

# MAP: Multilingual Action Plan

at the University of Andorra

## Summary of the document

The Multilingual Action Plan (MAP) is a language policy plan designed for the specific needs of the members of the University of Andorra. The plan consists of several objectives and actions, which are summarised below:

Cross-cutting objectives:

- *Diagnosis*: To know the sociolinguistic reality and the international dimension of the University of Andorra (UdA) before and after the implementation of the Plan.
- *Regulation*: Define linguistic rights and duties and set a horizon for achieving the objectives.
- *Support*: To offer the various groups of the UdA language services according to their specific needs.
- *Evaluation*: Evaluate the achieved goals, in order make proposals for improvement and transfer these achievements to society.

These objectives apply to two priority lines of action:

- *Knowledge and use of Catalan*: To promote and guarantee knowledge, use and positive attitudes towards Catalan as the UdA's own language and the official language in Andorra. At the same time, to guarantee linguistic quality in all productions generated in Catalan within the University
- *The promotion of multilingualism*: To respond to the needs of the academic and professional spheres, which are increasingly global, through the knowledge and use of languages, which can be vehicular, with special emphasis on the English language as a lingua franca of scientific and international communication.

### First action: to promote the knowledge and use of English

To achieve these strategic objectives of the WFP, actions are carried out aimed at **students** and **staff**. They are summarized below:

- *Diagnosis of the entry level of UdA students*: By means of a level test, the evolution of the levels that arrive at the UdA is monitored, at the time when students enrol in a bachelor's degree curriculum.
- *Definition of an entry level and an exit level of the UdA in English*: Ideally, the minimum entry level is established in a B1 and the minimum exit level in a B2, in order to guarantee that students can comfortably follow the courses taught in English. These levels are shown by means of a level test at the end of the training courses in English. Exceptionally, in the curriculum of the Bachelor of Education Sciences, the starting level is a C1.1 when that language
- *Proposal for the creation of the subjects of Preparatory English 1 and 2*: These subjects are part of the university extension offer and are therefore not linked to any curriculum. Preparatory English is aimed at students who do not reach level B1 in the entrance exam, and which allows them to join the English 1 subject with sufficient knowledge.  
The subject English 1 starts from level B1.1, defined as the entry level.
- *Proposal to unify the minimum load of English language in all degrees*: It is proposed to

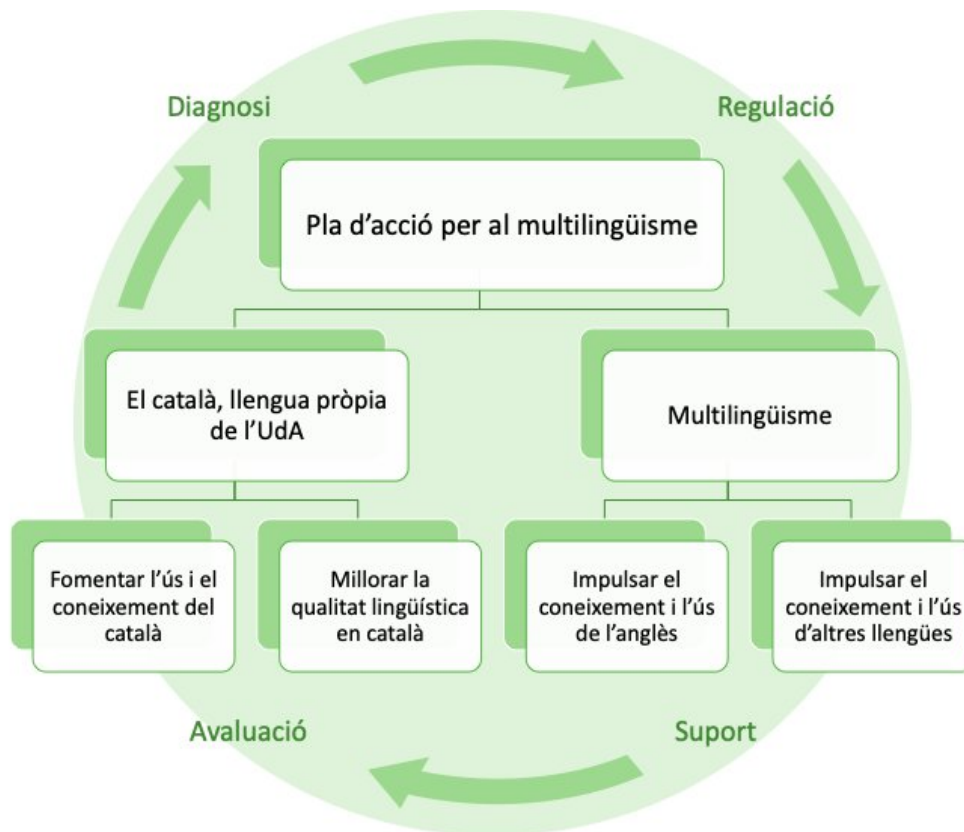
introduce a minimum load of English, according to the possibilities of each bachelor's degree, in order to guarantee the achievement of the minimum exit level.

