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DELIVERABLE 3.1- SCOPING STUDY ON EXISTING
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE INITIATIVES
IN PARTNER LATIN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Document Control Sheet

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Contents

1. Introduction

This report gives an overview of the different Intercultural Competence initiatives that exist in the Latin American Higher Education Institutions who form the consortium of the *PROFIC: Professional Development in Intercultural Competence in Higher Education Institutions* project (599023-EPP-1-2018-1-UK-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP).

Latin American Universities who form part of the PROFIC consortium are as follows:
1) P4 Universidad Tecnologica de El Salvador (UTEC), El Salvador;
2) P5 Universidad Don Bosco (UDB), El Salvador;
3) P6 Universidad Nacional de Cordoba (UNC), Argentina;
4) P7 Universidad Nacional de Lanús (UNLa), Argentina;
5) P8 Universidad Nacional de La Plata (UNLP), Argentina;
6) P9 Universidad de Guadalajara (UG), Mexico; and
7) P10 Universidad Veracruzana (UV), Mexico.

The one of the main aims of PROFIC is to come up with professional development programme that can (further) support academic and administrative staff in Latin American Universities in the tasks of developing own intercultural competence (IC) and helping their students develop IC. The argument here is that for academic and administrative staff to be able to support students in the development of IC, staff members need to both have a high level of IC themselves and they need to know how to help others develop competence – more particularly how they can help the students they work with help develop IC.

To make sure that the professional development programme does not duplicate the already existing professional development offer at partner institutions and that it can complement what is already in place, the present scoping study was undertaken.

Each of these seven universities was asked to identify any documents, policies and initiatives on intercultural competence professional development that may exist at their institution, as well as report on what is currently done to help their students develop intercultural competence.

The exact task guidelines were as follows:

[Deliverable 3.1]:

We need to put together and prepare an "overview" of the existing documents, policies and initiatives on intercultural competence professional development at LA institutions who participate in PROFIC.

What exactly do you need to do?

1.   Make a list of existing documents, policies and/or initiatives (workshops, programmes, seminars, guidelines, etc.) that your institution has put in place to
   a) help your staff further develop own intercultural competence,
   b) help your staff in the tasks of developing students' intercultural competence,

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c) support your students in developing intercultural competence.

* Our focus is on "a" and "b" but we include the point on students because it might permit us to see additional staff needs.

** These documents / policies / initiatives might use the term "intercultural competence" or other terms that you consider synonymous to it. Consult the slides from Bilbao on our understanding of cultural layers and the concept of intercultural competence.

*** Your institution might have no such documents / policies / initiatives, that is fine. We just need to know what is already there (not to reinvent the wheel).

2.   For each item on your list, provide a 2-3 sentence brief description "summarising" the document/policy/initiative and indicating why you include it in the list

3.   Find where these documents and/or policy descriptions and/or descriptions of these initiatives can be consulted:
   a) If they are available online – include the link to the page where the relevant documents / information can be consulted (and add the annotated list to the Dropbox folder [WP3/Deliverable 3.1/Your institution acronym folder])
   b) If you have an internal document – add the document itself in the folder for your institution in the Dropbox folder [WP3/Deliverable 3.1/Your institution acronym folder]. Please name the documents in such a way that we can understand which document corresponds to which item in your list.
   c) If there is no document (in case of an initiative), identify who is/are the best person(s) to ask about the initiative – we will see how we can take it from there (indicate these names next to initiatives in the document you will add to the Dropbox folder)

The task guidelines were sent out by email and institutions had approximately one month to provide their answers. The present report was compiled on the basis of the information received and can probably not be considered exhaustive – more initiatives can exist at each University that for some reason have not been mentioned in individual institutional reports and could not, therefore, be featured in the present document.

The following categories of measures put in place to support the development of intercultural competence (IC) were distinguished:

   1/ **according to the target audience**
      - those aiming to help students develop their IC
      - those aiming to help academic and/or administrative staff develop their IC
      - those whose target audience are the local university community ("Outreach activities"), but participation in which can further enhance students and/or staff IC

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2/ **according to the type of "measure"**:
- institutional/policy documents that establish IC development as one of priorities, general objectives, axes, etc. of all the university activities
- special units or structures within university organigramme whose main aim is to promote actions and policies contributing to IC development of students and staff
- resources that aim to help staff/students to further develop (certain aspects of) IC
- initiatives (events, workshops, programmes, etc.) which can help staff and/or students develop IC

3/ **according to the types of cultures and cultural differences that seem to be the focus**
- initiatives and measures focusing on dealing with different national cultures ("focused on foreign cultures")
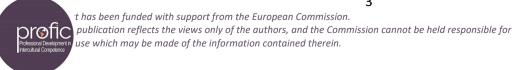- initiatives and measures focusing on differences within national cultures ("focused on inclusiveness").

