

2024 INQAAHE Talk on
QA and SDGs

*How do universities in Taiwan respond to SDGs?
from perspectives of QA and global rankings*

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Several issues

- QA mandates for SDGs
- QA standards for SDGs and relevance to university mission and vision
- SDGs and institutional governance
- Challenges for incorporation of SDGS into teaching, learning and research

Context and sustainability in higher education

- Massification and marketization in the global competitive era
- Accountability and institutional governance in higher education
 - Global Ranking and Quality Assurance are as regarded policy instruments under neoliberalism
 - Academic performance metrics in Global Rankings and QA (THE, QS and INQAAHE)
- New focuses : diversification, relevance and transformative capacity
 - How research, teaching quality and learning outcomes are relevant to SDGs via QA and global metrics

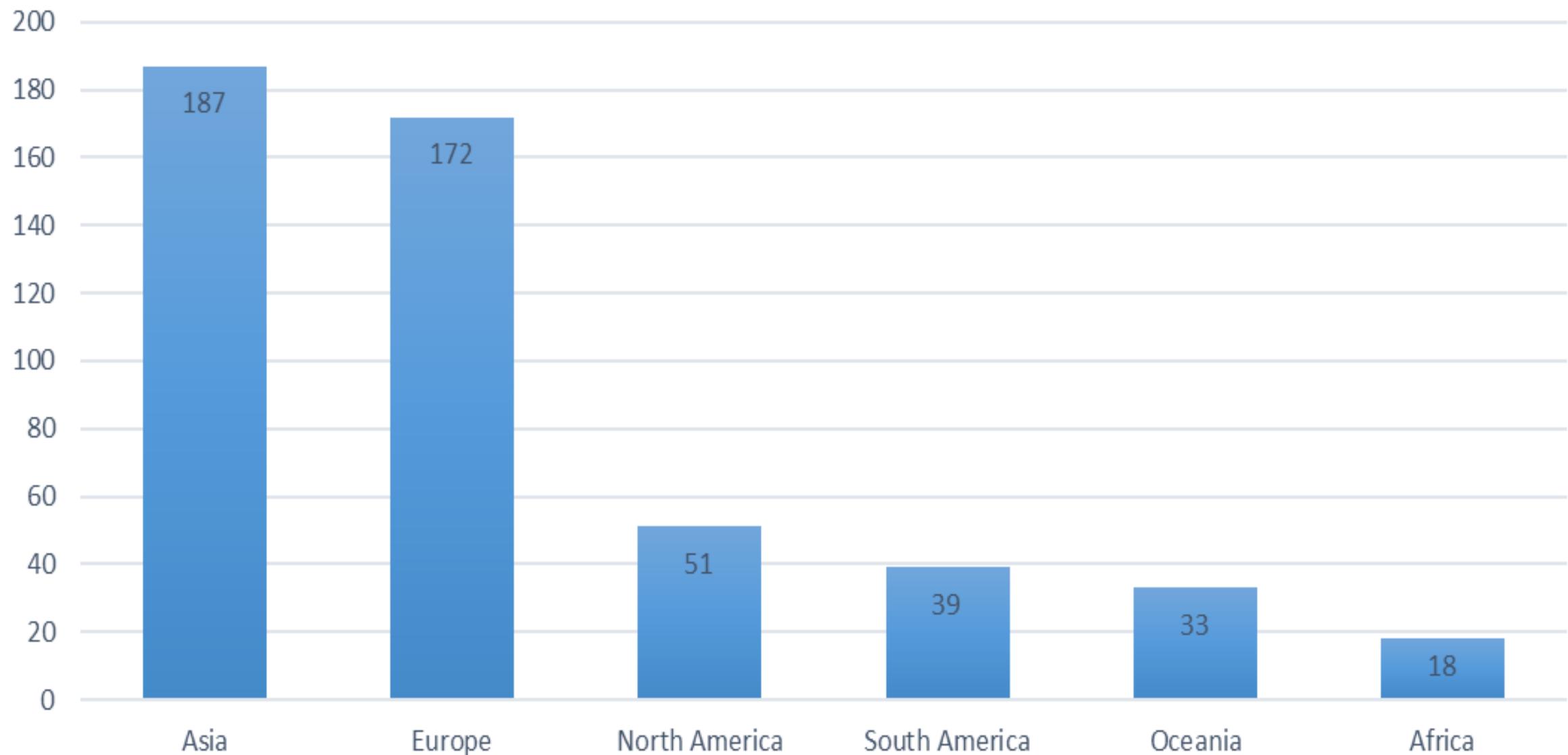
Sustainability in Asian Higher education