- **Offer of English courses for teachers and administrative staff:** The courses are organized based on a level test and placement tests at the end of each course. These courses began to be taught in 2012.

## Index

0. Summary Table	5
1. Introduction	6
2. The Action Plan for Multilingualism	9
2.1 Lines of action and cross-cutting objectives	9
2.1.1. Diagnostic objectives	10
2.1.1.1. To know the linguistic reality of the University	10
2.1.1.2. Monitoring the progress of the MAP with data and indicators	11
2.1.2. Regulatory objectives	11
2.1.2.1. Defining consensual criteria	11
2.1.2.2. Setting a horizon for achieving the objectives	11
2.1.3. Support objectives	12
2.1.3.1. Define resources for the members of the UdA according to the needs detected	12
2.1.4. Evaluation objectives	13
2.1.4.1. Evaluating the objectives achieved	13
2.1.4.2. Transfer to the company	13
2.2 Line 1. Catalan, the UdA's own language	13
2.2.1 To promote knowledge, use and favourable attitudes towards Catalan	13
2.2.2 Improving linguistic quality in Catalan	14
2.3 Line 2: Multilingualism	14
2.3.1 Promoting knowledge and use of English	14
2.3.1.1. Defining the levels of English at the entrance and exit of the UdA	15
2.3.1.2. Unify the English language workload in all degrees	16
2.3.1.3. Introducing English as a vehicular language	16
2.3.2 Promote knowledge and use of third languages (non-English)	17
3. Final note	18

## 0. Summary Table



This document is an updated version of **the Multilingual Action Plan** of the University of Andorra (MAP). Created to respond to the specific needs of the University of Andorra (UdA) in terms of language policy, the MAP focuses mainly on two areas: the knowledge and use of **Catalan** as the language of the UdA and Andorra and the promotion of **multilingualism** as a response to the sociolinguistic reality of the Principality and to an increasingly global university system and world of work. with a special emphasis on the English language.

The MAP defines four cross-cutting objectives, which are specified in a set of actions and recommendations: **diagnosis** (knowing the sociolinguistic reality of the members of the UdA in order to be able to define appropriate actions); **regulation** (defining linguistic rights and duties, setting a horizon for achieving the objectives); **support** (offering the UdA community language services according to needs), and **evaluation** (evaluating the objectives achieved, making proposals for improvement and transferring these achievements to society). The MAP has an impact on all the University's groups and also requires their active involvement in order to achieve the objective of providing our institution with a structure that promotes multilingualism and its international relations.

## 1. Introduction

### ***The Research Group on Languages and the MAP project at the University of Andorra***

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the [Research Group on Languages](#) the University of Andorra (GREL) began a research project that made it possible to understand the sociolinguistic reality of the University of Andorra, and whose ultimate objective was to design and deploy a language policy plan for the University. Initially, a diagnosis of the knowledge and linguistic uses of the members of the University was carried out, an analysis of the institution's situation in terms of multilingualism and internationalisation was carried out, and this knowledge was disseminated in scientific forums. The first version of the MAP, in September 2014, included the objectives and actions resulting from the process of collecting and analysing data and reflecting on the linguistic future of the University.

### ***Languages in the European Higher Education Area***

In 2005 the European Parliament ratified the need for European citizens to know two foreign languages within the basic skills set<sup>1</sup>, and this feature was considered an important measure to assess the quality of education systems. It was determined that universities have a duty to provide students with the necessary linguistic competence to prepare them for their professional future.

The European Higher Education Area promotes the mobility of students, teaching staff and technical and service staff. A fundamental aspect of making mobility possible is knowledge of languages, especially English.

