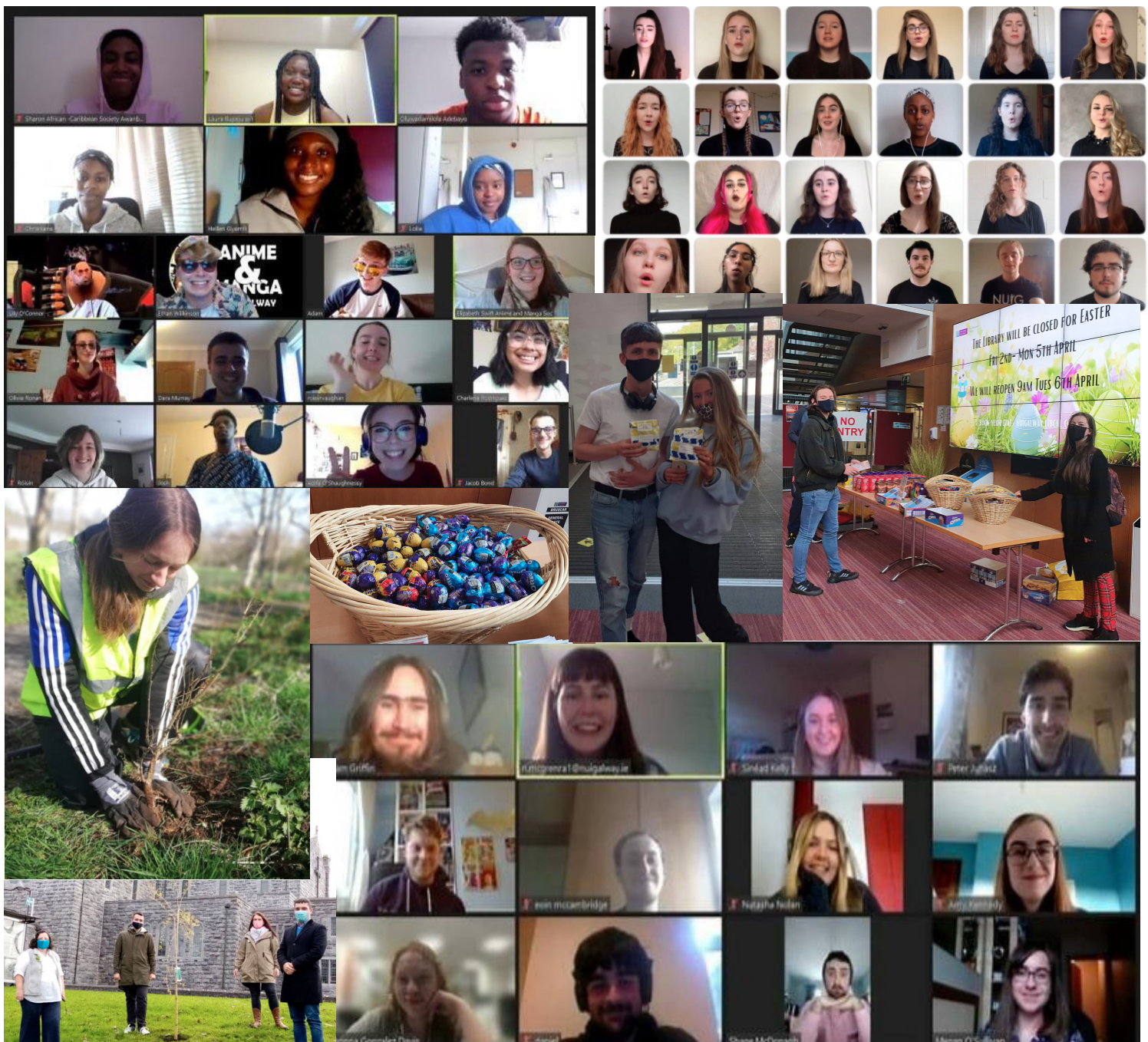


NUI Galway Societies

Societies in 2021

‘Some Stats from The Year of the Pandemic’

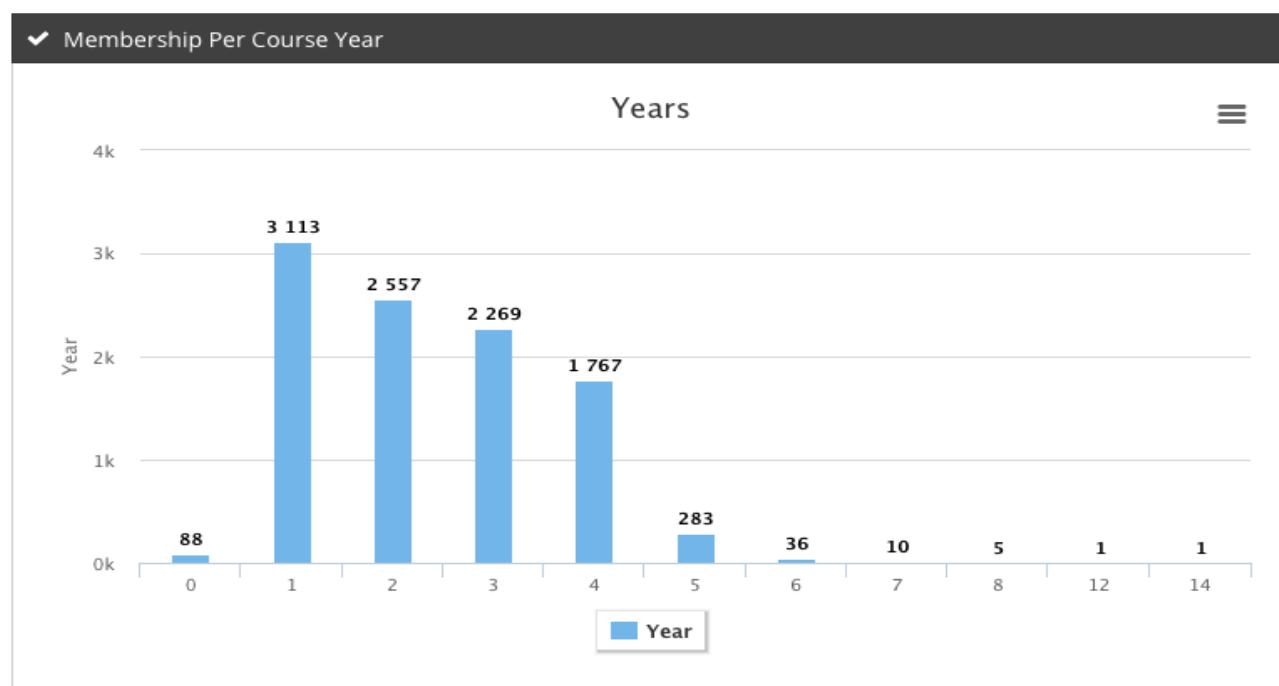
In advance of our full end of year report here are some interesting findings.



Findings from the 2021 End of Year Report

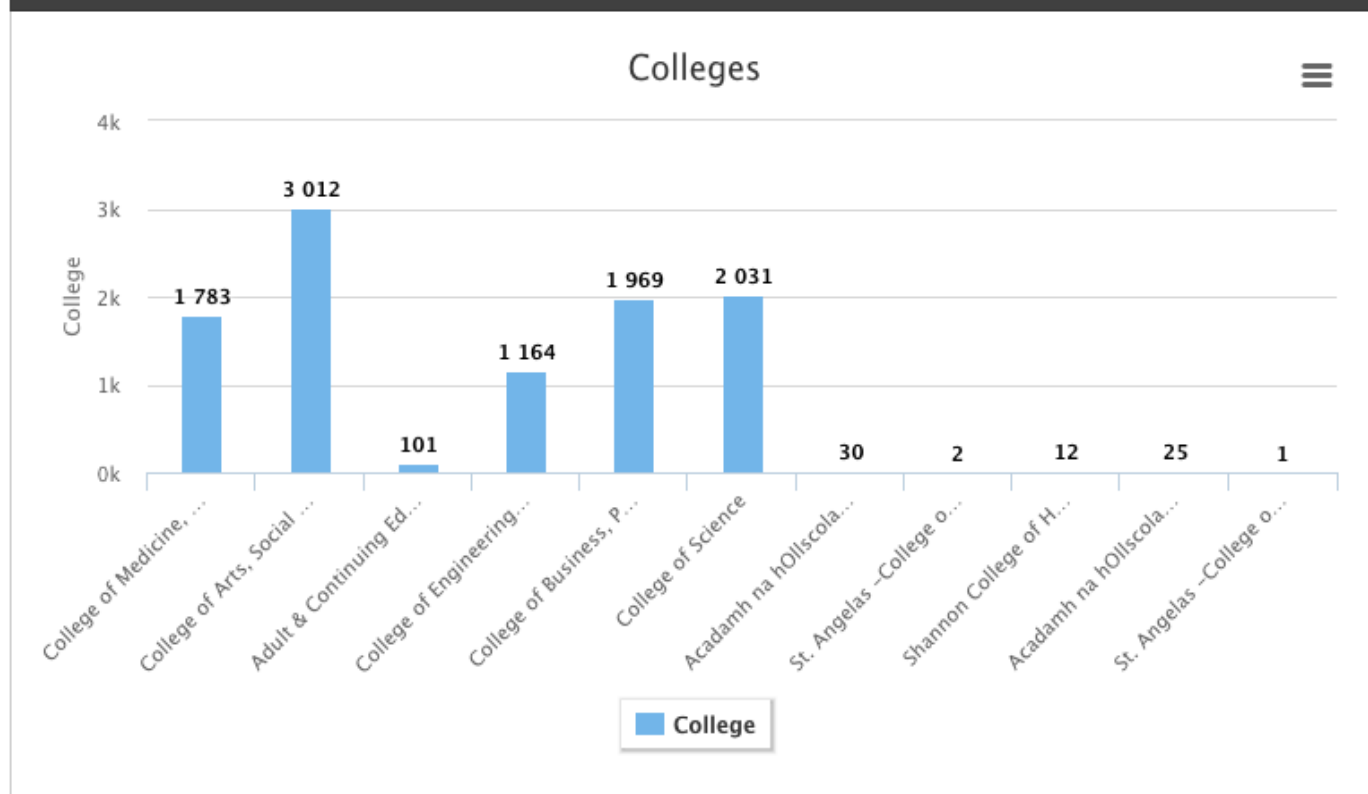
Societies had 10,130 members, an 11% drop from last year's figures of 11,389. These are unique students as members. This includes 3,113 first years. Given that we were not able to hold an in-person societies day and all of our recruitment was on-line, one could surmise that the students who joined were more interested in joining. Students could join during our virtual societies days and at any time during the year via yourspace. The highest numbers were in the College of Arts, but there was high engagement from all the colleges. The number of committee members rose from 1021 to 1091, an increase of 6.5%, another indicator that engagement was not negatively impacted by Covid-19 lockdown.