- The concept of “sustainability” seems to be invisibly institutionalized within campuses in Asia via taking proactive initiatives
 - to build resilience, strengthening environmental sustainability, and advancing inclusiveness
 - Green campus, social impacts, educational effectiveness
- HEIs are motivated to develop institutional strategies related to the advancement of SDGs due to global rankings and national accreditation
 - THE impact ranking, QA sustainability ranking, INQAAHE pilot study

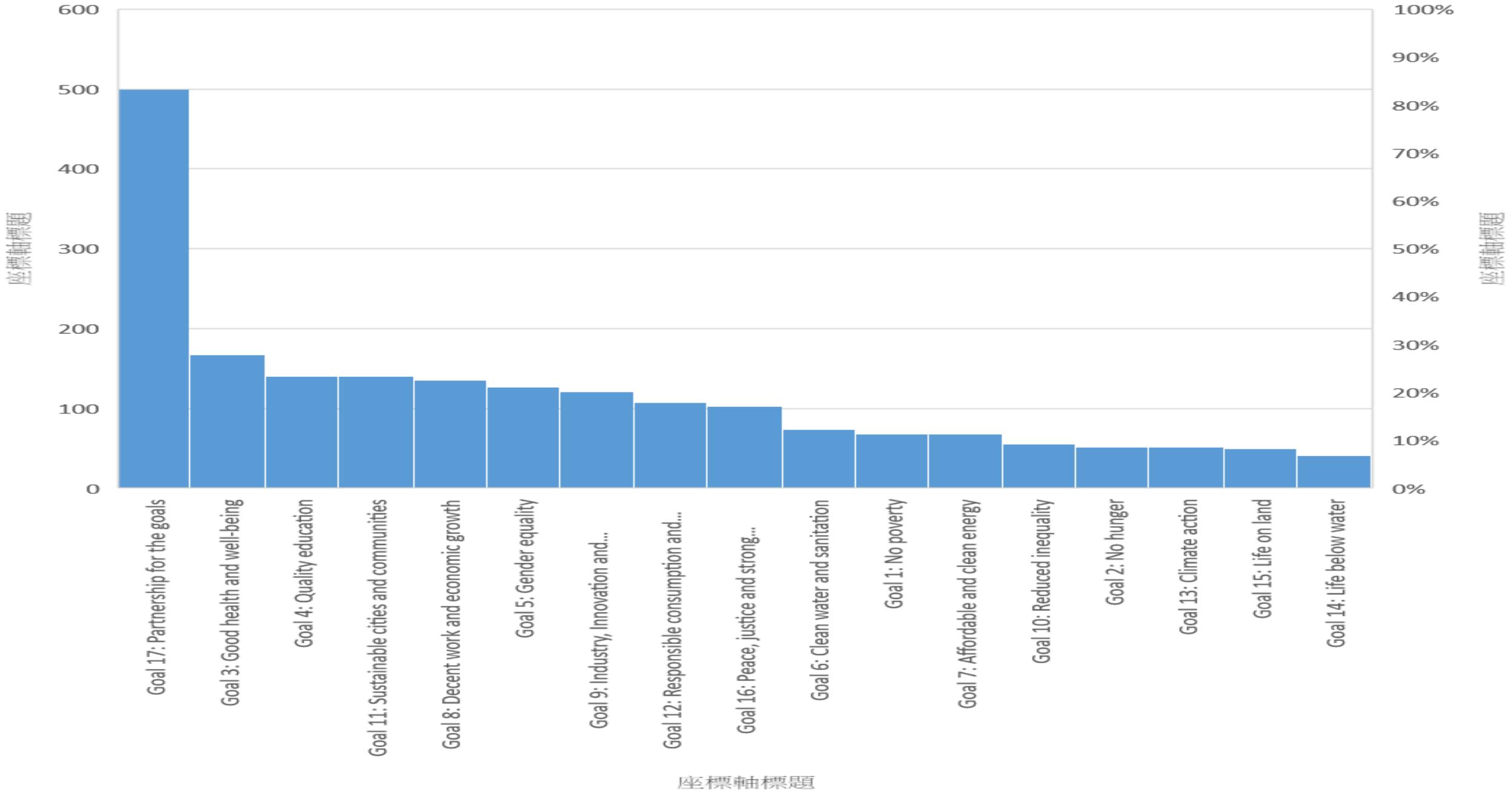
Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings

- The only global performance tables that assess universities against the united nations' sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- Self reported
- Four indicators
 - Research: to deliver the SDGs is by creating research in relevant topics
 - Stewardship: to manage the related resources efficiently
 - Outreach : the work that universities do with their local, regional, national and international communities
 - Teaching: making sure that all alumni take forward the key lessons of sustainability into their future careers

top 500 by region



By Number of SDGs



QS World University Rankings: Sustainability

- all quantitative data
- Top 700 research universities
- Three dimensions
 - Social impact, environmental impact and governance

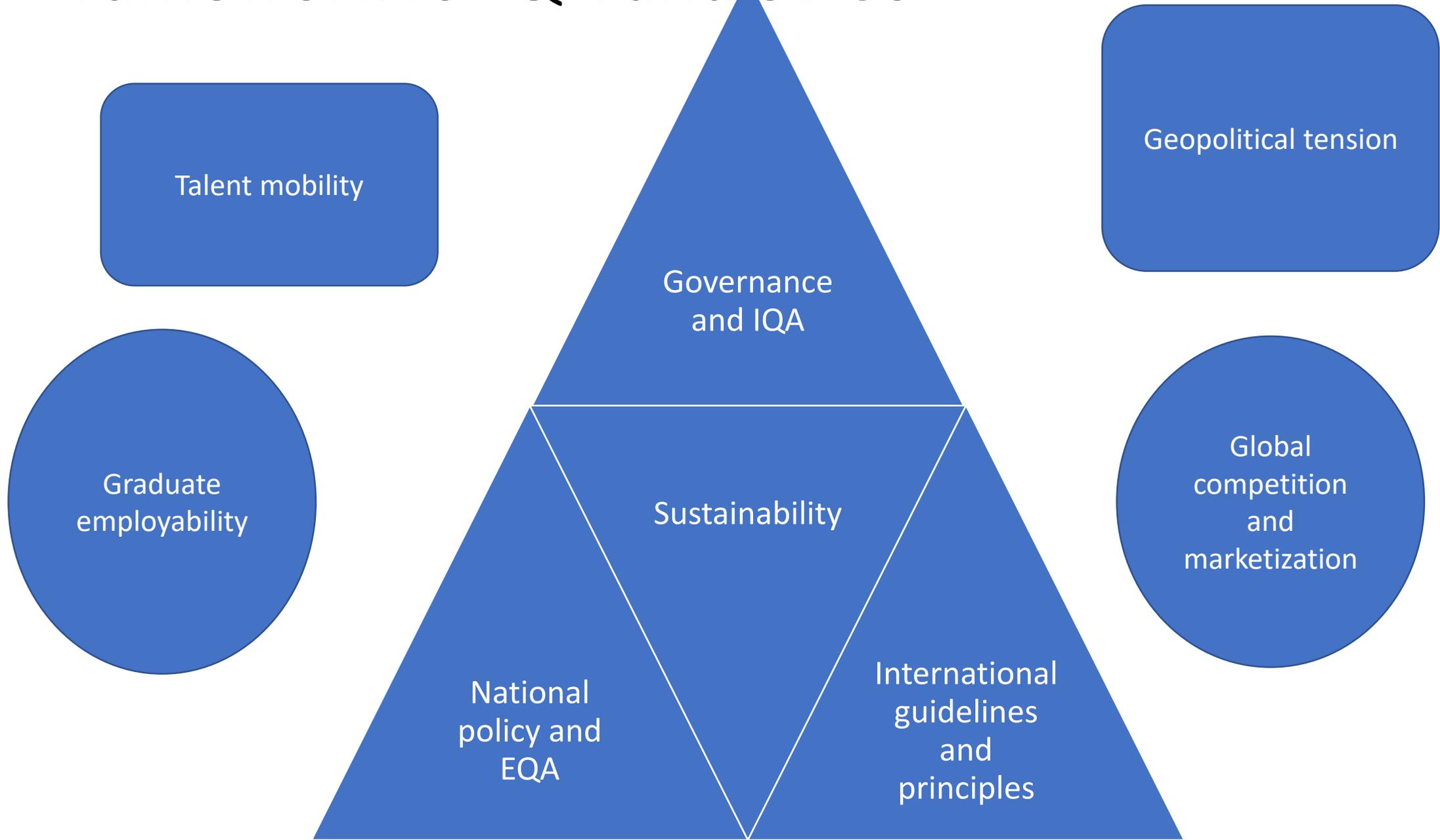
Performance Lens	Weight (Of the lens / Overall)
<u>Equality</u>	30% / 15%
<u>Knowledge Exchange</u>	20% / 10%
<u>Impact of Education</u>	20% / 10%
<u>Employability and Opportunities</u>	20% / 10%
<u>Quality of Life</u>	10% / 5%