### ***Languages in Catalan-speaking universities***

At the University of Andorra we share with the rest of the universities in Catalan-speaking territories the coexistence of our own language, Catalan, with several languages of social use and with an important presence of English as a prominent language in scientific and academic uses. This group of universities therefore shares the task of designing language plans that make it possible to achieve the objectives of multilingualism demanded by today's society and at the same time guarantee the presence of their own language. Within this common framework, the University of Andorra is a member of the Xarxa Vives network of Universities, which establishes common values for all its members, such as the *linguistic unity of the member university communities, with common geographical, historical and cultural links*<sup>2</sup>. Currently, most of the member universities of the Xarxa Vives network have designed and deployed a

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<sup>1</sup> Motion for a resolution of the European Parliament on the promotion of multilingualism and language learning in the European Union ([ref. 2005-2213 \(INI\)](#))

<sup>2</sup> Xarxa Vives network: <http://www.vives.org/qui-som/>

language policy plan that is committed to the presence of their own language, while promoting multilingualism in all university groups. Likewise, in 2019, the universities of the Xarxa Vives network agreed on a joint language policy plan<sup>3</sup> that establishes more than 30 lines of action each year.

### ***Languages at the University of Andorra***

Andorra has certain specificities that are not found in other Catalan-speaking territories. Catalan is the only official language of the country and, therefore, the main language of instruction. On the other hand, as it is inserted in a traditionally multilingual society, the UdA is intrinsically so. All its members have full competence in at least two languages, and many of them speak another or more.

Article 12 (*Languages*) of the Law on the Organisation of Higher Education<sup>4</sup> refers to the University's language policy in two points:

1. Catalan is the language of public higher education in Andorra.
2. Programmes must be established to promote other languages, which may have the character of a vehicular language in the development of teaching and research programmes.

### **Among the objectives of the University of Andorra we find the following:**

In the Strategic Model of the University of Andorra 2011-2015, special emphasis was placed on the internationalization of the institution. In 2017, the<sup>5</sup> 2017-2019 Programme Contract was signed between the University of Andorra and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Both the Strategic Model and the Programme Contract indicate where the University will be oriented in the coming years, and in this regard the following objectives are specified, among others:

### **International relations<sup>6</sup>**

- To improve the international profile of the degrees.
- To increase and facilitate mobility and international exchanges and their recognition.
- To increase the number of international teaching, research and development projects.

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<sup>3</sup> Language Policy Plan of the Xarxa Vives network of Universities (<https://www.vives.org/book/pla-de-politica-linguistica-de-la-xarxa-vives-duniversitats/>)

<sup>4</sup> Law 12/2008, of 12 June, on the organisation of higher education (BOPA, no. 54, year 20, 16 July 2008)

<sup>5</sup> Signing of the Programme Contract (uda.ad: <http://www.uda.ad/blog/signen-el-contracte-programa-2017-2019/>)

<sup>6</sup> Strategic model of the University of Andorra: <http://www.uda.ad/blog/model-estrategic-de-la-universitat-dandorra/>

- To improve the academic reception of students from outside Andorra.

The various linguistic references show the dual vocation of the UdA to work to guarantee the knowledge and full use of Catalan as its own language, and as a cultural heritage and the only official language of Andorra, and, on the other hand, to open up to the world, though, among other actions, the knowledge and use of other languages by all members of the institution, with a special focus on knowledge of English.

These two lines of language policy, however, must be specified in an explicit language policy plan, since until the drafting of the MAP the linguistic life of the UdA had been governed by what is known as *Practiced Language Policies* (Spolsky, 2004<sup>7</sup>), that is, language policies based on practice, in the day-to-day life of university life.

### **MAP Agents**

The implementation of the MAP requires the participation of all members of the various groups of the University.

The GREL also deals with the tasks of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the various actions planned in the MAP. The research group aims to be open and flexible and, in this sense, always seeks to create synergies with other agents and people involved in GREL study areas. In addition, there should be a body responsible for multilingualism, following the model of other universities.

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<sup>7</sup> Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy*. Cambridge University Press.



