## Activity 2.3 Internationalization at home Strategy

Based on a self-evaluation and SWOT analysis done under work-package 1 and after conducting internal round tables derived from the 4 webinars organized under work-package 2, each partner institution formalizes here it strategy to reach it objectives in terms of international strategy at home Designed by : Elodie Ernoult University of Montpellier (Wp2 leader)

Written by: Wiem Zahi Ezzitouna University





# Content

INTR	ODUCTION	2
CURR	RENT SITUATION, IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS AND GENERAL TRENDS	2
INTE	RNATIONAL AT HOME STRATEGIC PLAN	5
DETA	ILS OF THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT TO REACH THE OBJECTIVES	6
1.	PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	7
2.	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION	9
3.	STUDENT EXPERIENCE (LEARNING AND EVALUATING)	12
4.	STUDENT SUPPORT AND SERVICES	13
5.	STUDENT ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES	14





### **INTRODUCTION**

- Vision, mission, values of your institution
- Why is it important for your institution to settle an IaH strategy now
- Which state of development of IaH has your institution already reached and where do you generally want to

University Ezzitouna has sought to open horizons to partnerships beyond its classical ones. Indeed, French and Italian universities and organizations have always been the partners on the academic and professional levels. Nevertheless, there have been some attempts to settle partnerships across the Mediterranean region, Asia, and Africa. These attempts were in line with the general strategic vision of the UNIEZ. Setting up solid distance learning foundations. However, what the really UNIEZ lacks is offering its students avenues for internationalization let alone internationalization at home (IaH). The necessity of internationalizing UNIEZ students stems from the global tendency to account for international experience as a potential condition for recruitment. UNIEZ made great efforts to engage UNIEZ students in virtual exchange programs. Still it did not settle on a clear official strategy for IaH despite some individual efforts.

## CURRENT SITUATION, IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS AND GENERAL TRENDS

- SWOT analysis made with Nada
- Main indicators of progress taken from self-evaluation tool 1.1 (evolution of the number of international students enrolled, evolution of the number of students in outgoing mobilities, evolution of academic staff mobility, evolution of academic cooperation partnerships etc.)

#### SWOT Analysis of Ezzitouna University

#### Strengths:

- The Ezzitouna university precisely during the COVID 19 set up virtual learning for its official programs. Teachers and students, local and international were officially involved with the platform MOODLE and this way of teaching helped students to have more virtual exchange and encouraged UNIEZ to implement projects that have as a major objective developing local students' global citizenry skills. The Ezzitouna university builds on this new experience in virtual exchange and makes it a well-established practice within its some programs and curricula.

- Ezzitouna university is an institution that has its own budget, hierarchical structure, and curricula, which can consolidate its orientation towards internationalization at home.

- Ezzitouna university is a university that encourages innovation on the institutional and educational levels. It always looks for new initiatives and fresh avenues for development and progress. That is why all members of the institution welcome implementing such a new strategy of internationalization.

- On a yearly basis, Ezzitouna University organizes a number of international conferences and study days for its administrative and academic staff as well as for its students. These international events are good occasions for them to mingle with experts from different cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds, which may empower them with the right competences for internationalization.





#### Weaknesses:

- The Language handicap makes our students, especially local one, feel uncomfortable and discouraged to participate in international events or conferences and convincing them is really challenging.

- The choice of The University Ezzitouna to organize its international events mainly in Arabic, rarely in French or English language does not go with the requirements of internationalization.

- Although Ezzitouna University has on-campus diversity of students' population from different nationalities who study and mix up with the Tunisian students but when it is question of virtual and online exchange there no constant, organized and perpetual activities.

- Ezzitouna university foreign affairs department is very restricted in terms of the number of staff, which may hinder the internationalization process.

#### **Opportunities:**

Opportunities can be categorized into two categories, namely national and international opportunities.

#### 1. National opportunities:

- Tunisia is a country that strives for openness to other cultures, which encourages our staff and students as members of a Tunisian institution to have the mind-set of change, openness, and respect to other cultures.

- Internationalization at home as a new concept in Tunisia will certainly support local Tunisian students to acquire global citizenry skills in order to have more opportunities in the global job market.

#### 2. International opportunities:

- The development of research on internationalization at home gives better insights on objectives, methods, and tools to support our students along their internationalization process.

- COVID-19 paved the way for novel initiatives of cultural exchange among students worldwide. These initiatives relate to virtual exchange, which made it easier for local students to enter into intercultural dialog with members of different cultures.

- The acknowledgement of virtual exchange as a component in ERASMUS+ is certainly a way of elaborating new devices of mobility based on virtual exchange with an online orientation .We should take this as an opportunity for setting up more online courses that involve both UNIEZ local and international students and those of foreign universities.

- The active engagement of Ezzitouna University in several international projects may reinforce its internationalization strategy. Indeed, within such projects all stakeholders in the university (i.e. academic and administrative staff as well as students) can benefit from experiencing the different steps and tools of working within international environments. They can acquire the right skills not only to be internationally competent but also to implement the UNIEZ strategic plan for internationalization and internationalization at home.