In this latter category, three further sub-foci became apparent:
(i) addressing the divide between academic and non-academic cultures – working on making academic (or higher-education-institution) culture less foreign to incoming students and members of local communities (from small children to adults);
(ii) addressing the divide between "mainstream" and indigenous cultures – preparing teachers to work with learners from indigenous cultural backgrounds, and
(iii) addressing the divide between "high" and popular cultures – working on making "high" culture accessible to general population

Figure 1 (below) gives an overview of the "mapping" and the interplay of these three types of categories distinguished. The pages that follow provide more information on what is done at each Partner University.

The report is organised in seven sections (apart from this Introductory section):
- Institutional / Policy Documents
- Special Units / Structures
- Helping Academic and Administrative Staff Develop Intercultural Competence(s)
- Helping Students Develop Intercultural Competence(s)
- Outreach Activities
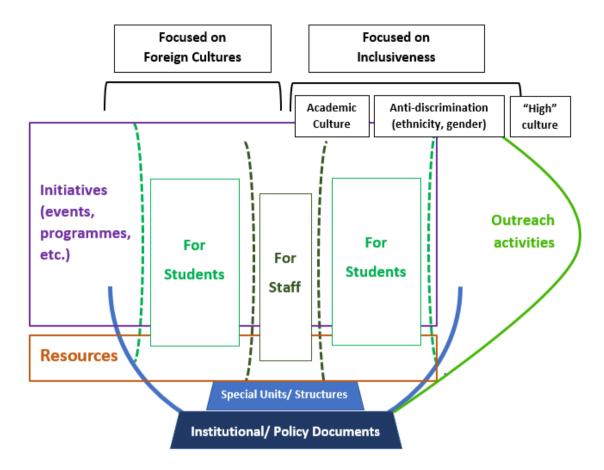- Two more initiatives
- Concluding remarks

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**Figure 1. "Mapping" of existing Intercultural Competence
initiatives in PROFIC partner Latin American Higher Education Institutions**

2. Institutional / Policy Documents

Some of the PROFIC LA Partner institutions have reported that their Strategic Plans or similar institution-level policy documents mention or highlight the need to develop students' and/or staff's intercultural competence(s).

- **P4 UTEC: Strategic Plan for Internationalisation** – mentions that students, teachers, and administrative staff must develop "universal understanding" and "skills … to live and work in a diverse world", that they should "strengthen the global competences", and that the university will strive to create "an intercultural environment" to ensure this; internationalisation of teaching is also a priority (even If this appears to be interpreted as achieved through exposure/contact with representatives of other cultures and language teaching and learning.
  [https://www.utec.edu.sv/utecdri/upload/pdf/Strategic_plan_for_internationalization.pdf]

- **P5 UBD: Proyecto de innovación curricular** – highlights the importance of building social "convivencia" (living-together) characterised by openness and respect for cultures; it also draws attention to the need for responsible and solidary participation in community life; finally, it says that the university approach to education has "recognition and value of

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cultural differences, as well as the capacity to promote intercultural dialogue" as one of its axes.

[http://rd.udb.edu.sv:8080/jspui/bitstream/11715/648/1/MODELO%20EDUCATIVO%20universidad%20don%20bosco.pdf]

- **P9 UG: Plan de Desarrollo del Centro Universitario de Los Lagos 2030** and **Universidad de Guadalajara. Plan de Desarrollo Institucional 2014-2030** – firstly, "inclusive and equitable university that inspires social mobility" is one of the strategic guidelines; secondly, "Internationalisation" strategic lines has as its aim 'to develop the set of cognitive and multicultural abilities called global competences, which enable students and academics to perform in work, social and cultural contexts different from their own and which promote the development of values like diversity, respect and tolerance' (own translation). This strategic line is translated into two objectives: "developing students' global and intercultural competences" and "fomenting international profile of university staff". In the Los Lagos Plan, the first is to be met through language learning and mobility, while in the whole-university document 'integration of international, intercultural and global dimension into educational programmes' is also mentioned as a mean to help students develop the desired competences. [*document not available online*]