## 2. The Action Plan for Multilingualism

### 2.1 Lines of action and cross-cutting objectives

The MAP has been conceived with the aim of promoting two key aspects for the University, which constitute the two main lines of action:

- Catalan, the UdA's own language
- Multilingualism and internationalisation

The implementation of the actions and the achievement of the objectives defined within these two axes must have a positive impact on:

- The linguistic profile of all groups in the university community (positive academic and labour repercussions).
- The multilingual and international profile of the UdA (reception and issuance of students, teaching staff and technical and administrative staff).
- A management of languages that contributes to achieving a situation of linguistic sustainability, understood as a situation of balance in which the own language is used and promoted while promoting multilingualism in all areas.

The objectives that are common to both lines of action have been classified into four groups:

- Diagnosis
- Regulation
- Support
- Evaluation



Fig.1 Two lines of action, four cross-cutting objectives

Below we detail the general objectives of the WFP, which are transversal to both lines of action:

### 2.1.1. Diagnostic objectives

2.1.1.1. To know the linguistic reality of the University

2.1.1.2. Monitoring the progress of the MAP with data and indicators

#### 2.1.1.1. To know the linguistic reality of the University

#### Current status

Since the 2011-2012 academic year, GREL has collected sociolinguistic data from the entire university community (students, teaching and research staff, and technical and service staff) to learn about our starting reality.

This diagnostic task was carried out by means of a sociolinguistic questionnaire in which data on linguistic knowledge, uses and attitudes of all groups were collected.

In addition, all documentation related to languages (laws with linguistic references, agreements with foreign universities, etc.) was emptied, in order to have a complete vision of the situation of the UdA in terms of languages and international projection. The analysis of these different sources of information made it possible to know the starting situation and to be able to define objectives appropriate to this reality.

In addition, from the 2012-2013 academic year onwards, an English level test will be carried out for students new to the university (see section 2.3.1.1). From 2015-2015 onwards, the English level exit test was made compulsory after the last English language subject or taught in English.

On an ongoing basis, English language training is offered to the university community beyond students (teaching staff and administration).

In addition, the GREL has wanted to provide tools to all those participants in subjects taught in English. In this sense, the possibility of creating MIL training groups for teachers is offered and another MIL course has been designed for students.

Since the 2016-2017 academic year, international students at the UdA have been welcomed through the *Buddy Programme*, which also offers linguistic support.

#### Planning

With regard to the objective of diagnosis, the GREL will continue to assess the level of English language of students, both at the time of access to their studies and after the English courses.

#### *2.1.1.2. Monitoring the progress of the MAP with data and indicators*

In parallel to the deployment of the various actions of the WFP, the GREL monitors the different actions with the evaluation of their impact

#### *2.1.2. Regulatory objectives*

2.1.2.1. Defining consensual criteria

2.1.2.2. Set a horizon for achieving all the objectives

##### *2.1.2.1. Defining consensual criteria*

The MAP must include the definition of explicit linguistic rights and duties for all groups in the University. These rights and duties will have to be agreed upon by the agents involved in the deployment of the WFP. Likewise, these agents will have the task of defining consensual criteria –especially with regard to academic production– on linguistic quality. For example, work will have to be done on the unification of the correction of linguistic errors in all studies, the textual and contextual adaptation of productions, or their degree of cohesion and coherence. The agents will also have to define the use of different languages for teaching and for any type of academic production. These criteria must also be extended to any linguistic production, oral or written, generated by the members of the University.

##### *2.1.2.2. Setting a horizon for achieving the objectives*

The WFP agents also have the task of establishing, in a consensual manner, a horizon for achieving the objectives defined in this document.

### 2.1.3. Support objectives

#### 2.1.3.1. Define resources for the members of the UdA according to the needs detected

##### Current status

The UdA has several language learning resources for university members. Specifically

- Free courses in English, French and Catalan for permanent staff of the UdA.
- Compilation of linguistic resources available on the website [of the UdA Language Service](#).

##### Planning

In the sociolinguistic questionnaires that GREL collected in the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 academic years, data were collected on the language services that would be of most interest to the members of the university. Students, faculty, and technical and service staff rated their interest in the following list of services on a scale of 0 to 5:

- Language courses
- Translation, proofreading and writing support service
- Self-study language service
- Official language certificates
- Training in communication techniques
- Language exchange service

Language **courses** were the service that generated the most interest in all three groups. As far as students are concerned, the second most interesting service was the official language certificates, followed by the translation, proofreading and writing service. As for teachers, in second place was the translation, proofreading and writing service, followed by the language self-study service.

