they had never worked.

A look at the employment trajectory by age bracket shows consistency with people's professional development. That is, the older they got, the more jobs they had had. Thus, 25-29 year olds reported having had 2.9 jobs on average, while 50-59 year olds had had a total of 4.2 jobs on average over the course of their careers.

On the other hand, the comparison of the number of jobs by gender did not show significant differences in behaviour.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 27.** Employment history and number of jobs by age group

### 9.2.2. Important factors in securing a job

Every professional change (whether a change of employment relationship or a transition from one job to another) requires that the candidate possesses certain personal characteristics and circumstances, appropriate training, both technical and transversal specific competencies, as well as preferences that make them a suitable fit for the particular position they are applying for.

This section analyses the factors that UD graduates considered most important for securing a job and being selected over other candidates, based on their own personal and professional experience throughout the different jobs they had held in their professional career so far.

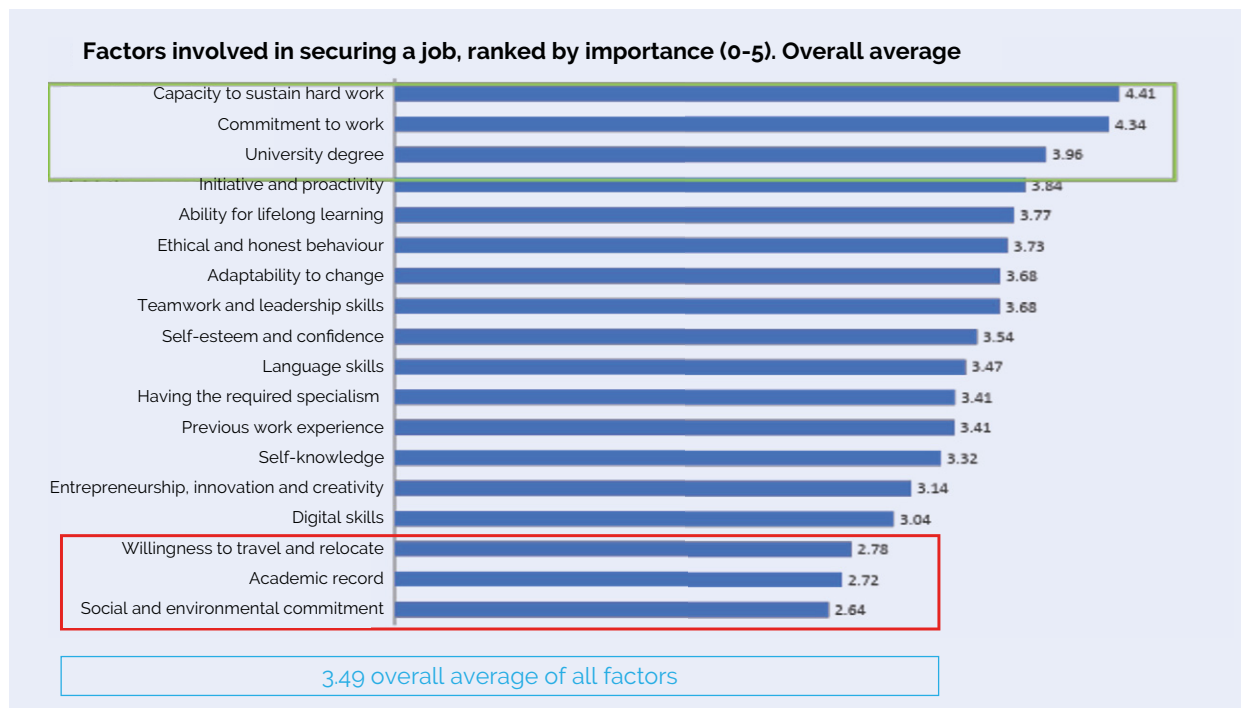
Thus, as shown in Figure 28, the three most important factors for securing a job were:

1. The ability to sustain hard work
2. Commitment to work
3. Holding a university degree

In contrast, the three factors that were given the least importance were:

1. Willingness to travel and relocate
2. Academic record
3. Social and environmental commitment

As shown in Figure 28, all the factors analysed (a total of 18) received a rating above 3 on a scale of 1 to 5, with an overall average score of 3.49.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 28.** Factors by importance for getting a job. Global Average

The assessment of these factors from a gender perspective showed no significant differences.

No significant differences were observed in the analysis by age group regarding the average rating of each factor. However, generally speaking, as age groups grew older, the importance attributed to all of the factors involved in securing a job was slightly higher. This may be linked to the profile of senior graduates, who are often more close-

ly involved in recruitment processes. As an exception, the youngest age group placed above-average importance on having digital skills when it comes to securing a job.

In terms of how these factors were assessed across different fields of study, the responses from graduates who participated in the fieldwork were generally consistent with the overall average. However, graduates from engineering disciplines placed slightly greater importance on digital skills.

### 9.2.3. Motivational factors for employment

A decision to change career requires that the person considering such a change reflect on, assess and prioritise those factors that are important to them when selecting, opting for and making the decision to change jobs.

What are the factors that motivate UD graduates to make professional changes? The fieldwork identified the following three factors as being the most important (see Figure 29):

- Firstly, the flexibility provided by the job (in terms of being able to work remotely, have work-life balance, etc.).
- Secondly, the overall set of characteristics and level of the job in question.
- Thirdly, the wage/total income offered.