Membership



Membership per Course Year	
Year	Total
0	88
1	3113
2	2557
3	2269
4	1767
5	283
6	36
7	10
8	5
12	1
14	1
Total	10130

✓ Membership Per College

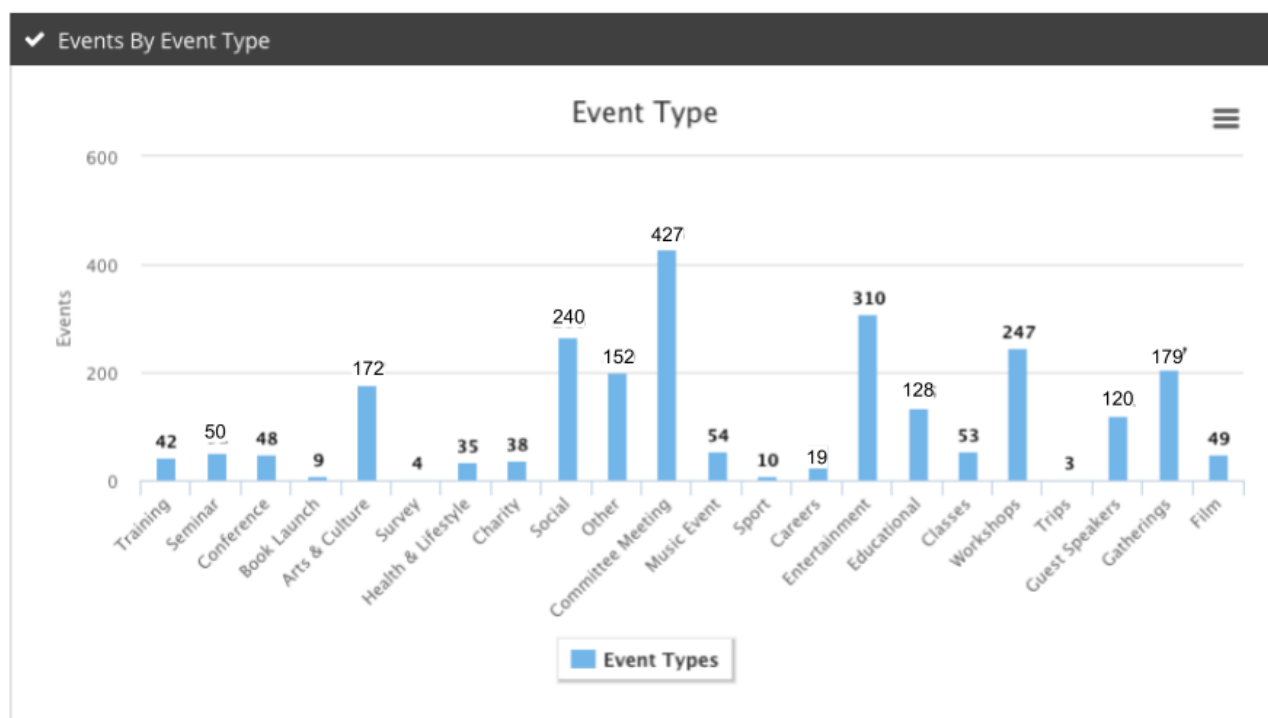


📅 Membership per College

College Title	Total
College of Medicine, Nursing, & Health Sciences	1783
College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies	3012
Adult & Continuing Education	101
College of Engineering & Informatics	1164
College of Business, Public Policy, & Law	1969
College of Science	2031
Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge	30
St. Angelas - College of Arts	2
Shannon College of Hotel Management-College of Business, Public Policy and Law	12
Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge	25
St. Angelas - College of Medicine & Health Sciences	1
Total	10130

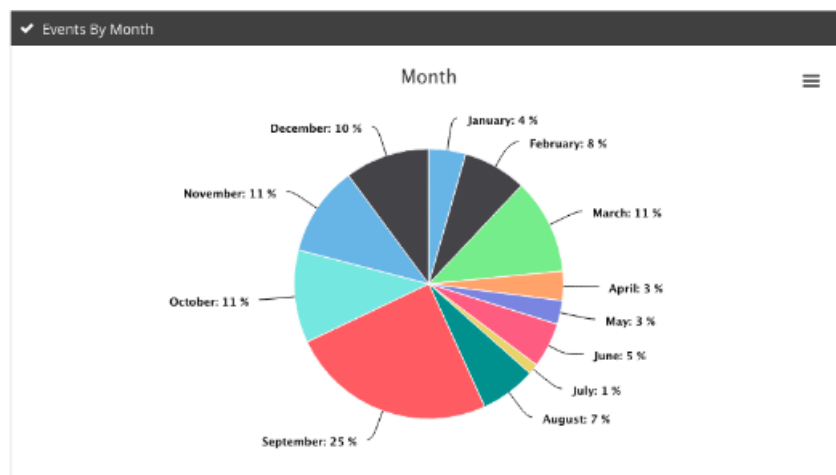
Events

This year the societies organised 2,243 down from 3,440 last year but an extraordinary amount given that the vast majority were virtual. After committee meetings the most popular category was entertainment, workshops and social events.



Top 10 societies by number of events

Postgrad Research Society	96
Writers Group Soc	96
Law Soc	90
FanSci	76
Feminist Society	70
Anime and Manga Society	67
Dramsoc	66
Dansoc	62
Choral Soc	60
Lit & Deb	60



These figures are generated from events added to the societies calendar, this includes 427 committee meetings. Entertainment, social events and workshops were the next most popular type of events. The most popular months for events were October, November and March. The majority of events were virtual. No trips took place this year. There were a small number of events early in the year and during orientation, all of which happened before the second lockdown. There were also a small number of events in the wider community which adhered to all safety guidelines such as tree planting. The societies took to a wide range of virtual mediums to host their events Zoom and Discord proving to be the most popular. The Societies Office also arranged on campus giveaways and posted gifts to students throughout the year.

Interesting Statistics.

Below is a comparison with last year.

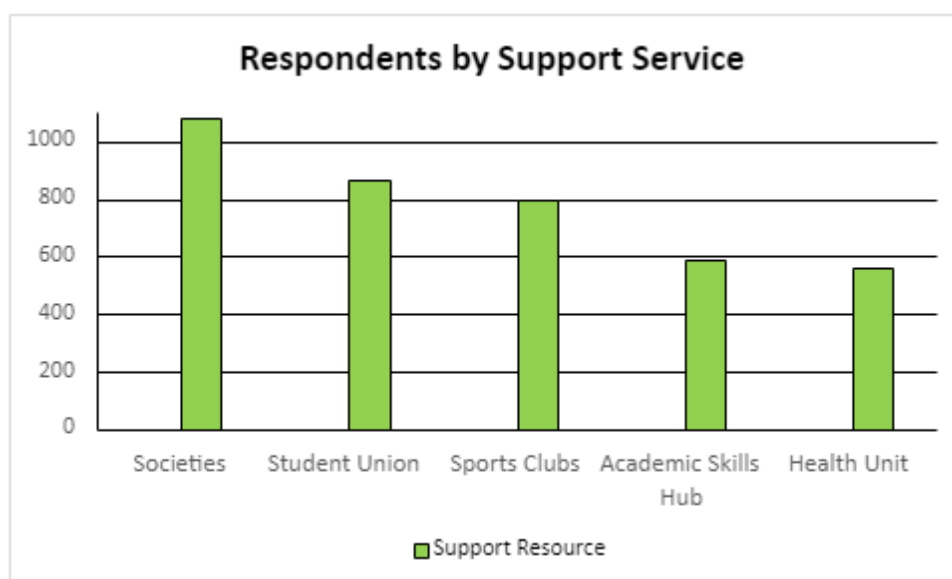
	Society Members	Committee members	Number of Events	Numbers of Societies who completed the report	Society ALIVE Certs Awarded	Hours Volunteered by ALIVE Participants	Recipients of the Society Leadership Awards	Digital Badge Recipients
2020	11,389	1,021	3,440	113	690	66,681	248	381
2021	10,130	1,091	2,243		439	24,458	153	252

Societies Leadership Report

End of Year Survey

Societies are a popular choice.

72% of Students who completed the Success Quiz, (1361 completed it), expressed an intention to join societies. In this same report we asked the students which support services they were interested in and Societies ranked as their first choice with 80% indicating an intention to avail of societies.



Top 5 services chosen in the Success Quiz 2020

Society Leadership Award

The societies leadership award is available to all committee members. At the start of the year the committees create a mission statement and set goals for their committee. Each committee member then completes a set of goals for themselves. Any society members who fail to set goals, are afforded numerous opportunities and then by a certain date they are removed if they do not complete this step, so that the societies can hold an EGM and elect a new committee member, this ensures that student who were elected the previous semester are still engaging with the society. The society then must fulfill certain criteria, this year we reduced the number of events they needed to organise to 3 (normally 8). At the end of the year they reflect on their goals and complete a survey. We added new questions to this year's survey. For comparison purposes we have included last year's results for any of the questions we also used last year to see the impact of a year of lockdown and predominantly virtual events.