Performance Lens	Weight (Of the lens / Overall)
<u>Sustainable Institutions</u>	35% / 17.5%
<u>Sustainable Education</u>	40% / 20%
<u>Sustainable Research</u>	25% / 12.5%

Governance (2023)

Code	Metric	Metric Weight
GG1	Ethics Culture	1%
GG2	Open-Access Publishing	1%
GG3	Dedicated staff / team for Sustainable Development	1%
GG4	Transparent financial reporting	1%
GG5	Student's Union	1%
GG6	Student Representation in Governance	1%
GG7	Published governance minutes	1%
GG8	National Signatory to UN charter against torture	1%
GG9	Staff perception	1%
GG10	Policy Citations (Governance)	1%

Framework for QA and SDGs



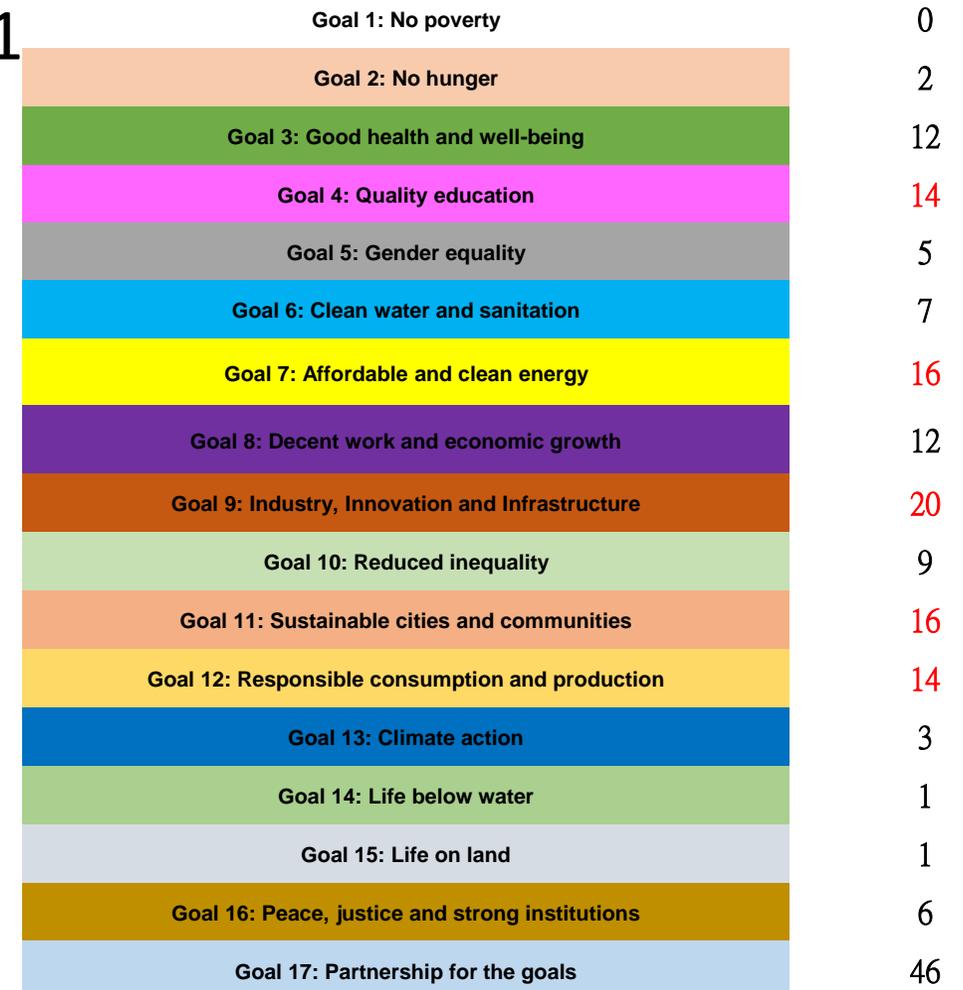
Taiwan case

Institutional governance and SDGs implementation in Taiwan context

- “Taiwan Sustainable Development Goals” was released by the government in December 2018
- The Ministry of Education (MOE) included concept of “sustainability” into **the University Social Responsibility (USR) Program in 2019** (MOE, 2020; Ho, et.al., 2022)
 - and requested university applicants to implement the 17 SDGs in a comprehensive manner
- **The third new cycle of institutional accreditation of HEEACT** added “social responsibility and sustainable development” as one of the four standards.
 - **Indicator 4.2 stated that “institutions should be able to commit themselves to social responsibility in linking to institutional development plans” (HEEACT, 2023, p.38).**
- 46 Taiwanese universities participated the THE Impact Ranking and 10 were listed in the QS sustainability Ranking

Performance of Taiwan's universities in THE Impact Ranking 2022

- 46 Taiwan's universities are listed in the top 1
- 27 are public universities; 19 are private
- Public universities focus on
 - Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
 - Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy
 - Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities
- Private sectors tend to be interested in
 - **Goal 4: Quality education**
 - Goal 3: Good health and well-being
 - **Goal 10: Reduced inequality**



Advancing sustainability in higher education and institutional governance

(Stensaker & Hermansen, 2023)

- Two main objectives for universities to advance the SDGs,
 - **Self-image building**
 - universities often emphasize their self-image, academic duties and its relevance to mission, with a focus of social impacts, community engagement and global outreach.
 - **From a competitive advantage approach,**
 - universities are encouraged to align their educational offerings, research profiles, and academic strengths with specific SDGs paralleling their features, resources, capacities

Analysis of 46 universities' sustainability in
global ranking and national accreditation
and incorporation into institutional
governance

SDGs and institutional governance

- Majority of Taiwanese universities attempted to **incorporate sustainability initiatives into institutional strategic plans and aligned with their mission due to the upcoming national accreditation**