At the other extreme, the factors least considered in these decisions to change employment were the organisation's training policy, the employer's prestige and

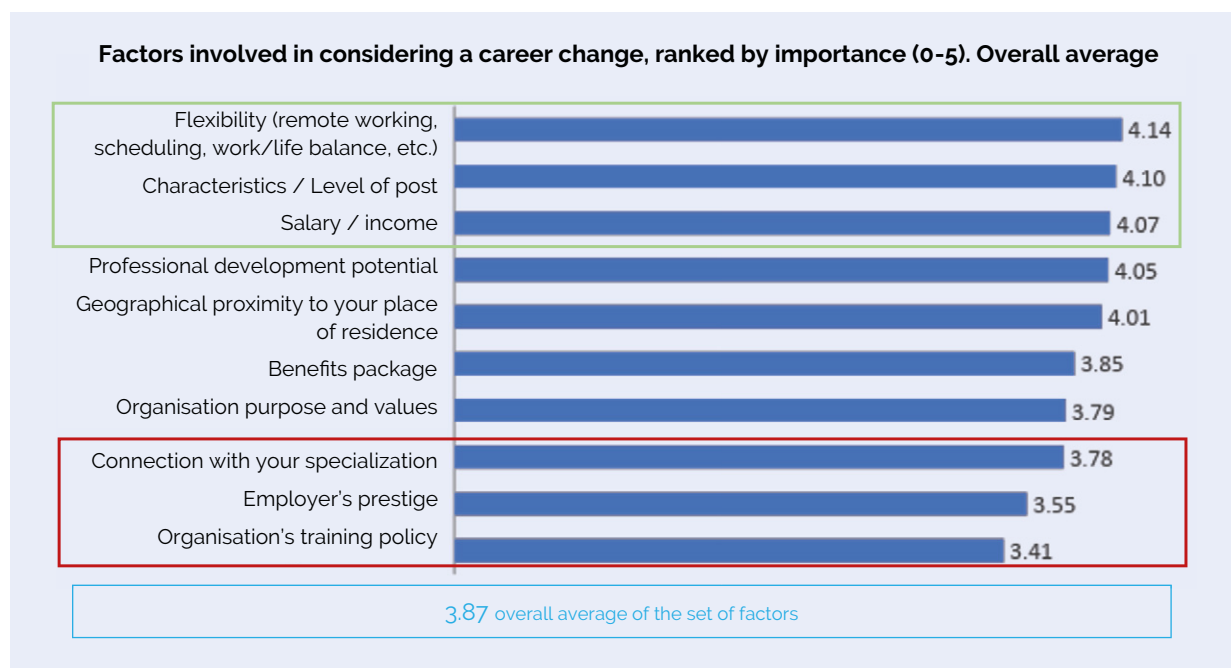
whether the job was specifically related to the candidate's area of specialisation.

Figure 29 shows that all factors were rated above 3 out of 5, with an average rating of 3.87 for all of them. This suggests that the various factors identified play a significant role in influencing career change decisions.

This assessment is highly consistent with the results of the main studies included in the fourth section of this report, which highlighted the increasing priority given to flexible working and work-life balance, career development and job-related pay, among others.

As in the rest of the items analysed, we have looked at these evaluations from the perspective of age, area of knowledge and gender. There were no significant differences in the mean scores by age and area of knowledge. However, the analysis by gender yielded some differences:

- The assessment of factors by gender showed that women valued benefits packages, flexibility and the training policies of the employing company/organisation more than men.
- Men valued the career development potential offered by the job, as well as its associated characteristics and level more than women.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

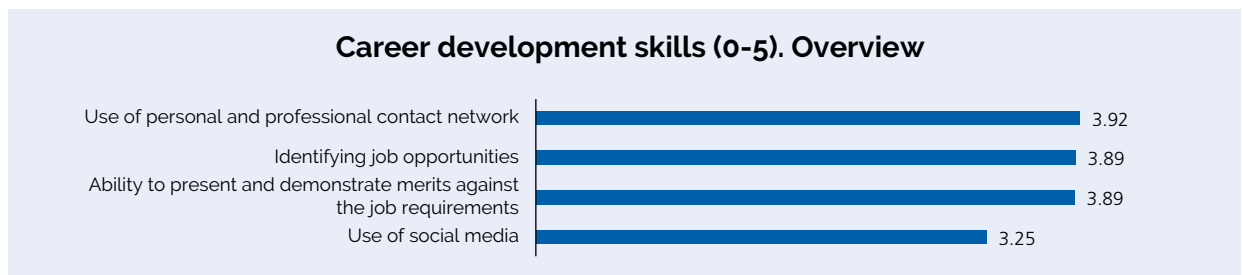
**Figure 29.** Factors of importance in a professional change. Global Average

## 9.2.4. Employment skills

People who want to maintain and improve their employability throughout their lives should not ignore the development of so-called employment skills. Achieving high employability thus requires an approach that includes the development of skills that enable entry into the labour market, as well as supporting adaptation and transition

commensurate with the development of the individual's professional field. These skills facilitate the transition process from one job to another depending on the factors discussed above.

In this section, the participating UD graduates were asked to assess four competencies linked to professional career development. As can be seen in Figure 30, these competencies were generally assessed highly, with the importance given to the network of professional and personal contacts being in the first place, scoring almost 4 out of 5.



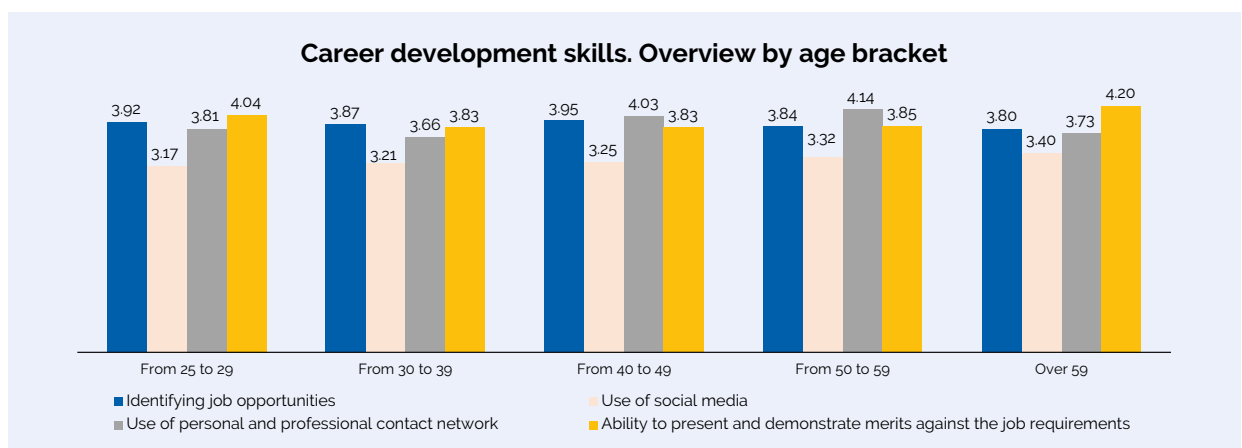
Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 30.** Assessment of the importance for career development competences. Overview