How to get the Leadership Award

The Society Leadership Award

This is an add on to the ALIVE Cert, The society must be eligible.

Society Eligibility requires:

- The society must create a Mission statement and goals at the start of the year.
- 4 committee members (need to have their personal goals set at the start of the year)
- The society need to have held at least 3 events this year.
- The society must have 100 members

Personal Eligibility Requires

- Committee members must answering your first question (setting personal goals)
- Completed their end of year reflection in the leadership section in your dashboard.
- Completing the short Leadership survey
- Attending training or completed an on-line training module in Blackboard.
- Apply to do the ALIVE cert in yourspace.nuigalway.ie

Committee members were also eligible for **Digital Badges**, if they had completed all the steps above plus completed their end of year report above. They do not need to have applied for an ALIVE Cert.

Leadership Survey Results

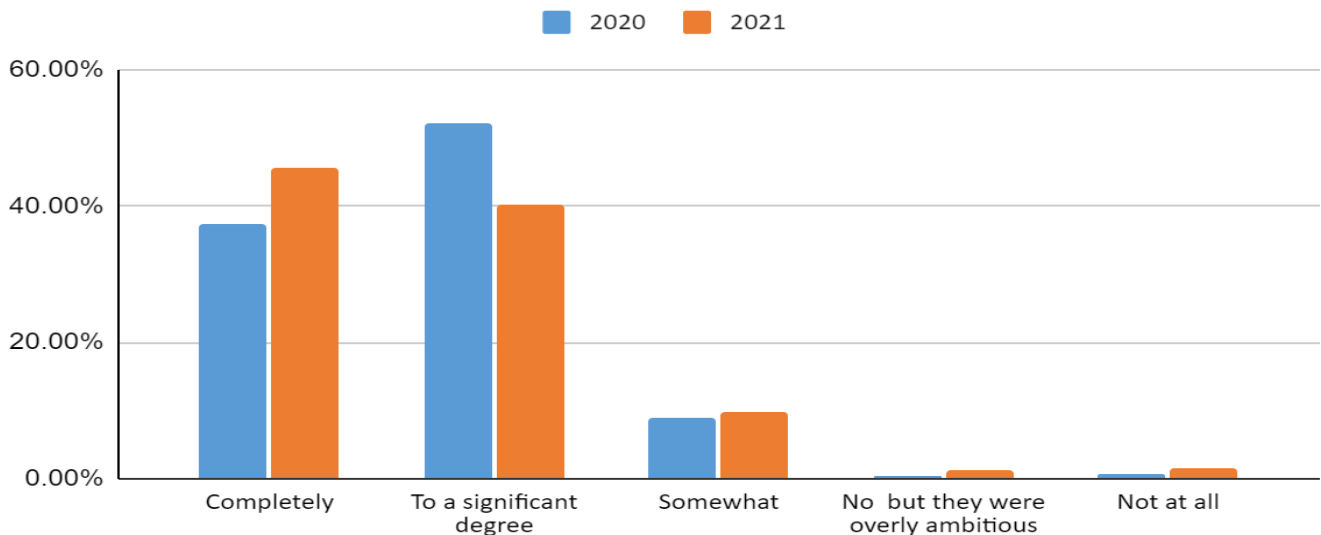
Empowering Students – The Role of Societies

Setting & Achieving Goals

Last year 894 committee members completed the survey at the end of the year out of 1021 members. Last year 89.37% believed that their society had either completely or to a significant degree achieved their goals. 88% believed they had completely or to a significant degree achieved their personal goals.

This year 509 committee members completed the survey out of 1091. Of these 46% completely achieved their goals up from 38%, this could be due to the fact that less committee members took the survey so one could surmise that the more engaged committee members completed the survey, without a physical presence on campus it was certainly more challenging to get to know the committees. Overall the results were similar with 86% believing they had either fully or significantly achieved the society goals with the 9% somewhat achieving them both years. What is extraordinary is that the committee members surveyed felt that their society was successful this year given all the challenges. Less than 1% last year and just over 2% this year did not achieve their goals either because they were too ambitious or not at all.

Did your Society achieve the goals you set at the start of the year?

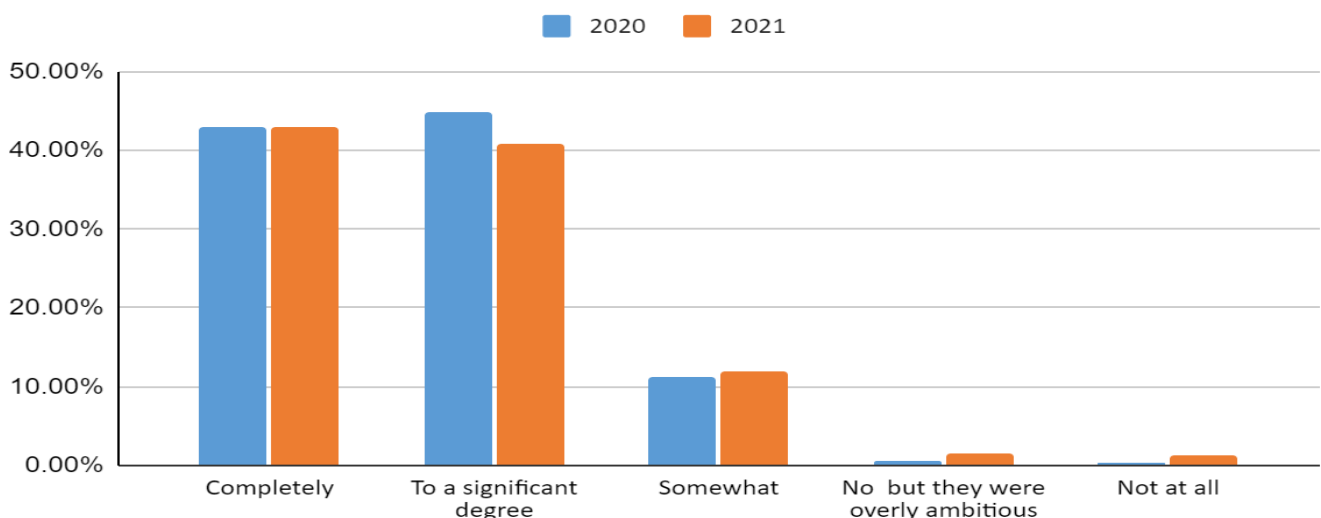


Did your Society achieve the goals you set at the start of the year?		
	2020	2021
Completely	37.36%	45.58%
To a significant degree	52.01%	40.28%
Somewhat	9.04%	9.82%
No but they were overly ambitious	0.45%	1.18%
Not at all	0.78%	1.57%

Personal Goals

The results for achieving personal goals remained very constant with 43% fully achieving their personal goals, and a drop from 44% to 41% to a significant degree achieving their goals. There was an increase of 8% in respondents feeling they had completely achieved them. Somewhat remained at 11% and no but they were overly ambitious increased from 0.67% to 1.57% and not at all increased from 0.34% to 1.38%.

Did you achieve your personal goals and objectives?



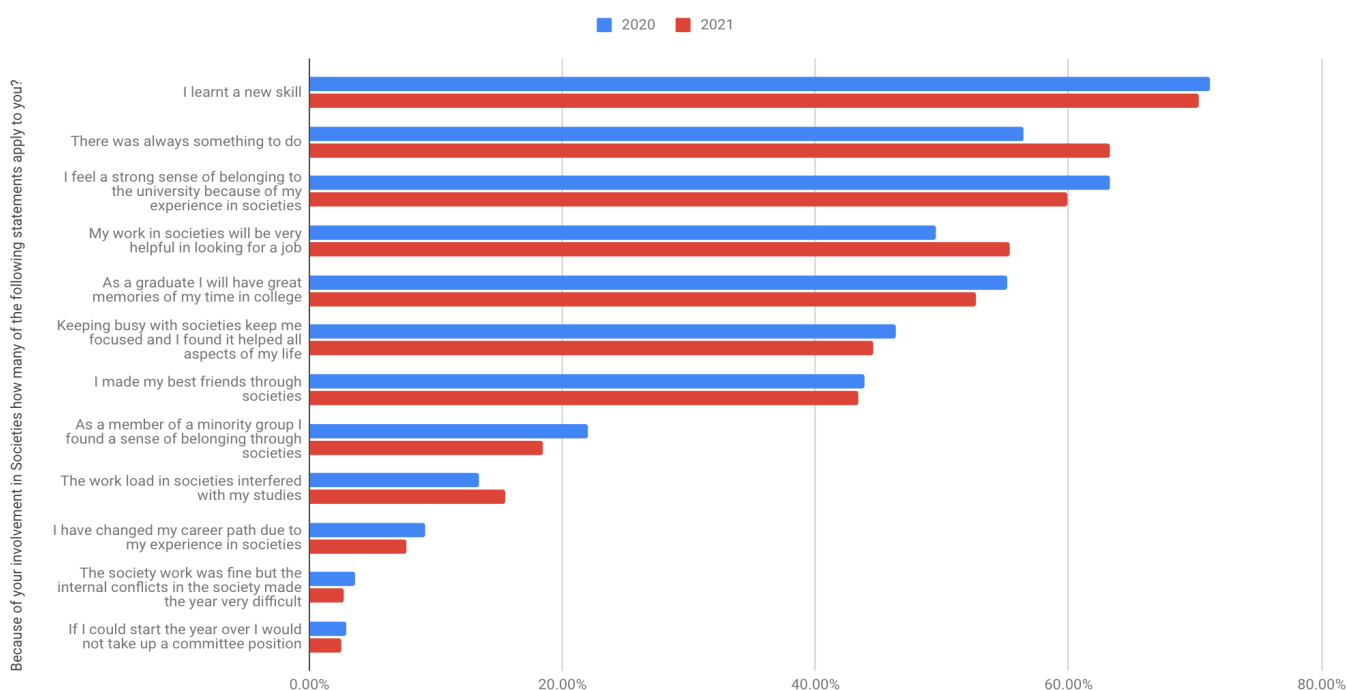
Did you achieve your personal goals and objectives?		
	2020	2021
Completely	42.95%	43.03%%
To a significant degree	44.75%	40.86%%
Somewhat	11.30%	11.98%%
No but they were overly ambitious	0.67	1.57%%
Not at all	0.34	1.38%%

Belonging, Friendship, Purpose, Self-Actualisation

Societies gave committee members a sense of belonging and helped them to get through difficulties and stay in college. Societies will also help them find a job and give them great memories of NUI Galway. Last year 71% learnt a new skill this remained constant with 70% this year. Last year 55% made great memories and 53% this year, 63.31% had a sense of belonging because of societies and despite no on campus experience 60% felt this sense of belonging this year. Last year 50% believe their work in societies will help in their search for a career and this year that rose to 55%. Societies help keep their committee members busy, last year 66% always had something to do and this year 63% did. 445 both years made their best friends through societies. They also found keeping busy helped with other aspects of their life and kept them focused, 46% last year and 45% this year. 9% last year and 8% this year changed their career path due to their work with societies. On the negative side 14% last year and 16% this year felt their society work interfered with their studies. Only 3.58% found internal conflict to be a problem last year and 2.75% this year and last year 2.91% wished they had not joined a committee and this year 2.55%.