- In order to comply with the metrics of the third cycle of institutional accreditation by HEEACT, they shall respond to the SDGs metrics appropriately.
 - 46 institutions developed institutional strategic plans
 - 44 of them published sustainability reports
- Competitive advantage is the key reason driving universities for SDGs implementation

Strategies for SDGs implementation and impacts

- The common strategy is to align university social responsibility project
 - with general education curriculum.
- All university respondents highly agreed that it was quite significant **to partner with employers and local communities in SDGs implementation**
- **Strong leadership, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability culture building** are the gateways to the success of SDGs implementation

Challenges Taiwanese universities are facing from varying perspectives

- **Data accuracy and reliability** are the big concerns
- **A tracking system under IQA mechanism** is still in process
- It is harder to undertake **intersectoral coordination and negotiation**
- **Faculty and student engagement** remain limited

QA and SDGs in Taiwan higher education

- Three modes 三種模式
 - Service learning 服務學習
 - University social responsibility
 - **Incorporation with institutional strategic**
- Strategies
 - ***Establishment of SDGs office***
 - ***Connected with Reward system***
 - ***Engagement in global rankings (THE impact ranking)***

- ***Top SDGs***

- ***Inequality***
- ***Quality of education***
- ***Environmental protection***
- ***City sustainability***
- ***Partnership***

- **Challenges**

- Implementation at the program level
- University features and selected SDGs

Key concerns

- The aim of the SDGs metrics is to break away from the traditional measurement concept in higher education (Dilena, 2023).
 - their focuses of diversity, relevance and inclusiveness, not only respond the current global agendas for sustainability, but also pave the way for a foreseeably sustainable community
- still need to realize that critical issues and challenges would continue to disrupt the positive impacts which have brought into the sustainable globe.
 - engagement of varying stakeholders in HE which will likely leading to a paradigm shift is considered as the key element to the success of SDGs implementation on campus in the future

Statement from one President of Taiwan's research university

- *I really hope that **we can move away from the era of casually talking about SDGs sooner.** **We've talked too much, and the biggest challenge with SDGs is that our answers are still lacking.** Without engaging our faculty members and students, we haven't really found clear and quick solutions to overcome the current challenges. This is an aspect where we need to continue making mutual efforts and striving forward.*

Be Responsible , be sustainable



Thank you for your attention

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