These assessments did not vary in the analyses that considered the gender and area of knowledge of participants. However, when looking at importance from the perspective of age, some differences were identified, as noted below (see Figure 31):

- Graduates aged 25-29 valued the ability to present and demonstrate their merits against the job requirements above all other skills.
- However, for graduates aged 30-39, the most important employment skill was being able to identify job opportunities.

- Graduates aged 40-49 considered the use of personal and professional networks to be more important, as did graduates aged 50-59.
- Similarly to the youngest age group, the most important employment skill for graduates over 59 years of age was the ability to present and demonstrate their merits against the job requirements.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 31.** Competences for career development. View by age bracket.

## 9.3.

### Analysis of the current employment situation: Use and characteristics of the link

Employment is the specific link established between the employed person and their employer at a specific moment in time in order to engage in a productive activity that generates value. This link can be described in terms of different elements: the salary associated with that work, the type of contract, the type of working hours, the relationship between the job and the education undertaken and the satisfaction experienced by the person who performs the work. These elements are analysed for the group of Deusto graduates participating in the study throughout this section.

#### 9.3.1.

### Employment status

A broad overview of the employment status of Deusto graduates (with an average age of 42 among the sample of participants) showed that only 2.7% of senior UD graduates were unemployed. A total of 95% of senior graduates were employed. Almost all of the remainder were involved in a pre-retirement scheme.

The unemployment rate among UD graduates was more favourable than the Basque average for individuals with higher education qualifications. As outlined in section 8.2, data from the Encuesta de población en relación con la actividad IV/2023 (Survey of population in relation to activity IV/2023 (Eustat, 2023)) indicated that unemployment stood at 11.6% among individuals with primary or lower educational attainment and 10.3% among those with secondary or intermediate education, declining to 5% for those holding higher education qualifications. In comparison, the unemployment rate for UD graduates was 2.3 percentage points below the Basque average for this education category.

When considering age, unemployed UD graduates were more concentrated in the younger age group (25-29 years old): 46% of the 2.7% unemployment rate was accounted for by people in this age group.

The following characteristics describing employment are of interest here:

#### a) Type of contract

As can be seen in Figure 32, almost 9 out of 10 senior graduates had a permanent contract. This type of contract offers the greatest stability and job security to workers.

No significant differences by gender or subject area were found in the analysis. However, the higher the age, the higher the proportion of permanent contracts.

A comparison with the data from the latest Lanbide survey of graduates three years after graduation showed that 53% of the total had stable employment. The fieldwork data indicated that this proportion increased as graduates gained experience in the labour market.

#### b) Type of working hours

The majority of senior graduates were employed on a full-time basis, which was the case for more than 9 out of 10 people. As can be seen in Figure 32, there was a higher proportion of full-time employment among men than among women (6% more).

The rest of the people with reduced or part-time working hours (1 in 10) belonged more to the younger age group.

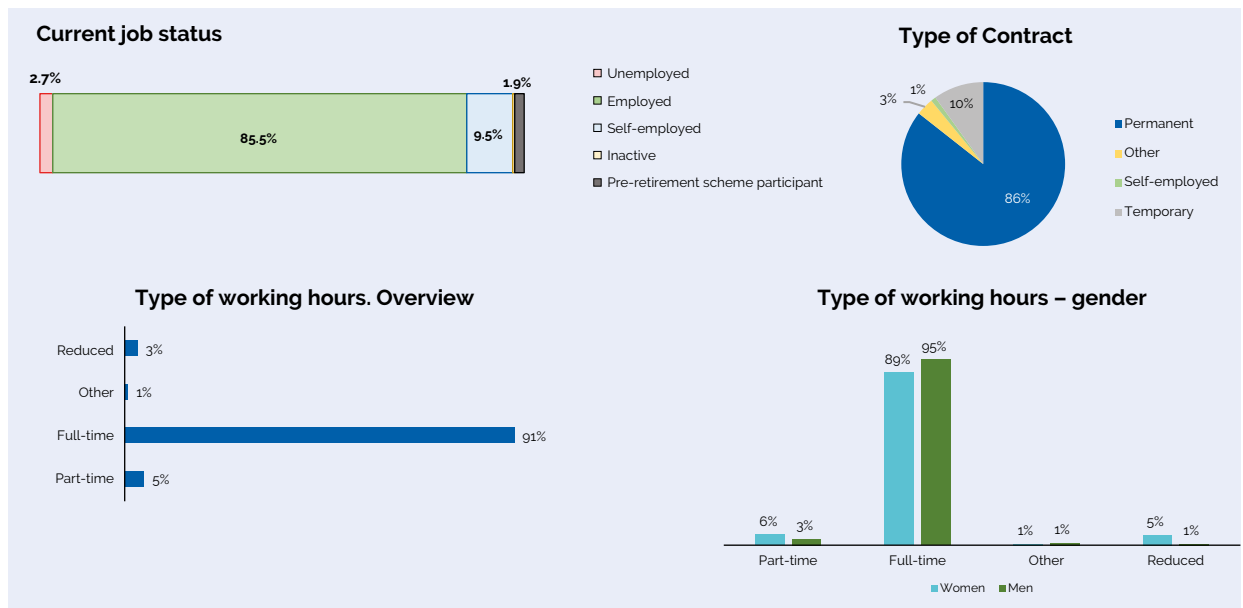
A comparison with the data from the latest Lanbide survey of graduates three years after graduation yielded a proportion of reduced working hours of 21%. As in section a) above, the fieldwork data showed that this proportion decreased as graduates gained experience in the labour market.