Surprisingly for society committee members there was little change in this year of lockdown and the uncertainty of the pandemic in the value of societies to their college experience. This is heartening to know that the societies had the support and the knowledge built up to be able to not only survive but thrive during a pandemic. The IT support we had developed and the way we were all able to transition seamlessly online and the creativity and innovation of everyone involved shows that the core idea of a society, this group of like minded people creating a community for their members is robust and has the ability to endure.

Because of your involvement in Societies how many of the following statements apply to you?

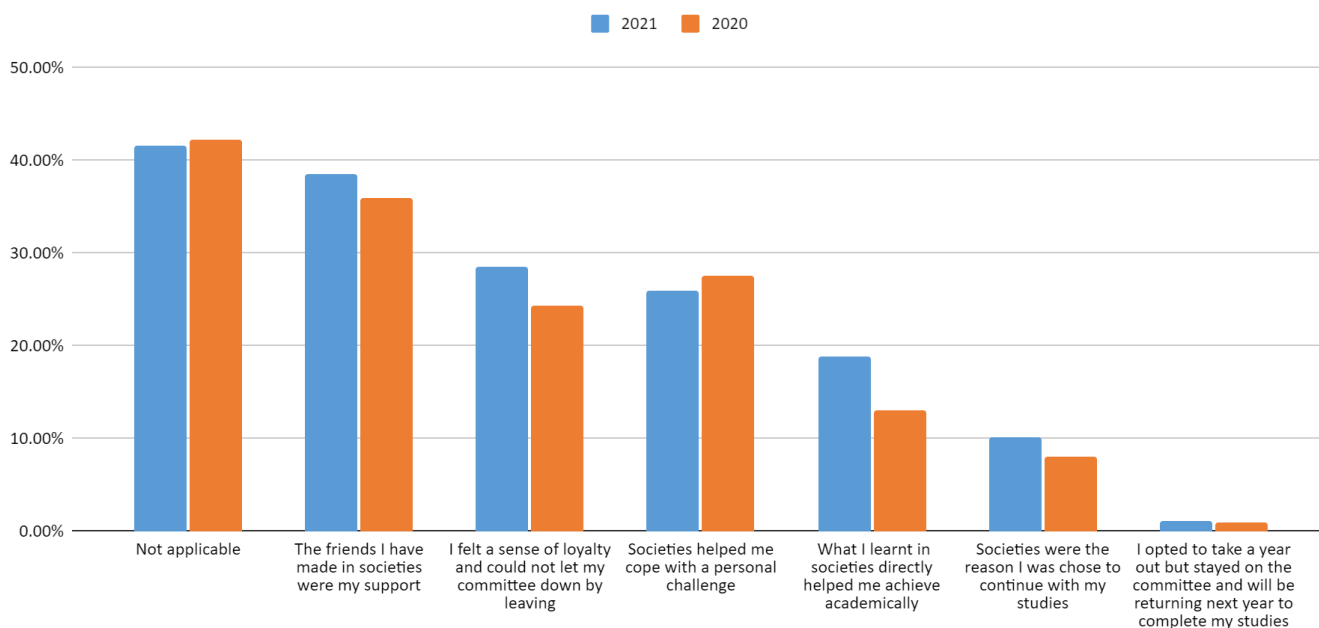


	I learnt a new skill	There was always something to do	I feel a strong sense of belonging to the university because of my experience in societies	My work in societies will be very helpful in looking for a job	As a graduate I will have great memories of my time in college	Keeping busy with societies keep me focused and I found it helped all aspects of my life
2020	71.14%	56.44%	63.31%	49.55%	55.15%	46.31%
2021	70.33%	63.26%	59.92%	55.40%	52.65%	44.60%
	I made my best friends through societies	As a member of a minority group I found a sense of belonging through societies	The workload in societies interfered with my studies	I have changed my career path due to my experience in societies	If I could start the year over I would not take up a committee position	The society work was fine but the internal conflicts in the society made the year very difficult
2020	43.85%	22.04%	13.37%	9.17%	3.58%	2.91%
2021	43.42%	18.47%	15.52%	7.66%	2.55%	2.75%

Societies Aid Retention

This year the figures of students who had contemplated leaving dropped by less than 0.5% to 41.75%. This meant that 58% of student had contemplated dropping out.

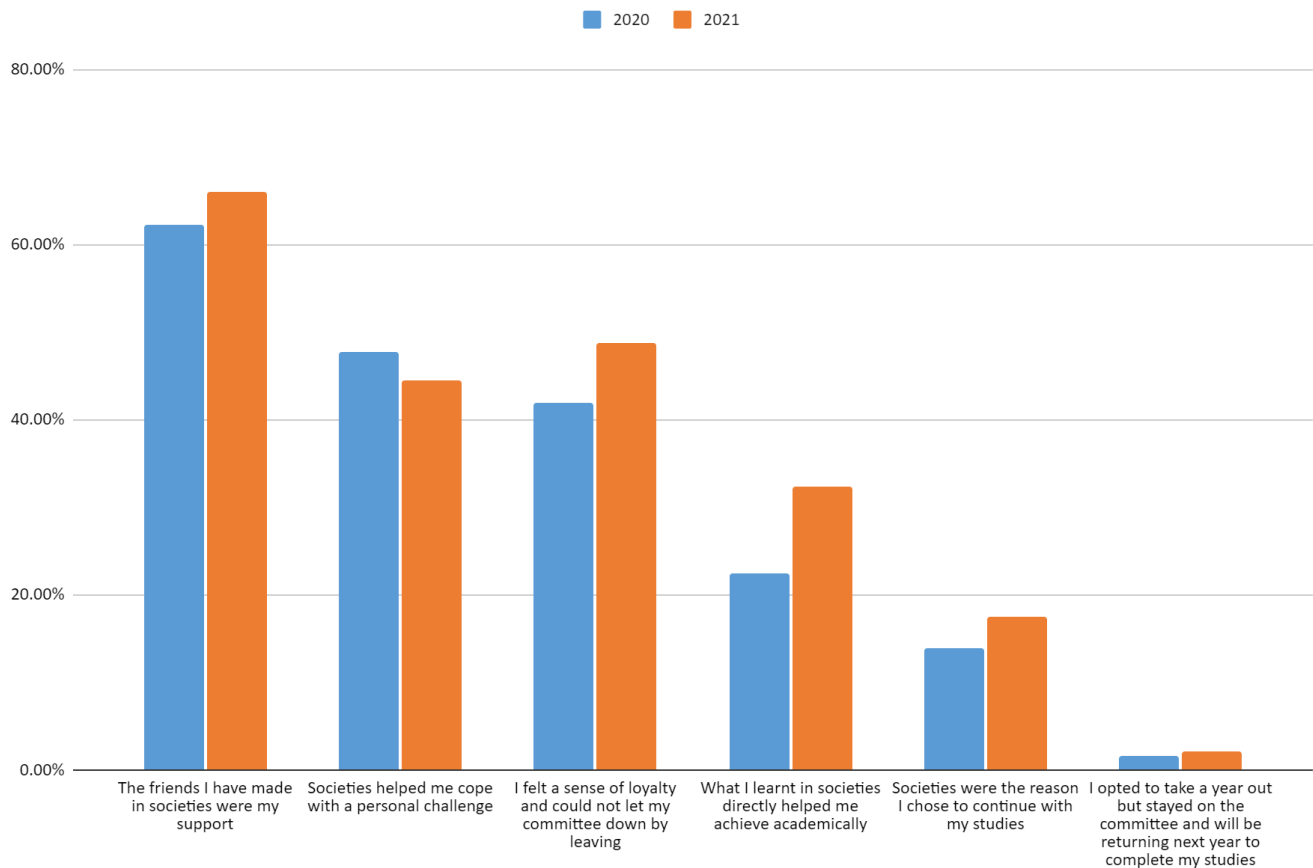
If at any stage during the year you contemplated leaving college or felt yourself under significant pressure personally or academically to what degree did your involvement in societies help you cope?



	Not applicable	The friends I have made in societies were my support	I felt a sense of loyalty and could not let my committee down by leaving	Societies helped me cope with a personal challenge	What I learnt in societies directly helped me achieve academically	Societies were the reason I was chose to continue with my studies	I opted to take a year out but stayed on the committee and will be returning next year to complete my studies
2020	42.17%	36.02%	24.27%	27.63%	12.98%	8.05%	0.89%
2021	41.65%	38.51%	28.49%	25.93%	18.86%	10.22%	1.18%

Responses by % of the 517 students who said they had contemplated leaving college

Of the remaining 58% (which represents 297 students), despite lockdown and only virtual communication, societies made a significant contribution to them completing their academic year. In some cases the reasons that societies helped them to stay increased, for example last year 62% cited the friends they made were their support, this increased to 68%. Last year 42% felt a sense of loyalty and could not let my committee down by leaving this jumped to 49%. Last year 22% believed that what they learnt in societies helped them academically this increased to 32%. Last year 10% said societies were the reason they chose to continue with their studies this year this increased to 18%. The number of students who took a year out with the intention of returning to their studies increased by less than one percent to 2.02%. The only reason that decreased was how societies helped them cope with a personal challenge, this dropped from 48% to 44%.