- **P6 UNC: Estatutos de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba**, **Plan Estratégico Participativo**, **Proyecto "Internacionalización de la oferta académica de la UNC"** and **Proyecto "promoción de la cooperación científica internacional de la UNC"** – these four policy documents have been reported as demonstrating that promoting intercultural competence is important part of the university mission and strategy. However, there is no explicit mention of the need to develop students' intercultural/global competences, and the most overt references to the issues of our concern are the statements in the Strategic Plan that highlight the need to favour equality and equity, as well as the high important that should be given to international student and academics' mobility and attracting international students (without, however, linking these actions overtly to the target of developing intercultural competences, etc.).

[https://www.unc.edu.ar/sites/default/files/Estatutos%20de%20la%20UNC%20-%20Reforma%2015-12-2016_rev1.pdf; http://www.digesto.unc.edu.ar/consejo-superior/honorable-consejo-superior/resolucion/1641_2017_1; https://docs.google.com/document/d/19_rTchd_-Hozm4HaKZK27zMIdyf9lyuo8q3Ul4kyO9E/edit?usp=sharing; https://docs.google.com/document/d/148C3ZiiHDCcrJYTf69UUZoH29RASriuE7DvuHQNWn8U/edit?usp=sharing]

3. **Special Units / Structures**

Three PROFIC LA Partner institutions have reported that they have created special units/structures/or academic committees to promote intercultural interaction and/or ensure inclusiveness of the campus culture.

- **P7 UNLa**
    - Program of University Inclusion for people with disabilities and
    - Program for Gender Equality

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- **P8 UNLP**
  - Gender issues academic committee & Gender issue working table
  - Accessibility and disability academic committee
  - Inclusion, disability and human rights unit
  - Victim Assistance Unit

- **P10 UV**
  - Program coordination for Intercultual and Gender Issues (CIG, by its Spanish full name)

While the majority of these units probably lie at the borderline of, or even beyond, the PROFIC scope, it is interesting to see how intercultural competence development can be reinforced thanks to creation to a special unit / government body. Thus, CIG at UV – placed at the same level as structures responsible for coordinating research, student and staff mobility, or other issues at a university level – aims to help all university actors construct intercultural approach through professional development and educational actions, extension, administration and dissemination activities, supporting collaboration among the different university campuses, as well as between the university as such and other organisations who work with culturally-diverse population groups and regions. [https://www.uv.mx/uvi/cig/]

4. **Helping Academic and Administrative Staff Develop Intercultural Competence(s)**

As can be seen from the Table 1 (below), academic and administrative staff can receive support to (further) develop their intercultural competence through attending courses, programmes or one-off events, although not on all PROFIC LA Partner Institutions. Initiatives are clearly more "popular" then resources and among the existing initiatives both foci – focus on foreign cultures and focus on inclusiveness – seem to be addressed. Furthermore, at least two "transversal" or wholistic initiative have been reported – initiatives that address intercultural competence as a whole, rather than focusing either on national cultures or only on differences relevant for own national society.

Table 1. Overview of good practices aiming to help academic and administrative staff develop intercultural competence(s)

	Focused on Foreign Cultures	*Focused on Inclusiveness*
Resources		Publications (P6 UNP)
Initiatives	Foreign language courses (P8 UNLP) International mobility (P5 UDB, P9 UG) Professional development activities: - One-off seminars run in collaboration with international colleagues/bodies (P9 UG) - Developing the International Profile in Academic and Administrative Staff Program (P10 UV)	Professional development activities: - Salesian trainings on the sense of community (P5 UDB) - PROCADO (P8 UNLa)

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	- Integrating the international dimension in the syllabus (P10 UV)	- ADULP's course (P8 UNPL)
	Professional development activities: - Talks on values such as tolerance and solidarity, as well as emotional intelligence (P4 UTEC) - Training course on Transversal issues (P10 UV)	

- Publications

  P6 UNP has produced a publication (as an outcome of a master research Project) where the institutional approach to including indigenous cultures' representatives in higher education is systematised and analysed critically.