#### c) Occupation

More than half of the participating UD graduates were in either director/manager, or in technical and intellectual/scientific professional occupations. The average age was 42 years old, which meant that these graduates already had a long professional career behind them that had enabled them to access higher occupations.

This analysis was confirmed by looking at the age of the participants in the study, as the results were consistent with the professional careers of the individuals: The distribution by age range placed management in the 40+ age range, with the highest proportion of technicians in the younger age group.

A gender-based perspective pointed to a gap in favour of men in the first category (director/manager), and a higher proportion of women in the technical and intellectual/scientific professional positions.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

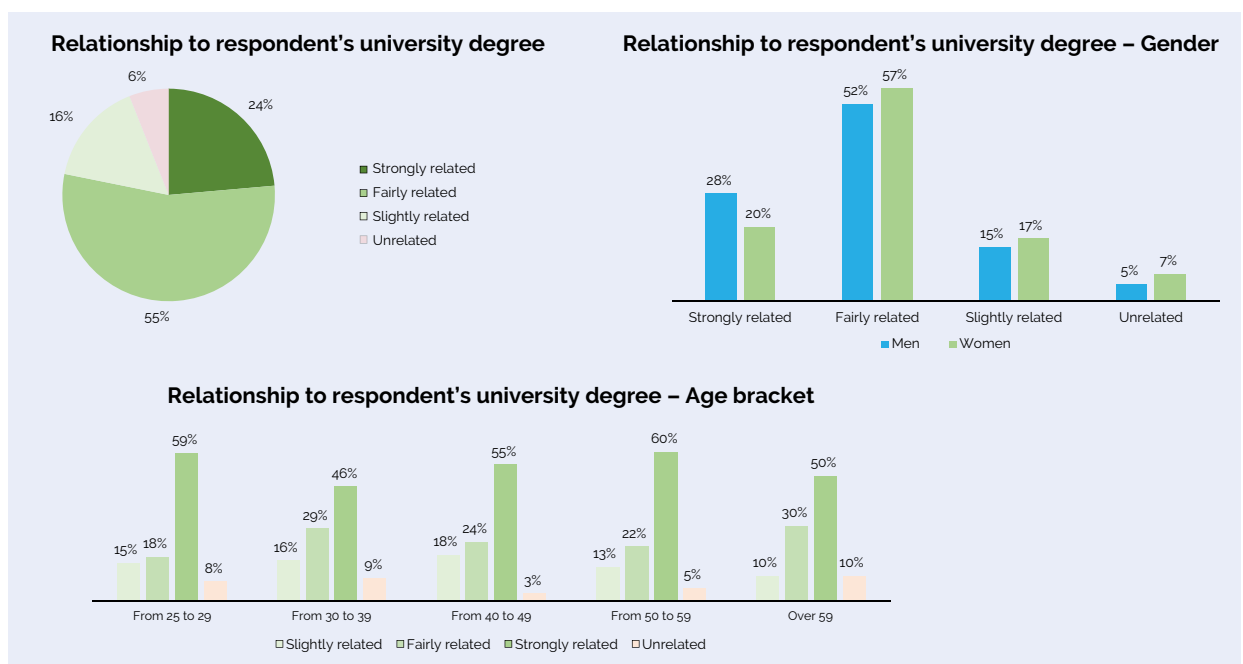
**Figure 32.** Current employment situation. Overview

### 9.3.2. Relationship with education

Understanding the relationship between the studies undertaken and the job held led to the analysis of the job matching indicator. In the case of the UD, according to the fieldwork carried out, practically 8 out of 10 senior

graduates indicated that their job was closely related to their education. Only 6% reported that their current job was not at all related to their education. This proportion was virtually unchanged by age bracket.

A gender perspective showed that 3% more men than women had a job closely related to their studies. See Figure 33 for details.



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 33.** Relationship with education Overview

### 9.3.3. Salary

Job remuneration was one of the factors most valued by UD graduates when considering a professional change.

The average age of the sample of people who participated in the fieldwork was 42 years old, and the average salary of UD senior graduates was €55,064 gross per year.

This result placed UD graduates with salaries above the national average, both by educational level and age group. See Figure 34 and Table 4.



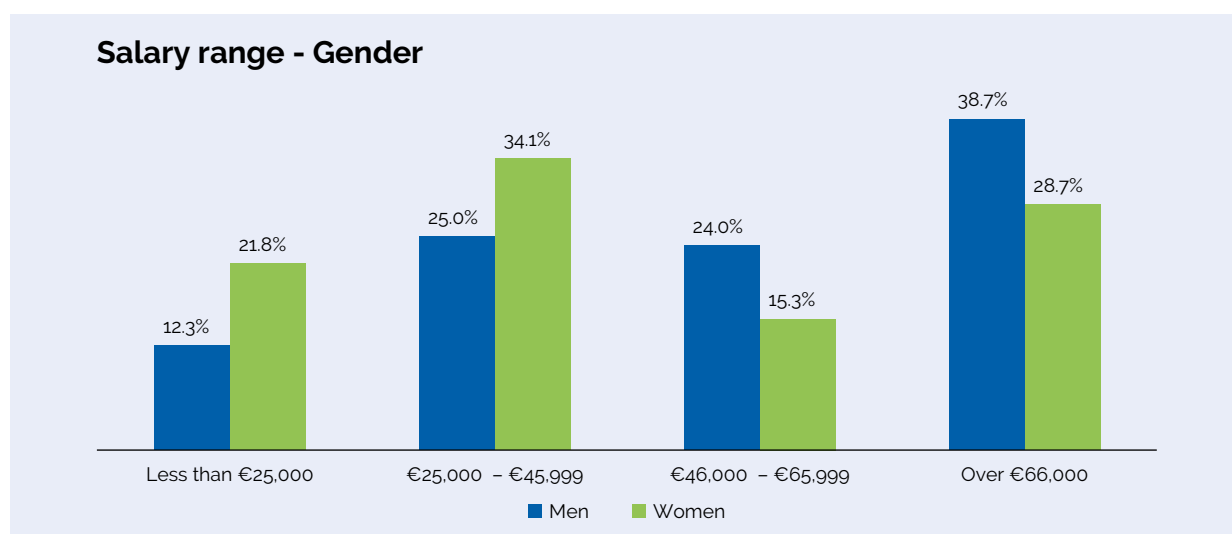
Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 34.** Gross annual salary.