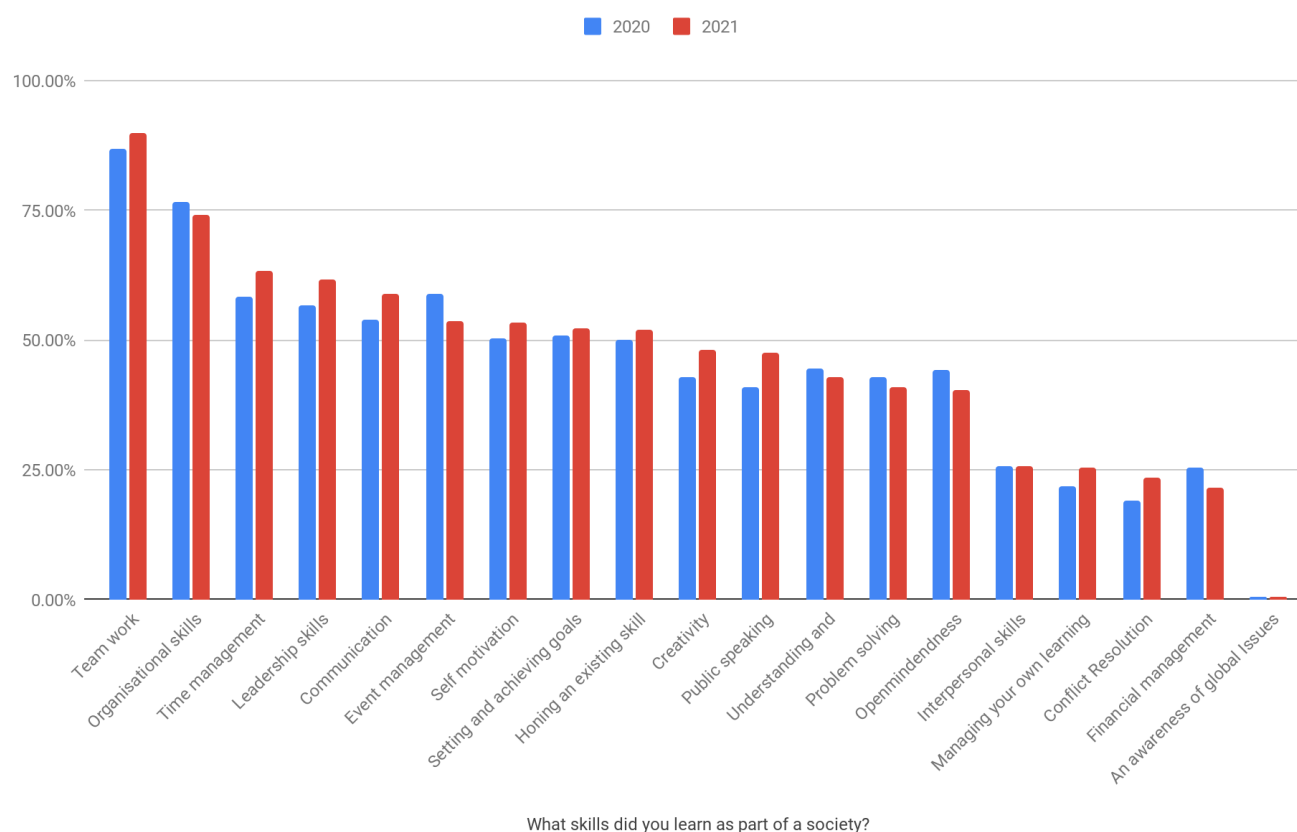
If at any stage during the year you contemplated leaving college or felt yourself under significant pressure personally or academically to what degree did your involvement in societies help you cope?

	The friends I have made in societies were my support	Societies helped me cope with a personal challenge	I felt a sense of loyalty and could not let my committee down by leaving	What I learnt in societies directly helped me achieve academically	Societies were the reason I chose to continue with my studies	I opted to take a year out but stayed on the committee and will be returning next year to complete my studies
2020	62.28%	47.78%	41.97%	22.44%	13.93%	1.55%
2021	65.99%	44.44%	48.82%	32.35%	17.51%	2.02%

Skills for life and to help create a healthy campus.

Committee members learnt a wide variety of vital life skills, the top five were TeamWork (90%) Organisational skills (74%) Time management jumped 5% to 3rd place this year at 63% pushing Leadership Skills to 4th place at (61%), Communication jumped to 5th place at 59% while Event Management dropped by 5%, all skills needed for success both in their careers and life. What is most surprising is that the learning did not change significantly from last year and Teamwork. Creativity, Public Speaking, Managing your own learning and conflict resolution saw the greatest increase from last year.

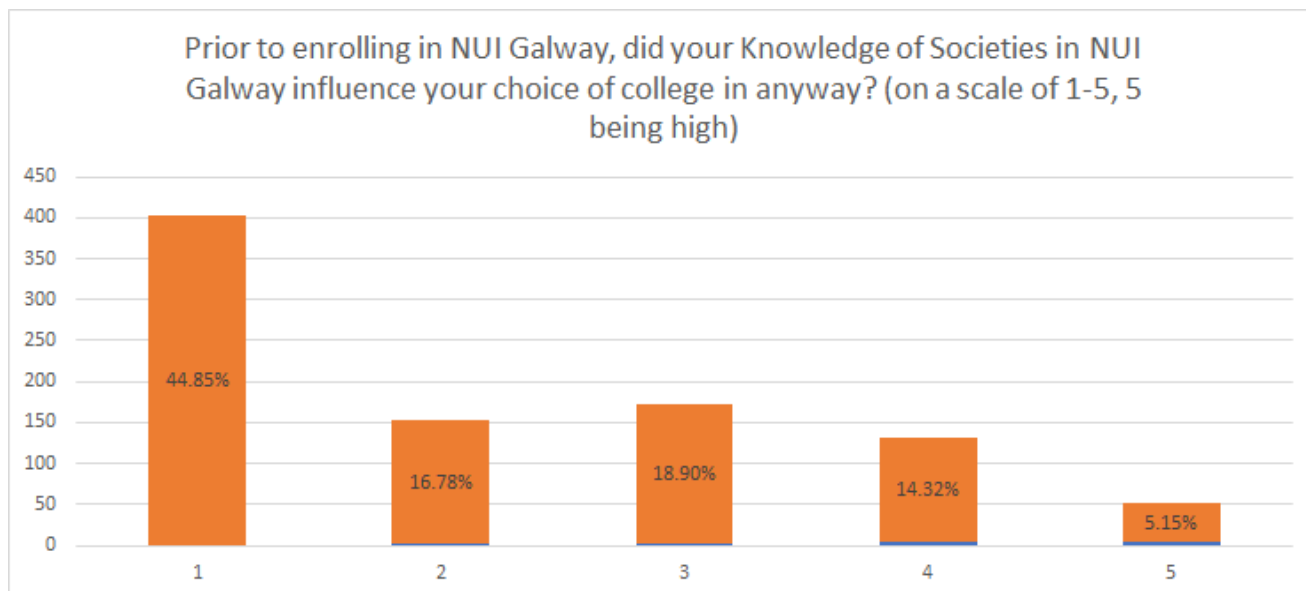
2020 and 2021



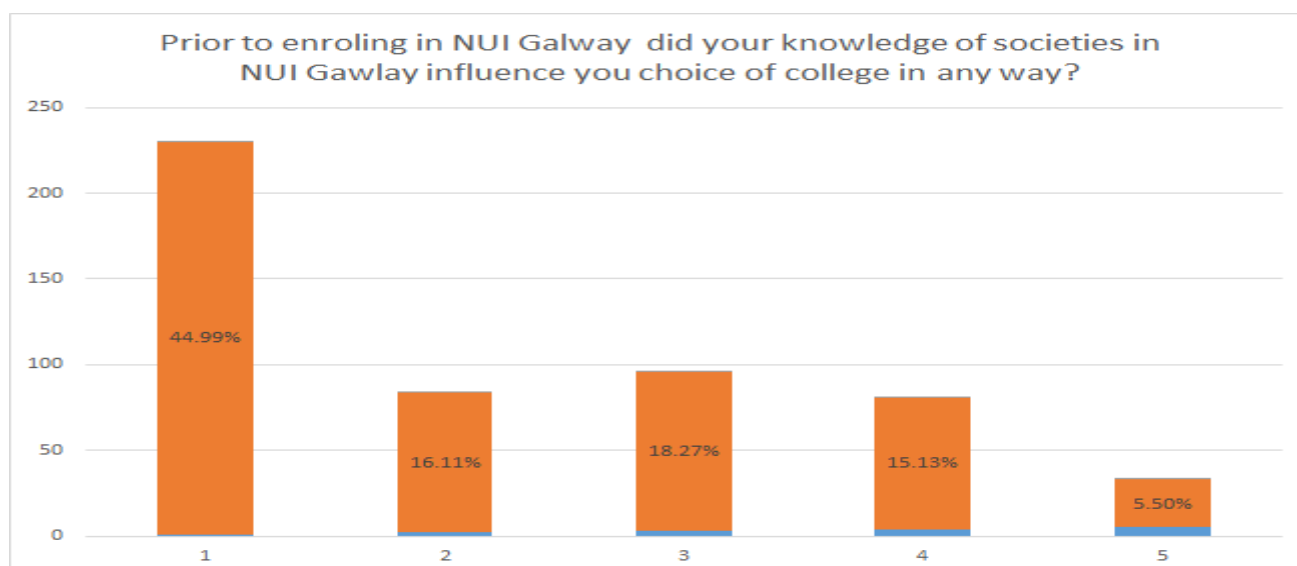
	2020	2021		2020	2021		2020	2021
Team work	86.91%	89.78%	Setting and achieving goals	50.78%	52.26%	Openmindendness	44.30%	40.28%
Organisational skills	76.51%	74.26%	Honing an existing skill	50.11%	51.87%	Interpersonal skills	25.75%	25.74%
Time management	58.39%	63.26%	Creativity	42.95%	48.13%	Managing your own learning	21.81%	25.54%
Leadership skills	56.62%	61.69%	Public speaking	40.83%	47.54%	Conflict Resolution	19.08%	23.58%
Communication	54.03%	58.94%	Understanding and appreciating difference	44.41%	42.83%	Financial management	25.28%	21.61%
Event management	58.95%	53.63%	Problem solving	42.73%	40.86%	An awareness of global Issues	0.45%	0.59%
Self motivation	50.34%	53.24%						