- Professional development activities

  o Focused on foreign cultures:

    1) P9 UG has hosted two large-scale events organised in collaboration with international colleagues/bodies: International Seminar on Leadership and Innovation in Higher Education & Seminar of the Integral Internationalization of Education

    2) P10 UV runs a "Developing the International Profile" programme for academic and administrative staff – The aim is to develop 4 different aspects/competencies in the academic and administrative staff in order to acquire and international profile: languages, international mobility, international management and international innovation projects. [https://www.uv.mx/apps/internacional/hapi/]

    3) P10 UV also has an "Integrating the international dimension in the syllabus" course, which aims to help academic and administrative staff develop the competences needed to design and implement internationalised courses. [https://www.uv.mx/dgdaie/files/2018/06/ProgramaInternacionalizaciondelCurriculoAvalado.pdf]

  o Focused on inclusiveness:

    1) P5 UDB organises "Salesian trainings on the sense of community" – the community of staff and students built on understanding of intercultural differences and, according to the Salesian principles, indispensable for creating a genuine learning environment. During these training sessions, all the staff members of the university participate in order to reflect upon the importance of creating a community based on tolerance and the enrichment that can be achieved thanks to cultural differences.

    2) P7 UNLa offers PROCADO programme, which promotes reflective professional practice, equips teaching staff with tools for continuous critical analysis of own practice (with an emphasis on inclusiveness and non-discrimination), addresses

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multiple topics related to inclusiveness (gender, human rights, accessibility), and also focuses on means to analyse the local (cultural) context in which one works. Other UNLa staff training activities address different aspects of intercultural competence – e.g. through exploring own (national) cultural tradition, through learning a foreign language, as well as Sign Language.

3) P8 UNPL offers and ADULP's course on "Gender identities and subjectivities in day-to-day education in the current socio-historical contexts. Contributions from educational, feminist and decolonizational Anthropologies". The aim is to share with the undergraduate teaching staff some of the theoretical-methodological perspectives considered by Anthropology for approaching education and schooling problem areas, in order to contribute to the analysis of the historical dimension of the construction of subjectivities and gender identities (in an intersectional approach with gender, class and race categories within other diacritics) in day-to-day education.

o Wholistic:

P10 UV offers a Training course "aimed for academic and administrative staff on Transversal issues like internationalization, intercultural approach, gender equity, sustainability, inclusion, human rights and arts".
[https://www.uv.mx/dgdaie/files/2018/08/transversa.pdf &
https://www.uv.mx/transversa/]

5. **Helping Students Develop Intercultural Competence(s)**

Table 2 (below) gives an overview of good practices aiming to help students develop intercultural competence(s). Both foci - on foreign cultures and on inclusiveness – are present, similarly to support provided to academics. Likewise, there are certain initiatives that are "transversal" or more wholistic in nature.

On a more general level, initiatives reported are again more numerous that resources. However, for students, there seems to be a greater variety of initiatives proposed and ALL PROFIC LA Partner Institutions have some student-targeting initiatives in place.

Table 2. Overview of good practices aiming to help students develop intercultural competence(s)

	Focused on Foreign Cultures	*Focused on Inclusiveness*
Resources	Korean book collection (P5 UDB)	Guide document for students on no discrimination (P10 UV)
Initiatives	* Cultural events (P5 UDB, P8 UNPL)	
	* Foreign language courses (P7 UNLa, P8 UNLP, P9 UG)	* Fighting dropout caused by cultural differences (P5 UDB, P6 UNC)
	* Mobility and exchange programmes and associated activities (P4 UTEC, P5 UDB, P7 UNLa)	* Accompanying 1st generation students (P7 UNLa) * Accompanying all students – "From

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	partner to partner" (P7 UNLa)
	* Special programmes/courses (P5 UDB, P6 UNC, P7 UNLa) * Other means to increase direct contact with representatives of other cultures (P6 UNC, P7 UNLa, P8 UNPL, P9 UG, P10 UV)

- Resources

    Two types of publications reported form this category. One – the Korean book collection – gives students access to a (far-away) foreign culture and most probably a unique access (these books cannot be accessed in other local libraries or online). The other – a guide document on No Discrimination, is a house-made resources, developed for the students of one particular university (but potentially of use for any other higher education institution, perhaps in an adapted form).

- Cultural events

    Two LA Partners have reported organising cultural events at university premises for their students. In the case of P5 UDB, students are among the protagonists of the events and the aim is to encourage cultural exchange. In the case of P8 UNPL, one particular department of the University – International Relations Institute – regularly organises meetings, seminars and conferences that can permit students to broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding of different cultures and cultural differences.