	All education	Less than primary	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Second stage of secondary education	Higher vocational training or similar education	Graduates who were holders of a Pre-Bologna 3-year degree or similar education	Graduates who were holders of a Pre-Bologna 5-year degree (or similar education) and PhD holders
<b>All ages</b>	26,917.04	15,583.17	18,267.37	19,321.07	23,386.82	28,286.13	33,030.73	44,356.42
UNDER 19 YEARS OLD	5,903.95	8,713.52	7,242.35	6,038.19	4,931.60	5,288.11	1,802.81	1,071.69
FROM 20 TO 29	15,654.98	11,598.90	12,599.13	12,147.81	14,062.05	15,616.60	16,465.90	24,233.18
FROM 30 TO 39	23,221.82	14,432.29	17,271.21	17,672.67	19,665.33	24,093.31	26,718.67	33,620.10
FROM 40 TO 49	28,834.43	15,693.97	18,445.66	20,277.39	24,254.70	29,942.59	35,554.35	46,281.39
FROM 50 TO 59	31,873.51	17,024.57	20,300.54	22,192.52	28,861.20	36,745.31	44,497.53	60,184.65
Over 59	29,295.16	15,706.51	18,032.45	19,473.70	26,954.09	33,226.19	41,794.31	62,992.36

Source: Microdata available for 2018, latest year available, from INE.

**Table 4.** Average annual wage by educational level and age



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 35.** Gross annual salary ranges by gender.



Taking into account that the overall sample was made up of 56% of women and 43% of men, Figure 35 shows a clear salary gap between male and female Deusto graduates. The lower salary brackets contained a higher proportion of women, while there was clearly a higher proportion of men in the higher brackets.

This gap was not fully explained by the type of working hours, as the majority of women reported having a full-time job.

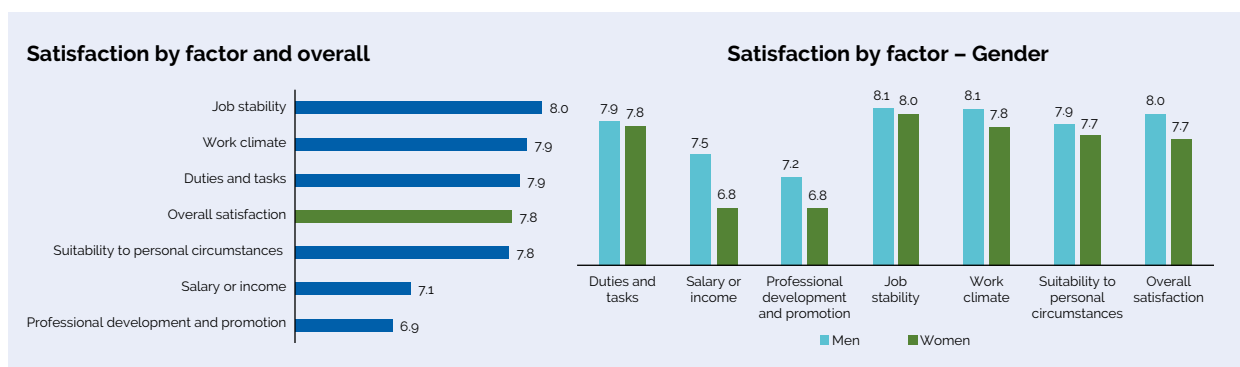
### 9.3.4. Job satisfaction and potential for change

Job satisfaction is increasingly recognised as a key indicator and is therefore monitored and assessed by most

companies and organisations. Low scores in one or more of the underlying factors contributing to job satisfaction may serve as an early warning signal of potential future staff turnover. It is therefore an increasingly important tool for personnel management.

UD senior graduates were notably generally satisfied with their employment, with an average rating of 7.8. The factor with which they were most satisfied, as can be seen in Figure 36, was job stability; they were least satisfied with the opportunities for professional development and promotion offered by their current job.

The view by gender showed that women gave lower ratings to all factors than men, with a larger gap in satisfaction with salary (0.7%) and with career development and promotion (0.5%).

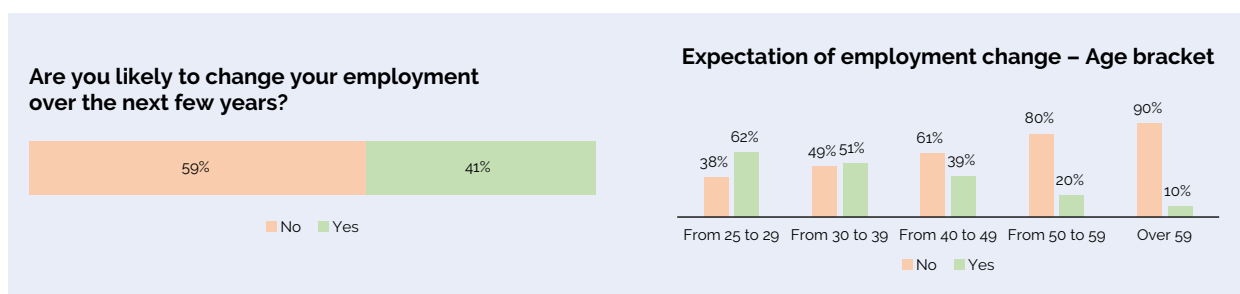


Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 36.** Job satisfaction factors

Finally, 6 out of 10 respondents stated that they did not expect to change their job within the next few years, compared to 4 out of 10 who thought such a change was

likely. As might be expected, younger graduates expected to change jobs to a greater extent than older graduates (Figure 37).