Societies Help Students Choose NUI Galway

Last year 19% of students (that is 174 students) were influenced by Societies to choose NUI Galway (selected 4 or 5) in addition to the 18.90% who selected 3, Overall over half of the student sample were influenced by NUI Galway Societies to varying degrees, Societies run numerous school outreach programmes throughout the year which may contribute to this phenomenon. For 48 students it was the deciding factor. This year this increased to 20% who were influenced by societies in their choice of university (selected 4 or 5) and the deciding factor (5) rose slightly from 5.15% to 5.50%. The number who were not influenced at all (chose 1 on the scale) increased by just over 1% to 44.99%. For 28 students this year Societies were the deciding factor in choosing to attend NUI Galway.



2020 survey results



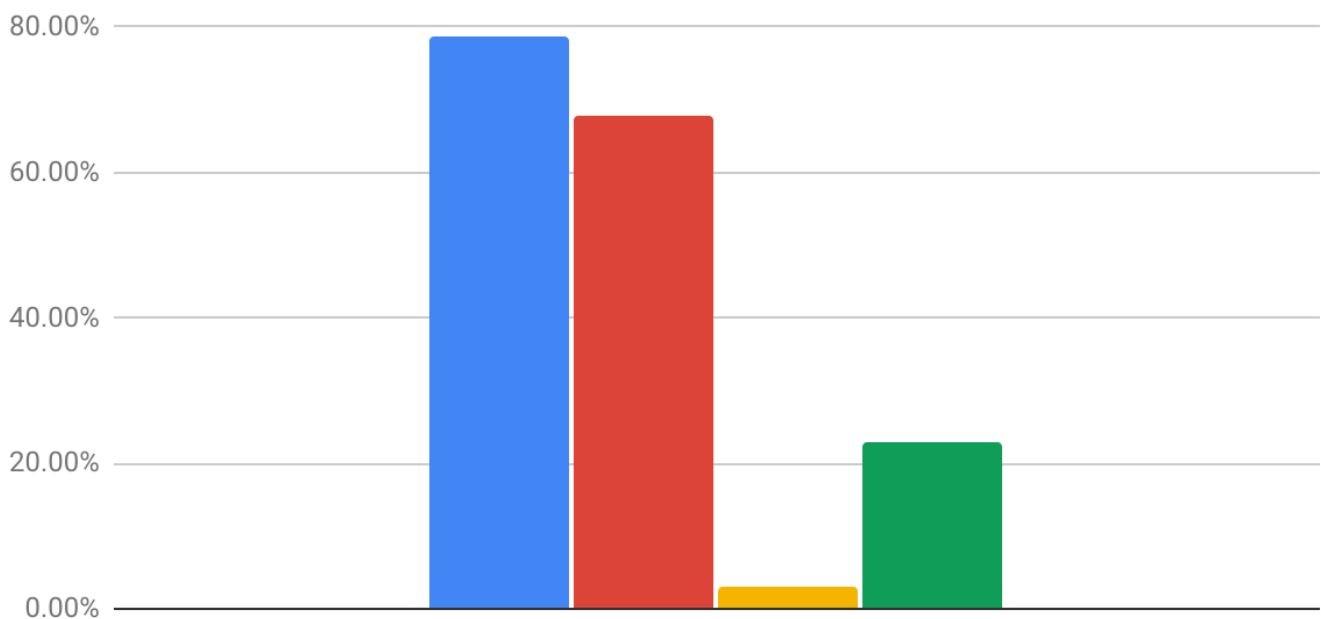
2021 survey results

New Questions

This year we introduced new questions to see what impact lockdown had on the societies, what worked for them and what we can learn from the experience.

How was this year for you as a committee member

- Being part of a society has had a positive impact on my mental health
- I felt supported in my committee work by the Societies Office / SocsBox
- I did not feel supported in my committee work by the Societies Office / SocsBox
- I felt supported personally by the Societies Office / SocsBox



Being part of a society has had a positive impact on my mental health	I felt supported in my committee work by the Societies Office / SocsBox	I did not feel supported in my committee work by the Societies Office / SocsBox	I felt supported personally by the Societies Office / SocsBox
78.78%	67.78%	2.95%	22.99%

How was this year for your Society

In this section we asked the committee members a series of questions and to choose any options that were relevant for them. We also asked about how they found the service we provided for them. At the start of the year we were full of anxiety about how the societies would fare and the team in the Societies Office (SocsBox) tirelessly tried numerous forms of communication and looked for new ways to support the societies through the year. Given that the team were all working from home makes their success all the more admirable, the virtual help desk we provided for societies via zoom, also acted as a virtual office for the team and allowed us to work together on projects, stay in contact and maintain team spirit.

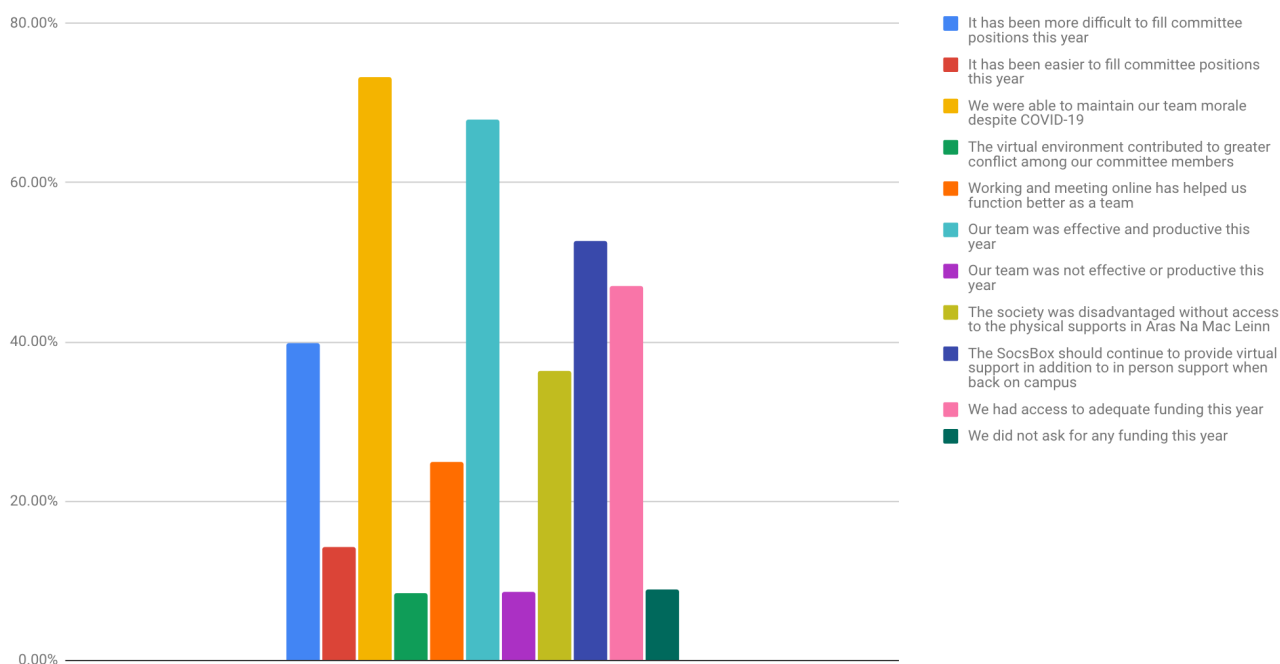
The societies themselves proved to be extraordinarily resilient and committed to providing opportunities for their members, given the circumstances this is a huge testament to the calibre of our student in societies and the absolute importance of having dedicated support staff to enable the committee members to provide such a valuable service to the wider student population. The University Societies coordination Group were also exemplary this year in their care and concern for the societies and the wider student population.

The societies themselves found they were able to maintain team morale as 73% chose this option. 25% actually found working online helped them function better as a team, and 68% felt that their committee was effective and productive. 40% did find it more difficult to fill committee positions but this meant 60% did not, but only 14% found it easier to fill the positions. Thankfully only 8% found that the virtual environment contributed to greater conflict among the committee members. 9% felt that their committee did not function well as a team, which conversely meant that 81% did not see this option relevant for them.

Unsurprisingly 37% found they were at a disadvantage without access to Aras na Mac Leinn and some societies are very dependent on physical space, but it is interesting to note that the majority found ways to adapt. It was heartening to see that the efforts of the Societies Office to provide virtual support did not go unnoticed and 52% asked that we should continue to provide virtual support in tandem with in-person support when we return to campus.

Only 47% felt they had access to adequate funding, this is interesting as all funding requests were approved and training was made available through the year, we do provide ongoing training for treasurers and repeatedly communicated to the societies that funding was available, but not everyone answering the survey was a treasurer so it will be interesting to investigate how this 53% of the respondents did not feel there was adequate funding. We also launched a 'seed funding for great ideas' which did get some interesting responses. 9% of the respondents said their society did not request funding. Many societies would have found that they either had sufficient funds from last year or that their virtual events did not require funds.

With the approval of the USCG the Societies Office undertook a number of initiatives to provide gifts for students by post and also ran two initiatives in semester two when the students were back on campus studying. Easter eggs in the library and Positiv-Tea packs in the study areas during study week. The societies were provided with guides on how to purchase vouchers for their members and how to post gifts, a big shout out to the staff in the mail room for their support. This year they were also given funding towards hoodies and there was good uptake on these opportunities.