- Foreign language courses

    All PROFIC LA Partner institutions offer their students an opportunity to learn at least one foreign language. There main differences here are in whether foreign language courses are obligatory for all students in an institution, obligatory for students pursuing certain degrees, or completely optional and voluntary (which is normally the case for "less popular" languages).

- Mobility and exchange programmes

    Again, this is something all universities offer to their students and of interest for us here is the associated activities – the ones that are put in place to promote the development of the intercultural competence(s) through the mobility and exchange experiences. In this sense, two types of activities have been reported:

    1) P8 UNPL organises seminars focused on study and research opportunities abroad, which permit students participating to get a better understanding of the educational systems of other countries and cultures.

    2) P4 UTEC, apart from similar talks, has put in place pre-mobility and post-mobility activities (talks and sharing of experiences among participants and between those returning from a stay abroad and other students and academic staff members – so as to share what has been learned and motivate others to continue learning about other cultures).

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- Inclusiveness initiatives

    Three of LA Partners have reported targeting first-generation higher education students (young people who are the first in their family to access higher education – either because of the socio-economic conditions or for ethnical reasons – as in the case of indigenous population). Special initiatives have been put in place to accompany such students and to try and prevent dropout due to these students failing to adapt to the academic culture.

    1) P5 UDB is running the PERSEVERA project, whose main purpose is "to reduce the negative impact of the intercultural differences among students" that tends to lead to dropout. The project comprises tutorship, counselling, and other actions to support students and help them learn to overcome the difficulties encountered.

    2) P7 UNLa has two support programmes, one where teachers are tasked with helping new students go through the transition period successfully (Guiding Teachers Programme) and the other in which senior students are the ones accompanying their first-year peers (From partner to partner programme). In this latter programme, both those accompanying and those accompanied are developing intercultural competence(s).

- Special programmes/courses

    Although some of these initiatives have a clear focus on national or a particular foreign culture, this is not the main differences among them. Therefore, they are presented "transversally" and are organised according to their "target groups" and nature.

    o Obligatory for all students at the university

        P6 UNLa has two such seminars, one on "National and Latin American Thinking", the other on "Justice and Human Rights". The first is more local or regional in its focus, although it has a clear international and intercultural component; the second is global in focus; and both aim to help students develop skills in comparing and contrasting cultural perspectives, in critical thinking about cultural phenomena and in non-judgemental approach to cultural differences, as well as overcoming stereotyping and discrimination of different types.

    o Optional or obligatory for students pursuing particular degrees

        P8 UNPL has a number of seminars offered to students of particular departments – "Intercultural perspective in Education, Healthcare and Communication in Latin America and Argentina" and or "Interculturality seminar" (for Faculty of Humanities and Education Science), or "Women in science and engineering: the history you do not know" (for the School of Engineering). The last one perhaps deserves an additional comment – intended for future language teachers it goes very much to the core of exploring issues of intercultural communication, intercultural competence and intercultural competence development – through focusing "on the concepts and principles of cultures, stereotypes,

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prejudices, comparison studies (Hofstede, Mendez), the concept of standard of cultures (Alexander Thomas) and the so called critical incidents. It also focuses on the modes of working around intercultural competence with second language students".

- o Optional for students of any degree
    - P5 UDB Global e-School Program for Latin America / Korean Foundation
    - P5 UDB Korean language and culture course
    - P8 UNPL Basque Language and Culture Course

- o Whole-degree programmes
    - P9 UG – Languages and Foreign cultures bachelor's degree
    - P10 UV - Bachelor degree program on intercultural management

- o One-off seminars (for particular groups of students) which took place at some point of time at Partner institutions:
    - P6 UNC Workshops on intercultural translation
    - P8 UNPL Seminar on International and Intercultural Education

- o Optional for culturally-diverse audiences
    This category groups together seminars and programmes offered to students in which the design and enrolment procedures ensure a culturally heterogeneous group – either composed of students from different countries, or of students and members of other cultural groups (e.g. working population, graduates, teaching staff, or general public).
    - P8 UNPL Seminar on "Interculturality, citizenship and inequalities in outreach programmes" (for students and anyone interested)
    - P8 UNPL Seminar on "Social Work and aboriginal peoples: theoretical elements for professional intervention with aboriginal peoples", bringing together students, professional social workers, lawyers, and anthropologists.
    - P8 UNPL Public Outreach Seminar on "Intercultural education and Inclusion" intended for students, graduates, teaching staff, school counselling teams, territorial organizations and interested public.
    - P9 UG "International Summer University" bringing together students from different countries.