Source: Prepared by the authors Deusto Social Lab

**Figure 37.** Expectation of change of employment.

# 10. Future lines of work

## 10.1. General project

The strategic and global nature of the project was discussed in the first section of this report. It is a large and wide-ranging project which affects various processes and involves numerous internal and external stakeholders. Given this complexity, it needs to be addressed in several progressive stages, this report presenting the outcomes of the third stage.

The first stage (carried out in 2019) involved developing the global conceptual model of the impact of the University of Deusto and its application to the area of entrepreneurship. The results were included in Deusto Social Lab Report number 3. The second phase of the project, carried out during 2020 and included in the Deusto Social Lab Report no. 4, dealt with the impact derived from the learning processes at the UD, thus addressing the core activity of the University. As in the previous case, this practical focus was specifically applied to undergraduate learning processes, and its assessment was made possible by both the internal data already gathered by the UD and fieldwork conducted with one of the university's most significant stakeholders: the companies and organisations that host students for internships and/or employ UD graduates. The results from the third phase contained Deusto Social Lab Report No. 5, explored undergraduate learning processes, this time focusing on the group that is at the heart of our mission: students—the group who trust UD to support them in their educational journey and their personal and professional development, enabling them to become agents of social transformation. Deusto Social Lab Report No. 6 analysed the social impact of the UD and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

In light of these considerations, some future lines of work have emerged in relation to the overall project:

- Building on the established general model and the work that has led to this report, there is a need to further explore the impact of learning processes on individuals' employability and employment at a social level.
- It is also necessary to look more broadly at different learning processes, such as those taking place in postgraduate courses.
- More specifically, this work on social impact must also address research processes, which, as will be explored

in future phases, can be regarded as learning processes characterised by a high level of co-generation of knowledge, requiring strong and intensive collaboration between stakeholders.

## 10.2. Undergraduate and postgraduate learning processes

### 10.2.1. Undergraduate and postgraduate learning processes

As was made clear in the study carried out throughout 2020, the UD implements a wide range and diversity of complex learning processes, among which the Bachelor's degree is the most intense and involves the greatest number of people. As previously mentioned, work to date has involved various key groups and stakeholders: measuring UD's impact through collaboration with businesses and organisations; students in the final years of undergraduate degrees; first-year undergraduate students (first pilot study); and senior UD graduates (included in this year's report).

In this year's study, the perspective on impact has been broadened to include the impact on employability and employment, combining both an individual dimension (more closely related to the concept of employability) and a wider social dimension (employment). This broad perspective, explored in the most recent stage, has generally focused on evaluating the most relevant competencies from an employability standpoint, along with certain wider macro-contextual factors.

The measurement has been fed by data published by the UD, as well as information obtained through ad hoc fieldwork with relevant stakeholders in each phase. However, the application of the model has been limited due to the lack of availability of some of the data required, either because they are not captured or because they are generated mainly in groups that have not been included in the analysis.

The above considerations will give rise to some lines of future work based on learning processes. These entail further exploration by using the specific relevant impact model, as follows:

- Analysing the impact that learning processes have on employability and employment along two avenues. On the one hand, taking a skills-based perspective, focusing on the lifelong impact on the individuals whom UD supports throughout their journeys. Some valuable information and evaluations from students in their final years, as well as from junior and senior graduates are available for this purpose. A longitudinal analysis (although not *stricto sensu*, as the individuals are different) will hopefully also provide conclusions of interest to the UD. And, on the other hand, adopting a more macroeconomic perspective, which will allow for a more in-depth analysis of the contribution of the UD to the labour market.
- Including in the analysis two additional groups which are crucial to undergraduate degree learning processes. These are the first-year undergraduate students and the teaching staff. It is therefore proposed for future phases to apply the model proposed in this report and complete it with the information to be obtained from the views and perceptions of both groups, which will be based on research to be conducted on an ad hoc basis.
- As information from the different groups becomes available, it will be possible to broaden and deepen the comparative overview of the impact, which began in this report with the comparison of the views of final-year students and those of companies.
- In order to complete the measurement of the indicators defined in the model (or any others proposed if their adaptation is necessary), it is important to advance in the systematic collection, analysis and management of the data required by the model. These aspects include:
  - Collection: establishing a clear system to accurately collect the necessary data in a timely fashion is essential to measure the indicators considered in the model. The specific lessons learnt from the fieldwork conducted on learning processes to date lead to the following observations:
    - Keep an open communication channel with the UD areas involved to date; these have contributed to updating the inventory of transformations related to transversal competencies—including their naming and classification—with a view to enabling future comparative and evolutionary analysis of these concepts.
    - It would be interesting to learn more about student profiles specifically linked to this impact process in order to strengthen the assessments according to the different profile variables identified. A global overview of UD student profiles already exists.
    - It is vital to reinforce the instruments to carry out the fieldwork, ensuring that there are some basic fields to be used in the work on every group and a specific, additional body of data that is necessary for each individual group.
  - Analysis: it is important to provide both an evolutionary and comparative overview with contextual variables, trends or others to showcase the indicators and the model.
  - Monitoring and management: a basic consideration of the impact model is that it should be a management tool, not just a measurement tool.
  - To achieve this, it will be important to plan the frequency of data collection and analysis. This means that the processes within this project should be taken up by different University areas and units.
  - It can therefore be considered an impact scorecard with ongoing monitoring, which could serve as a basis for setting future impact objectives.
  - Communication: once the impact of the UD on society has been estimated, measured through the key indicators linked to the actions taken to achieve the desired transformations, it is important to communicate it to stakeholders. The continued expansion of the Deusto Social Lab monographs remains one avenue; during this phase, communication and dissemination have also been initiated through various events and conferences. However, additional and complementary channels could also be explored.
- The proposed application of the model is subject to revision and adaptation, as it depends on other learning-related projects that the UD is currently implementing, or might implement in the future. Depending on the different groups that may be included in subsequent phases—subject to updates as planning advances—the model may need to be adapted.