Thus, it was prioritized, within the support actions of the MAP, to offer language courses to the members of the University.

Likewise, within the planning in the field of support, the MAP also included the project to create a website dedicated to languages within the UdA website. This page provides information on the services already offered by the University and those it may offer after the implementation of the Plan, as well as resources available outside the University (online language courses, resources for linguistic quality, resources for translation, etc.).

#### 2.1.4. Evaluation objectives

##### 2.1.4.1. Evaluating the objectives achieved

The evaluation of the objectives achieved is a pending task of the GREL. Once done, the MAP document will be updated with the results.

##### 2.1.4.2. Transfer to the company

The GREL continuously evaluates the functioning of the MAP as the various actions are implemented, and assesses whether its objectives are being achieved and what results are being obtained. Likewise, the existence of the WFP, its objectives and the results achieved must be transferred directly or indirectly to society.

### 2.2 Line 1. Catalan, the UdA's main language

#### Specific objectives of Line 1:

2.2.1 To promote knowledge, use and favourable attitudes towards Catalan in all groups at the UdA

2.2.2 To improve the linguistic quality in Catalan of all UdA groups

##### 2.2.1 To promote knowledge, use and favourable attitudes towards Catalan

- To know the competence and use of Catalan of the members of the University (diagnostic objective).
- To offer support resources to non-Catalan-speaking members (language courses, *accompanying teachers*, etc.) (support objectives).
- To promote the Bachelor's degree and research in the Catalan language.
- Design other actions: dissemination campaigns, other support tools, etc.

##### 2.2.2 Improving linguistic quality in Catalan

- To train and obtain the commitment of teachers to linguistic quality in Catalan (support objectives).
- To define consensual criteria for the linguistic quality of students' academic productions (regulatory objectives).

- Offer support resources (for linguistic correction, writing in Catalan, etc.).
- Align criteria for the implementation of communication subjects in all bachelor's degrees and define the contents of these subjects: abstracts, oral presentations, bibliographic references, etc.

## 2.3 Line 2: Multilingualism

### Specific objectives of Line 2:

2.3.1 Promoting knowledge and use of English

2.3.2 Promote knowledge and use of third languages (non-English)

#### 2.3.1 Promoting knowledge and use of English

GREL carried out the diagnosis of the sociolinguistic situation and language level (by means of a test in the case of students' English and a questionnaire in the case of other languages and groups) and developed the lines of action of the MAP, which have been approved by the University's governing bodies.

Since the initial definition of the objectives of the WFP, other actions have been implemented for their correct development and achievement. These new actions include support measures for the deployment of subjects taught entirely in English. On the other hand, since the 2014-2015 academic year, all students have taken an English level exit test at the end of their training in English, with the aim of collecting data on the results of the deployment of the WFP.

At the current stage of defining the WFP, this is the priority objective. Within the framework of the European Higher Education Area, it is necessary to train university students who have the necessary tools to continue their studies or work in any country in Europe. In this context, English, the lingua franca of international communication, is one of the essential resources for any citizen with a university education. It seems that the members of the university are fully aware of this need, as approximately 60% of all members answered the sociolinguistic questionnaire that they planned to learn or perfect English in the future. These data fully justify the objective of promoting the knowledge and use of English in the university community.

Within this specific objective, the MAP proposes three actions:

2.3.1.1. Define the levels of English at the entrance and exit of the Uda.

2.3.1.2. Unify the teaching load of English language in all degrees.

### 2.3.1.3. Introducing and consolidating English as a vehicular language

#### 2.3.1.1. Defining the levels of English at the entrance and exit of the UdA

Defining an entry level at the UdA in terms of knowledge of the English language is important in order to be able to offer English language subjects (present in all studies) that are accessible and profitable for all students, and that ultimately allow access to subjects taught in English.

The level of English at the entrance to the University has been defined based on various criteria and sources of information:

- *The English teaching staff of the UdA*, which has reported on the level of English of the students according to several variables, such as the educational system of origin or the studies that the students are taking.
- *Agents of the educational systems of Andorra*, who have informed us of the processes of pre-university teaching-learning of English.
- *The English level test* is given to new students since the 2013-2014 academic year.

Since the 2014-2015 academic year, all students have taken an entrance test at the beginning of their studies and an exit test, with the aim of collecting data on the results of the deployment of the WFP.