It has been more difficult to fill committee positions this year	It has been easier to fill committee positions this year	We were able to maintain our team morale despite COVID-19	The virtual environment contributed to greater conflict among our committee members
39.88%	14.15%	73.28%	8.45%
Working and meeting online has helped us function better as a team	Our team was effective and productive this year	Our team was not effective or productive this year	The society was disadvantaged without access to the physical supports in Aras Na Mac Leinn
24.95%	67.98%	8.64%	36.35%
The SocsBox should continue to provide virtual support in addition to in person support when back on campus	We had access to adequate funding this year	We did not ask for any funding this year	
52.65%	46.95%	8.84%	

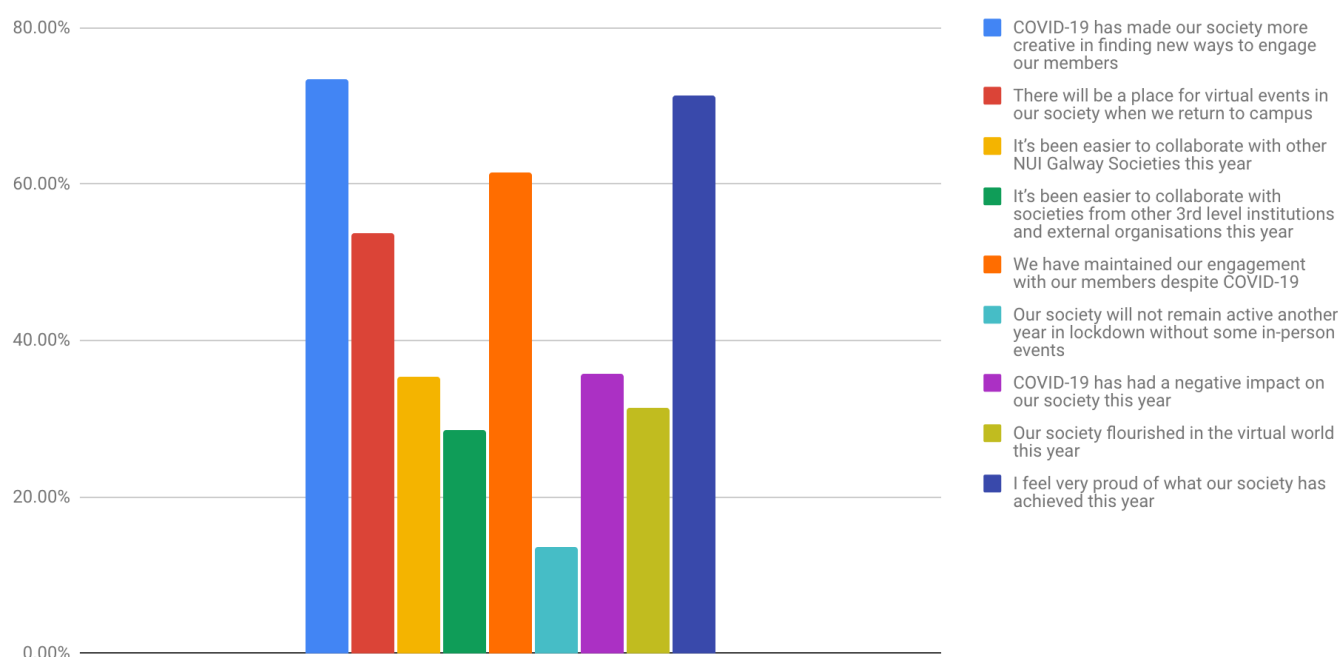
Impact of lockdown on the Societies this year

We asked the respondents a number of questions about the impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown on their society.

73% agreed that Covid-19 had made their society more creative in finding new ways to engage. 71% were very proud of what their society achieved this year, 31% believed their society had flourished this year. 61% felt they had maintained our engagement with our members despite COVID-19.

Were there any advantages to virtual events?. 54% felt there would be a place for virtual events when they return to on-campus activity, 35% said it was easier to collaborate with other societies and 28% found it easier to collaborate with societies in other colleges.

36% believed lockdown negatively impacted their society and 14% believe their society will not remain active another year in lockdown without some in-person events.



COVID-19 has made our society more creative in finding new ways to engage our members	There will be a place for virtual events in our society when we return to campus	It's been easier to collaborate with other NUI Galway Societies this year	It's been easier to collaborate with societies from other 3rd level institutions and external organisations this year
73.48%	53.63%	35.36%	28.49%

We have maintained our engagement with our members despite COVID-19	Our society will not remain active another year in lockdown without some in-person events	COVID-19 has had a negative impact on our society this year	Our society flourished in the virtual world this year	I feel very proud of what our society has achieved this year
61.49%	13.56%	35.76%	31.43%	71.32%

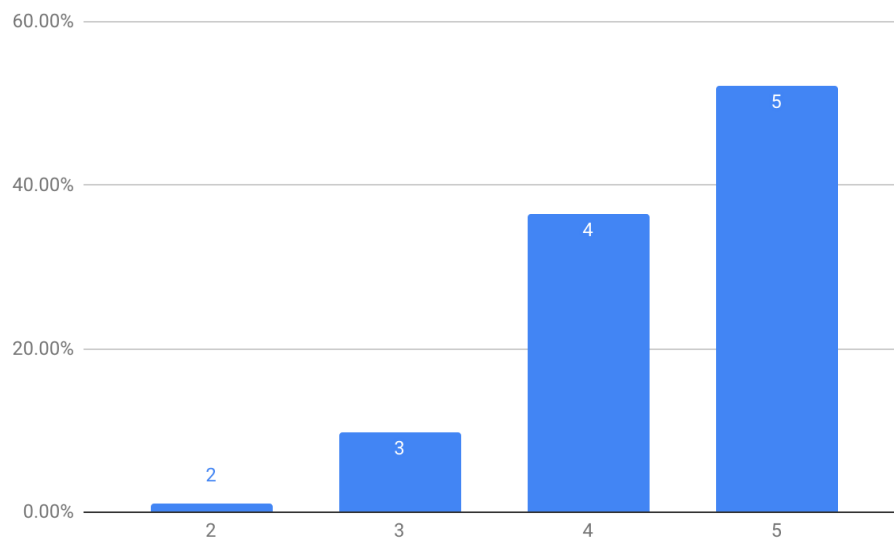
Communication

In the next section we asked about how societies felt they had managed to communicate with their members and the wider community and how the societies office had communicated with them. We also asked them to specify the methods of communication they used and found most useful.

Question: “We were able to communicate successfully with our members”.

1 strongly disagree 5 strongly agree

We asked this question to ascertain how successfully the committees felt they had communicated with their members, given that the majority of their interaction was virtual. 52% strongly agreed they had been successful with a further 35% scoring 4 on the scale. 87% successful with just over 1% felt they had not been successful.

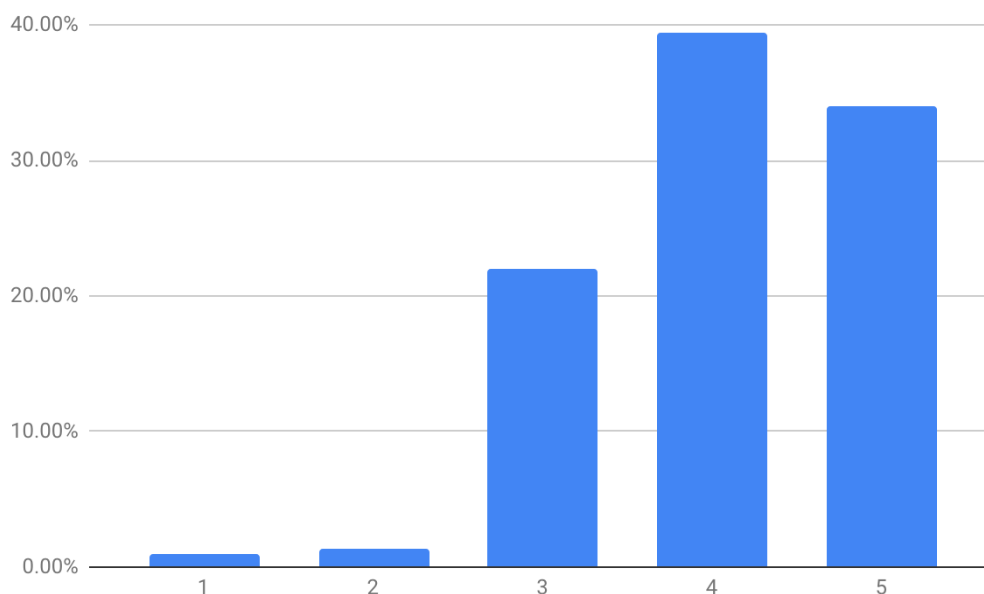


1	2	3	4	5
0.39%	0.98%	9.82%	36.54%	52.26%

Question: “We were able to communicate successfully with the public”