## 10.2.2. Research processes

Given the importance that the UD attaches to research processes, their impact analysis should be expanded in

subsequent phases. This will make it possible to complete the global model while considering all the transformations to which the UD aspires. This section will also focus specifically on doctoral learning processes.

### 10.3. **Sustained efforts to promote entrepreneurship**

Progress was made in implementing the model in 2020 and 2021, with a focus on systematising the collection of

information related to the indicators, as well as enhancing analytics and monitoring.

The objective for the future should be to consolidate the systematic capture and analysis of all actions with a view to updating the impact indicators considered in the model, so that an impact report can be drawn up in this area.

# Annexes



# Annex I. Methodology of the action research process

## 1. Introduction

The aim of the project is to build a model for measuring the UD's social impact. It is based on the premise that this model has to be built collaboratively with both the people who work at the university (internally) and the social agents with whom the UD interacts (externally). A shared vision needs to be constructed, therefore, not only on how to measure the social impact of the university, but also on what is meant by social impact.

Building a shared vision that underpins UD's social impact measurement model is a complex challenge. Complex challenges are those that do not have a single true or false, right or wrong answer; the solution must be arrived at between different actors with various types of knowledge, values and interests (Costamagna & Larrea, 2017). It is necessary to develop processes that include spaces for dialogue in which to build a shared vision to address these challenges.

In light of the above, the methodological approach chosen for this project was action research (AR). Unlike other approaches, the goal of AR is not to examine or describe reality, but to change it (Nicholas & Hathcoat, 2014). AR is a strategy for change that can combine both quantitative and qualitative research methods, (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Another characteristic of AR is that it focuses on processes. These are emergent, inter- and trans-disciplinary collaborative processes, consistent with mode 2 knowledge production. Mode 2 knowledge is knowledge that is produced in the context of its application by flexible research teams that change according to the task (Gibbons et al., 1994). The knowledge that is produced is socially relevant precisely because it is produced in the context where it is applied (Greenwood, 2007).

## 2. Methodological development

### 2.1. First stage

The AR process in this fourth phase of the project has been carried out in two stages: In the first stage, work involved reviewing various sources, studies and reports to gain an understanding and formulate our own contribution regarding employment and employability. This also enabled us to connect these concepts with the learning processes and competence-based transformations underpinning the UD impact model. The existing literature and references have been reviewed and updated.

### 2.2. Second stage

The second stage consisted of fieldwork. The questionnaire was shared and validated, and then disseminated among the group of participants who graduated from the UD between 2017 and 1987 (senior graduates).

Methodology notes: The fieldwork started on 25 May 2023 and was completed on 15 September 2023. The alumni databases of the two employment services of the UD (Deusto Business Alumni and Deusto Alumni) were used, complemented by personal reinforcement actions via telephone (message). A total of 703 responses were received:

- Out of those 703, a total of 177 were not considered valid because they were not correctly and completely filled in.
- 526 were considered valid answers.

The questionnaire used was as follows:

#### **Social impact of UD: Contribution to employment and employability**

As a graduate of the University of Deusto (UD), we would like to hear your views on various matters related to employment and employability. Your input will contribute to a project currently conducted by the UD (specifically, Deusto Social Lab) in collaboration with the BBK Foundation, aimed at understanding our impact on society (the results of previous phases of the project have been published as monographs that may be accessed here). We

would be grateful if you could answer this questionnaire, which is estimated to take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The data you provide will be treated as confidential at all times and will be used exclusively for the purposes of this study. You can consult the UD's information policy on data protection here.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

#### **BLOCK 1. PERSONAL DETAILS**

##### **Q01. Block 1. Personal details**

##### **Q1. Gender:**

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Non-Binary
- ☐ I prefer not to answer

##### **Q2. Age (years):** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Q3. Year of completion of your degree at the UD (current degree, current double degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree):** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Q4. At which UD campus did you complete your degree? (current degree, current double degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree):**

- ☐ Bilbao
- ☐ San Sebastian

##### **Q5. Which of the following fields of knowledge best describes your studies at UD (current degree, current double degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree):**

- ☐ Economics and Business Studies
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Law
- ☐ Health Sciences
- ☐ Education and Sport
- ☐ Social and Human Sciences (including Arts)
- ☐ Theology

##### **Q6. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Business Administration and Management
- ☐ Business Administration and Management + Law



- ☐ Business Administration and Management + Engineering in Industrial Technologies
- ☐ Business Administration and Management + Computer Engineering
- ☐ Other

**Q7. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q8. Which degree(s) or bachelor's degree (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Industrial Organisation
- ☐ IT (including Management)
- ☐ Industrial Electronics and Automation
- ☐ Industrial Design
- ☐ Mechanics
- ☐ Industrial Electronics and Automation + Computer Science
- ☐ Industrial Design + Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Industrial Technologies
- ☐ Telecommunications
- ☐ Other

**Q9. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q10. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Law
- ☐ Labour Relations
- ☐ Law + Labour Relations
- ☐ Other

**Q11. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q12. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Other

**Q13. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q14. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Social Education
- ☐ Primary education
- ☐ Physical Activity and Sports Sciences (CAFID)
- ☐ Physical Activity and Sport Science + Primary Education
- ☐ Pedagogy

- ☐ Educational Psychology
- ☐ Other

**Q15. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q16. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Modern Languages
- ☐ Modern Languages and Management
- ☐ Social work
- ☐ Tourism
- ☐ International Relations
- ☐ International Relations + Law
- ☐ Basque Language and Culture
- ☐ Basque Language and Culture + Modern Languages
- ☐ Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- ☐ Philosophy
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Social and Cultural Anthropology
- ☐ Sociology
- ☐ Basque Language, Literature and Culture (Filología Vasca)
- ☐ English Language, Literature and Culture (Filología Inglesa)
- ☐ Hispanic Language, Literature and Culture (Filología Hispánica)
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ History
- ☐ Other