#### **Status of English entry and exit levels**

##### From the 2017-2018 academic year:

As a continuation of the MAP in terms of detecting the level of entry in English, the compulsory entry level test will continue to be carried out for all new students.

On the other hand, an increase in the level of English corresponding to a full and proportional jump is established in the four English language subjects offered: Preparatory English (B1.1), Preparatory English (B1.2), English 1 (B2.1) and English 2 (B2.2). This increase is due, on the one hand, to the increase in the level of entry of students (statistics collected from the results of the initial test) and, on the other hand, to the clear commitment of the University of Andorra to establish and consolidate a level of English output comparable to other university systems in our neighbouring countries.

Therefore, the structure of minimum levels to be achieved from the 2017-2018 academic year is as follows:

1st year	2nd year	3rd year
PREPARATORY B1.1 and B1.2	ENGLISH LEVEL B2.1	ENGLISH LEVEL B2.2
B1.1 B1.2	B2.1 B2.2	

### 2.3.1.2. Unify the English language workload in all degrees

Due to a process of change in all degrees towards the [new educational model of the UdA](#), the Bachelor's degrees are reconfiguring the type and load of training in English. The curricula that are already rolling out the new curriculum, incorporate training in English as English language seminars but also training taught in English. This last modality responds to the methodology of Integrated Learning of Foreign Content and Language (CLIL). The presence of English in the different Bachelor's degrees is progressively updated on the UdA website: <https://www.uda.ad/recursos-i-serveis/servei-de-llengues/les-llengues-als-batxelors/>

### 2.3.1.3. Introducing English as a vehicular language

We are convinced and evidenced by the results in the implementation of actions and programmes for the integration of curricular content and foreign language (CLIL programmes) that, in order to prepare students to be able to live in English, English language subjects as such are not enough. On the other hand, conveying content in English increases motivation to learn the language and makes full use of the communicative resources it offers us.

The planning proposal includes the following aspects:

- After a compulsory English language level test for new students of all UdA degrees, students who reach level B1 can start the itinerary with the English 1 subject, of a generalist nature.
- Those students who do not reach level B1 in the entrance exam, begin the itinerary with the subjects of Preparatory English, which will be the tool that will allow them to reach the level to access the subject English 1.
- Once they have passed the English 1 subject, which is general in nature and focuses on the communicative aspects of the language, all students will take the English 2 subject. In this case, the subject will be focused, in terms of lexical field, textual genres, etc., on the area of knowledge of each degree, following the tradition of teaching English *for Specific Purposes*.
- In addition to the English language subjects, subjects taught in English will be introduced progressively in all curricula. It is recommended that these subjects be offered between the second and third years, when students have already



acquired a minimum level to be able to follow the courses properly.

- Before completing their studies, all students will take a compulsory exit level test, where the minimum exit level should be confirmed.

In addition to the subjects in English, it should be noted that in two Bachelor's Degrees (BAE and Computer Science), the Bachelor's final projects must be partially in English. On the other hand, and as an opportunity to improve their languages, students can enjoy the offer of international mobility in foreign universities with which the UdA has exchange agreements.

### 2.3.2 Promote knowledge and use of third languages (non-English)

The University enjoys a certain multilingual potential. In the field of teaching, in addition to the Catalan language and the English language, in some bachelor's degrees (Education Sciences and Nursing) there are also French language subjects. In addition, since the 2013-2014 academic year, a Portuguese language and culture course has been offered (in collaboration with Camões - Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua) which has been very well received. Since the 2016-2017 academic year, a Chinese language and culture course has also been offered, organized jointly with the Confucius Institute. And during the 2016-2017 academic year, free French language courses have been started for staff.

In addition to these activities, it should be added that, according to the sociolinguistic questionnaires carried out in all the groups of the UdA, in general the members of the University show a markedly multilingual profile, and also show a clear motivation to continue learning languages in the future.

## 3. Final note

This document should be understood as a constantly evolving deployment of the Multilingual Action Plan. Although the main objectives and lines of action have been defined and agreed upon, the plan will be expanded with other actions as the different agents involved specify specific objectives and various measures are implemented, such as the implementation of English as a vehicular language or the criteria for linguistic quality. It is, therefore, a dynamic process that will be reflected in future versions of this framework document.