<u>Other means to increase direct contact with representatives of other cultures</u>

Finally, a number of other initiatives aiming to increase local/mainstream students' contact with peers from other cultural groups have been reported. From the point of our two foci of analysis (foreign cultures vs inclusiveness), these initiatives range from those which aim at attracting more international students (in the hope this will permit local students to encounter "the other") to those that actively promote enrolment of groups of students who do not traditionally come to the university (thus also increasing cultural

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diversity on campus). A third group promotes the actual interaction between local and international students.
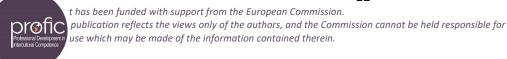
- o Attracting international students:
  - documents facilitating admission processes of international students, mutual recognition and credit transfer agreements, and mechanisms for accepting students who completed pre-university studies in other countries (P6UNC)
  - special programmes for international students - courses on Spanish language and culture (P6 UNC; P7 UNLa; P8 UNPL)
  - work/internship opportunities for international students – Programme of external collaborators that gives international students an opportunity to act as language assistants (P8 UNPL).

- o Increasing on-campus diversity through enrolling students from "new" cultural groups
  - "Educational Commitment Program" - providing scholarships to students from groups who would otherwise have no access to higher education (P7 UNLa)
  - "Program of University inclusion of people with disabilities" (P7 UNLa)

- o Promoting interaction between local and international students
  - Language TANDEM programme (P8 UNPL)
  - Students-Guides programmes for local students to accompany foreign students during their stay providing support in academic and extra-curriculum issues (P6 UNC, P8 UNPL)

6. Outreach Activities

A further type of initiatives has been reported by PROFIC LA Partner institutions – activities undertaken by university staff and students "outside" the institution with the local communities as main target audience. All actively promote the country populations' access to culture (high culture, academic culture) and can have a more or less direct impact on improving intercultural dialogue among different cultural groups. The extent to which such activities can and do enhance academic and administrative staff's intercultural competence(s) and the extent to which students act as protagonists of these undertakings requires further exploration.

With the information received, it was possible to distinguish three types of outreach activities:

- Bringing high culture to the local population
  - o P5 UDB National art festivals – "In a country where most of the population do not have access to art due to economic factors, the university reduces this gap by carrying out activities that promote an artistic encounter that helps communities explore different points of view, traditions, culture and insights of the world and its reality. These encounters are represented as artistic festivals that take place in several cities of the country and that are free of cost for the local communities".
  - o P5 UDB Strategic alliances and partnerships – "establishment of strategic alliances and partnerships that strengthen the impact that University's cultural activities

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have on the local community. For example, the Department of Art and culture of the University have articulated efforts with schools, city halls, embassies, artists and cultural organizations to develop initiatives that promote intercultural exchange for the locals".

- Promoting intercultural dialogue inside the country
    - o P5 UDB "Integral bilingual education" continuous professional development programme for school teachers – through helping school teachers understand the Náhuat-Pipil culture and acquire at least the basic level of the indigenous language, this programme seeks to enhance their intercultural competence(s), their abilities of working with learners from different cultural backgrounds and – more importantly – encourage teachers to replace the mono-cultural approach by a multi- and preferably intercultural approach.

- Reaching out to different population groups to build bridges between academic culture and communities who might perceive academic culture as foreign
    - o P6 UNC works with secondary schools for adults, trying to open up higher education culture to these learners and help them "enter" this "new world"
    - o P6 UNC is also involved in providing free Spanish language courses for refugees from Syria and Haiti
    - o P7 UNLa has a number of programmes whose aim is that of revendicating the right to education for all – children, adolescents, youth – and of creating links with the local communities, thus promoting inclusion and making every effort to achieve the situation where the university / higher education culture will no longer be foreign to the members of the local communities ("The rights of children has no vacations", "University goes to school", "The UNLA for the Youth", "Young community leaders", "University goes to Neighbourhoods")
    - o P8 UNPL has also reported working closely on building links between the society and the university.

7. **Two more initiatives**

Two more initiatives were considered worth reporting separately due to their unique character (among the PROFIC LA partner HEIs), as well as their interest to the general project aims and objectives.