**Q17. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q18. Which degree(s) (whether the current 4-year degree, pre-Bologna 5-year Hons degree, or Pre-Bologna 3-year degree) did you study?**

- ☐ Baccalaureatus in Theologia
- ☐ Baccalaureatus in Scientiis Religiosis
- ☐ Degree in Ecclesiastical Studies
- ☐ Other

**Q19. In case of 'other' please indicate as appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q20. Have you pursued additional postgraduate/master's studies?**

- ☐ Yes, at the UD
- ☐ Yes, at other institutions
- ☐ Yes, at both of the above
- ☐ No

**Q21. How often do you engage in educational activities for your professional development?**

- ☐ 0=Never
- ☐ 5=Very frequently

**Q22. These educational activities are:**

- ☐ On my own personal initiative
- ☐ On my employer's initiative
- ☐ Both of the above

**BLOCK 2. CAREER PATH. FACTORS OF CHANGE****Q02. Block 2: Career development****Q23. What has been your employment history since you completed your studies at the UD?**

- ☐ I have never worked
- ☐ I have had only one job (whether self-employed or employed)
- ☐ I have had more than one job
- ☐ Other

**Q24. If you have had more than one job, how many? \_\_\_\_\_****Q25. In case of 'other' please indicate how many \_\_\_\_\_****Q26. If you were considering a career change, how important would you consider the following 10 factors to be?**

- ☐ Salary/Income
- ☐ Other benefits
- ☐ Prestige of the employer
- ☐ Characteristics/level of the post
- ☐ Professional development potential
- ☐ The organisation's training policy
- ☐ Purpose and values of the organisation
- ☐ Flexibility (remote working, schedule, work-life balance, etc.)
- ☐ Willingness to travel and relocate
- ☐ Connection with your area of expertise

**Q27. In your case, how important were the following factors in securing a job compared to other candidates?**

- ☐ University degree
- ☐ Academic record
- ☐ Previous work experience
- ☐ Language skills
- ☐ Having the required specialism
- ☐ Digital competencies
- ☐ Teamwork and leadership skills
- ☐ Willingness to travel and relocate
- ☐ Adaptability to change
- ☐ Entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity
- ☐ Initiative and proactivity
- ☐ Self-knowledge
- ☐ Self-esteem and confidence
- ☐ Ethical and honest behaviour
- ☐ Social and environmental commitment
- ☐ Ability for lifelong learning
- ☐ Commitment to work
- ☐ Ability to sustain hard work

**Q28. In the process of searching for and identifying job opportunities, what importance do you attach to the following skills?**

- ☐ Ability to identify job opportunities
- ☐ Use of social media
- ☐ Use of personal and professional network
- ☐ Ability to present and demonstrate their merits against the job requirements (CV, cover letters, interview skills)

**BLOCK 3. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS****Q03. Block 3. Current employment status.****Q29. Current employment status.**

- ☐ Inactive
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Employee
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Pre-retirement scheme participant

**Q30. Gross annual salary (if you are self-employed, consider income from work): \_\_\_\_\_****Q31. Type of contract**

- ☐ Permanent
- ☐ Temporary
- ☐ I am self-employed
- ☐ Other

**Q32. In case of 'other', please indicate as appropriate \_\_\_\_\_****Q33. Type of working hours**

- ☐ Full time
- ☐ Part time
- ☐ Reduced hours
- ☐ Other

**Q34. In case of 'other', please indicate as appropriate \_\_\_\_\_****Q35. Please indicate the branch of activity of the company in which you work.**

- ☐ A. Crop and animal production, silviculture and fishing
- ☐ B. Mining and quarrying
- ☐ C. Manufacturing industry
- ☐ D. Electricity, gas, steam and air-conditioning supply
- ☐ E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- ☐ F. Construction
- ☐ G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- ☐ H. Transport and storage
- ☐ I. Catering
- ☐ J. Information and communication

- ☐ K. Financial and insurance activities
- ☐ L. Real estate activities
- ☐ M. Professional, scientific and technical activities
- ☐ N. Administrative and support service activities
- ☐ O. Public administration and defence; compulsory Social Security
- ☐ P. Education
- ☐ Q. Human health and social service activities
- ☐ R. Arts, entertainment and recreation
- ☐ S. Other service activities
- ☐ T. Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use
- ☐ U. Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies

**Q36. Size of the company where you work according to the number of employees (referring to the last fiscal year):**

- ☐ Micro-enterprise (up to 9 employees)
- ☐ Small (up to 49 employees)
- ☐ Medium (up to 249 employees)
- ☐ Large (more than 250 employees)

**Q37. Occupation in your current (or last) job:**

- ☐ Directors and managers
- ☐ Scientific/intellectual experts and professionals
- ☐ Support technicians and professionals
- ☐ Accountants, clerical and other office employees
- ☐ Catering, personal services, protection and sales workers
- ☐ Skilled workers in the agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries sectors
- ☐ Craftspeople and skilled workers in manufacturing and construction industries

- ☐ Plant and machinery operators, fitters
- ☐ Elementary occupations
- ☐ Military occupations

**Q38. Relationship of your current position to your university degree:**

- ☐ Unrelated
- ☐ Slightly related
- ☐ Fairly related
- ☐ Strongly related

**Q39. Are you likely to change your employment over the next few years?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Q40. Satisfaction with the following aspects of your job:**

- ☐ Duties and tasks
- ☐ Salary or income
- ☐ Professional development and promotion
- ☐ Job stability
- ☐ Atmosphere - working climate
- ☐ Suitability to personal circumstances: flexible working hours, work spaces, etc.
- ☐ Overall job satisfaction

**BLOCK 4. FINAL SECTION**

**Q41. This space is for you to include any comments and suggestions that you may have \_\_\_\_\_**

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# Annex II. References

Main references analysed by chapter:

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 **Deusto** Social Lab

 **Deusto**Dual

 **Deusto**Emprende

 **Deusto**Alumni