1 strongly disagree 5 strongly agree

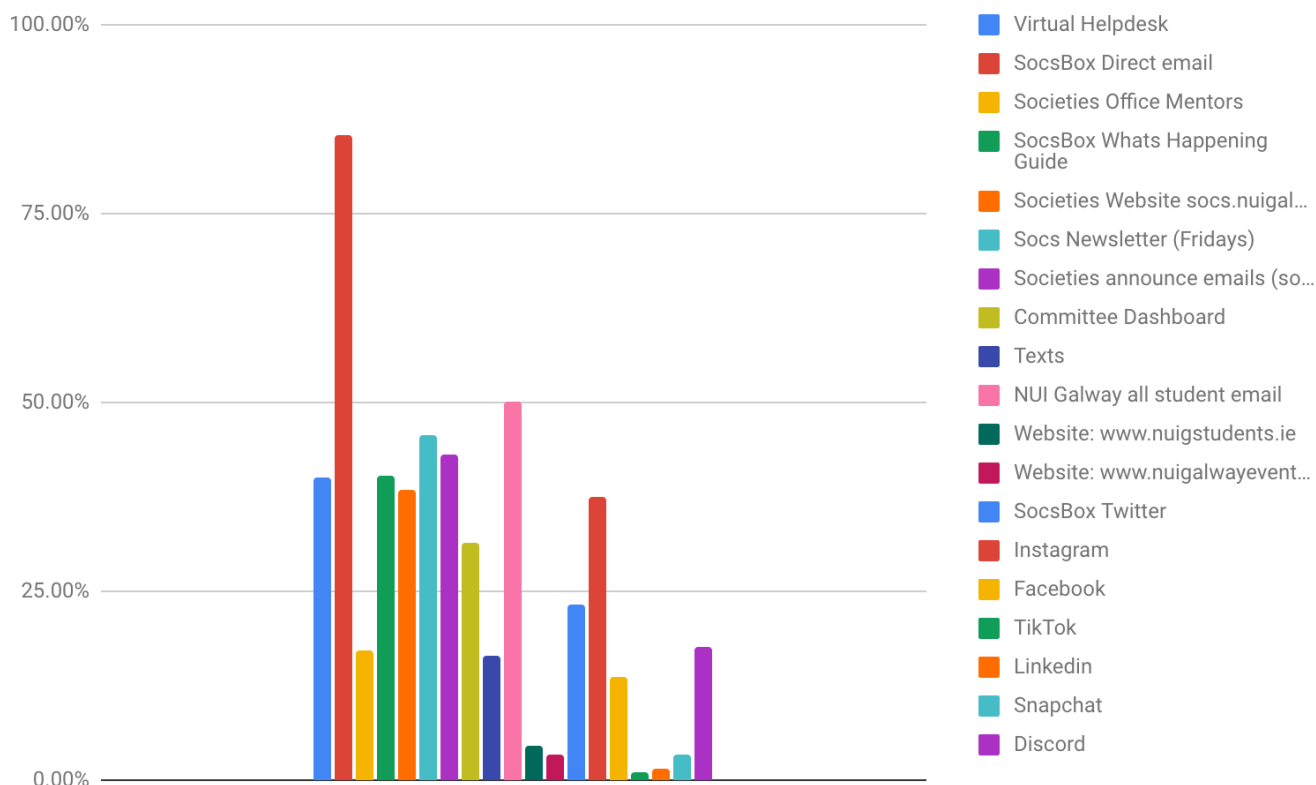
The respondents did not feel their communication with the public was as successful as with their members, but given the constraints of virtual events there were much less events open to the public this year and not all societies would have been looking to communicate with people other than their members. The societies did manage some media coverage for bigger events but the main focus for most was keeping their membership engaged. 34% felt they successfully engaged and 40% rated 4. 74% felt they communicated with the public and just over 2% felt they were not successful with 22% scoring a 3.



1	2	3	4	5
0.98%	1.38%	22.00%	39.49%	33.99%

What was the most successful method of communication between the Societies Office (SocsBox) Societies and the ?

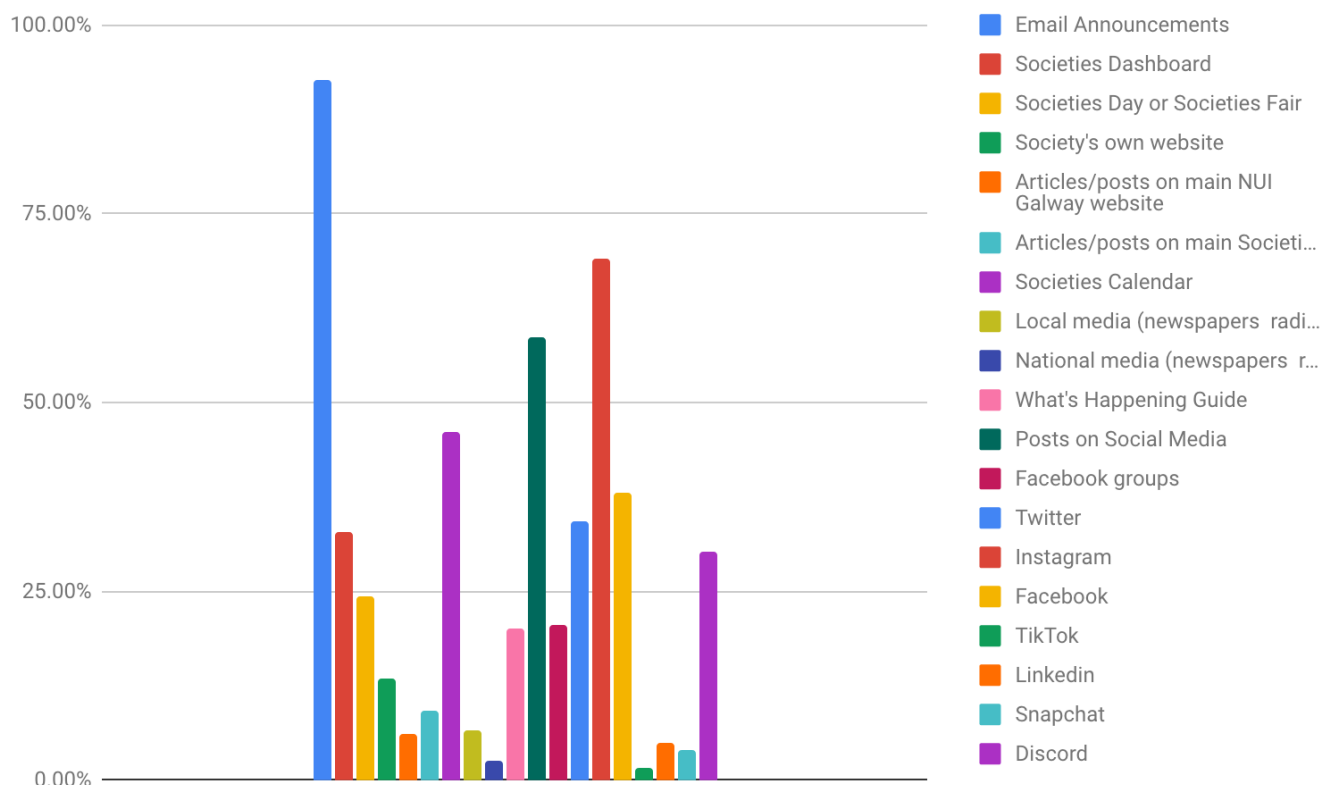
One of the biggest challenges was keeping in contact with the societies, we tried numerous methods. The most useful appears to be our emails directly to the committee's NUI Galway student email (85%). (this is a feature in the societies dashboard which allows the office to email directly to committees student emails and is updated automatically as committee members join or leave committees). The second most popular is again email to their student e-mail as an all student email (50%), this is much less frequent, but the message is that emails sent directly to their student email do get the message across. We also send emails to the societies email addresses, (each society has their own gmail and we can easily send e-mails to this society announce email via our google accounts. Not all committee members will have access to this. 43% found this method useful. We introduced a new weekly email, sent every Friday at the start of semester 2 and 46% found this useful. We also had a virtual help desk Monday - Thursday 2pm - 8pm and 40% of those surveyed availed of this. 40% found the weekly What's Happening Guide a useful method of communication (sent every Monday which includes all the events posted to the calendar and other info and competitions) The societies website was used by 39% and in general social media scored low with the exception of Instagram (38%) with less than 1% finding TikTok useful (we only started using this in semester 2), Discord is increasing in popularity with 18% finding it useful. Facebook now only useful to 14%.



Virtual Helpdesk	SocsBox Direct email	Societies Office Mentors	SocsBox Whats Happening Guide	Societies Website socs.nuigalway.ie	Socs Newsletter (Fridays)	Societies announce emails (socsofficer-announce)
40.08%	85.46%	17.09%	40.28%	38.51%	45.58%	43.22%
Committee Dashboard	Texts	NUI Galway all student email	Website: www.nuigstudents.ie	Website: www.nuigalwayevents.ie	SocsBox Twitter	
31.43%	16.50%	50.10%	4.52%	3.34%	23.18%	
Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Linkedin	Snapchat	Discord	
37.52%	13.75%	0.98%	1.57%	3.34%	17.68%	

What methods did your society use to Communicating with your members and the public

In this section Email (93%) was the most popular method, societies have an announce mailing list which is automatically updated as members join and members can also unsubscribe, societies tend to have more contacts on their announce mailing list than current members as alumni and guests can also join mailing lists, and student can choose to stay on a mailing list once they graduate. Social media scored 59% with Instagram as the most popular at 69% with Facebook (38%), Twitter (34%) and Discord (30%) being the next most popular. The societies calendar was chosen by 46% but websites in general scored quite low, societies own websites 14%, the societies general website 9% and NUI Galway website 6%. Local (7%) and national (3%) media also scored low. Unsurprisingly societies day scored only 24%, this year it was only virtual so numbers were down but it is only one communication method to get members to join, how they communicate afterwards is what counts. LinkedIn (5%), Snapchat (4%) and TikTok (2%) have not gained popularity yet.



Email Announcements	Societies Dashboard	Societies Day or Societies Fair	Society's own website	Articles/posts on main NUI Galway website	Articles/posts on main Societies website	Societies Calendar
92.73%	32.81%	24.36%	13.56%	6.09%	9.23%	46.17%
Local media (newspapers radio etc)	National media (newspapers radio etc)	What's Happening Guide	Posts on Social Media	Facebook groups	Twitter	
6.68%	2.55%	20.04%	58.55%	20.43%	34.18%	
Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	LinkedIn	Snapchat	Discord	
69.16%	38.11%	1.57%	4.91%	3.93%	30.26%	

Society Videos

[Society Awards 2021](#)

[Orientation 2020](#)

[Riona Hughes; What we learnt from the Pandemic](#)

Promo Videos

[March Lunch Meetups](#)

[SocsBox News](#) Link to weekly editions

[Society Training](#)