1/ **International Professional Profile** documents developed by the International Relations Department of P4 UTEC – these documents describe intercultural aspects for students and academic staff to achieve an international professional profile. They are disseminated by email, publications in international networks, talks, conferences, workshop, and guidelines, among others. Motivational messages are sent by email and social networks to raise students' and staff's awareness of these "development aims" and to encourage students and staff to strive towards achieving the desired profile. [how can these documents be consulted?]

2/ "**Cultural references and linguistic mediation**: problematization, analysis and intervention from the foreign language/culture didactic and translatology" research project undertaken by P8 UNPL in order to analyse the difficulties faced by students of cultural mediation and adjust

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curricula accordingly. In other words, university staff has undertaken a study to explore the students' needs in terms of developing intercultural competence and this was done with the aim of providing an adequate pedagogical response – to ensure that university teachers can adequately support students in their intercultural competence development. [http://www.memoria.fahce.unlp.edu.ar/library?a=d&c=proyecto&d=Jpy625]

8. Concluding remarks

To repeat, this report should not be considered exhaustive and covering every single initiative and measure currently in place at PROFIC LA Partner Institutions. However, there are reasons to believe that it gives a rather accurate general picture of the initiatives in place and their nature. It is also possible to observe certain patterns in the support academic and administrative staff receive in order to further enhance their intercultural competence and/or support their students' intercultural competence development. Moreover, the overview presented can suggest how the current support measures can be complemented, although a further PROFIC Deliverable (3.3) will cast much more light on this issue through interviewing academic and administrative staff and asking them directly about professional development activities they would like to see implemented in this respect.

Keeping this in mind, here are some tentative concluding remarks that can be made at this point.

First, there are differences in what PROFIC LA Partners offer their staff by means of support and peer-learning – learning from what another institution has tried and found useful – can be a promising step here.

Second, only some institutions have explicitly stated the aim of developing their students', let alone their staff's, intercultural competence in their policy documents. Although much can be done regardless whether or not the Strategic Plan lists this as one of the objectives (or another similar institutional document formulates this as a priority, core axe, etc.), these documents set a general framework for the different institutional activities and also provide a sound explanation and argument for introducing such support activities. It might also be observed that although having a reference to the need to develop IC in such a document does not make things happen automatically, mentioning IC explicitly gives an unambiguous signal that the competence is valued – a powerful message to all the university actors.

Third, even if the final goal is for all the actors to work on Intercultural Competence development, it is clear that some institutions have found it useful to set up special units directly responsible for advancing work on certain aspects of intercultural competence, or even the development of intercultural competence in all its aspects. The impact is likely to be both symbolic and practical. On the one hand, placing the task of developing IC at the same level as promoting research or mobility activities sans a very strong signal to all the stakeholders. On the other hand, it also permits a coordinated approach to different activities, designing of more targeted activities, continuity of the efforts and the wider outreach. However, such structural changes, if aimed at, should be placed among the longer-term aspirations.

Forth, there is clearly a niche for PROFIC and other professional development activities helping academic and administrative staff develop own IC and support their students' IC development.

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Here is will be important to ensure that each PROFIC LA Partner institution has at least one initiative, and – if this is the only support measure for staff – that this initiative covers both foci – that is, does not focus staff's attention on foreign cultures or on questions of inclusion only.

Fifth, those already involved in the different measures to support students' IC development could be important resource persons for those new to the task. At the same time, it would be important to ensure that these persons can also receive necessary professional development support, can reflect on their competence development and be strategic about any further developmental actions needed. Depending on the institutional priorities, PROFIC activities could, then, target (a) those new to the task of supporting students in IC development, (b) those already involved in the task, or (c) try to engage representatives of these two groups in a joint learning community.

Sixth, as mentioned before, it will be important to explore further to what extent students are involved in the Outreach activities and to which extent these opportunities for IC development are capitalised on or can – in the future – be built upon to ensure both staff and students involved actually benefit from these exposure opportunities (rather than expecting the mere fact of participation to make wonders, as was previously expected of mobility periods).

Finally, certain preparatory activities might be of great value in the task of developing staff's and students' intercultural competence, as demonstrated by two examples in the previous section. Defining intercultural profiles and identifying students needs in order to support them better through teaching, learning, assessment (and possibly other) activities, are two such activities. If not yet undertaken by PROFIC LA Partner institutions, they can form part of PROFIC Professional Development offer and permit all Partners to later build on the outcomes, as well as jointly explore different approaches to making this exercises part of their "routine" (and so continuously make sure that their efforts at developing their students and own IC pursue the most relevant direction(s)).