- Sharing experience and knowledge with foreign partner universities is a real opportunity to have insights on what is done in internationalization within these institutions.

- Exchanging data and internal evaluation reports between partner universities will certainly widen the vision of each one of them on internationalization at home and its impacts.

- The UNIEZ participation in several international conferences and webinars may give greater opportunities to fathom in a deeper and more practical way the best practices of internationalization at home. This will help us design our internationalization strategy and action plan.





#### - Threats:

Threats can be categorized into two categories, namely national and international threats.

#### 1. National threat:

- Opportunities for physical mobility are very rare in Tunisia because of the degrading situation of the Tunisian currency. This situation makes it very difficult to involve Tunisian students in exchange programs in foreign universities.

#### 2. International threats:

- COVID-19 made staff and students' physical mobility even more difficult because of travel restrictions worldwide. The threat in this case will further deprive local students and staff to participate in exchange programs in foreign universities. Consequently, they might not be able to develop their global citizenry skills that are highly solicited for internationalization.

- The current risk of cancelling study visits abroad may hinder the internationalization process. In fact, the people involved with designing and implementing the internationalization strategy might not be able to understand the different phases and tools to implement this internationalization strategy on the ground.

- Each university has its specific national context including the educational policy, the economic situation, the cultural and religious aspects, and the political and legislative dimensions. Therefore, it is not always affordable and advisable to transfer internationalization experiences from one institution in one country to another institution in a different country. There should be some adjustments and adaptations to local contexts. The real threat would be to copycat other successful internationalization experiences without considering the above-mentioned specificities of each university.

#### Main indicators of progress taken from self-evaluation tool:

The UNIEZ has many incoming students from different nationalities. Some students come from South Africa (Mali, Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria), North Africa (Algeria, Libya, Morocco) from Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia). So Students of the UNIEZ are regularly put into contact they mingle with foreignstudents. Strenuous efforts were established to contact the universities abroad via online channels to provide UNIEZ students with a multicultural environment of exchange. Nevertheless, management admits that it is not enough. The UNIEZ in its strategic plan is planning for facilitating encouraging the online multicultural contact. This would only be made possible through flexible policies of integration.

Since the implementation of a Virtual Department within Ezzitouna University in 2008, online teaching has been mainly blended as a general orientation. The UNIEZ teachers have been first encouraged to place their courses and evaluations on Moodle platform with the help of experts second to do online interactive exercises and blind tests. The number of teachers and students was not that impressive, but during the academic year 2020-2021, the number of enrolled students in the online courses has rocketed. This noticeable increase is the direct result of the restrictions that COVID-19 pandemic set on students' life.

According to its 2021 - 2024 strategic plan, UNIEZ has a clear vision on its internationalization strategy that guides the different dimensions of the institution's internationalization. However, and despite the growing number of foreign students from different continents, the UNIEZ does not really integrate the intercultural dimension into its programs. Its internationalization strategy is mainly linked to partnerships and collaborative efforts with universities around the world.

#### MEDZIAH Countries Towards Internationalisation at Home



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Indeed, the number of students who have benefited from mobility programs at UNIEZ exceeds 20 students. Several factors determine decision-making regarding outgoing student mobility, such as availability of funding and total costs, safety and security of students during mobility, host reputation and perceived quality, language requirements, cultural issues and differences, and above all the potential social and academic life that the mobility program offers to their students abroad. The recognition of credits acquired abroad is done according to the evaluation grid fixed by the approval of the program in which the student participated.

Although "monocultural" (mostly Tunisian), UNIEZ staff are open to multiculturalism to develop their intercultural skills and have more opportunities to enrich their professional career. The degree of tolerance is very high. Thus, they are involved in international, mainly European projects such as Erasmus+, Tempus and many others. As a result, the academic and administrative staff of UNIEZ are involved in international activities by participating in such international projects, of course, not all of them are affected by these activities.

## INTERNATIONAL AT HOME STRATEGIC PLAN

- Incorporation of IaH in the wider Internationalization strategy of your institution
- Priority areas chosen by your institution in order to achieve internationalization at home
- Annual action plan and budget (main areas, the precise activities being developed in the next chapter)

The UNIEZ strategic plan for the period 2021-2024 targets three vital groups: administrative staff, teachers and students.

The general guidelines of this strategic plan go in the direction of providing UNIEZ students with adequate tools to integrate the labor market which has metamorphosed into a multicultural space. The latter requires the development of intercultural skills to work in multicultural teams

This strategic plan also targets the revitalization of student life. Adapting curricula and involving students in extracurricular activities and events is another step in order to offer them greater opportunities for internationalization.

Therefore, it was agreed that virtual mobility and cultural diversity on campus should be integrated as major pillars of UNIEZ's internationalization strategy. Indeed, the adaptation of internationalization requirements to the specificity of Ezzitouna University, as a campus bringing together more than 23 different nationalities, is essential.

Regarding the annual action plan and budget to support internationalization activities, UNIEZ participates in several networks. These are Erasmus+Ka1 (mobility of learners and staff and Erasmus+ Ka2, CBHE (capacity building in higher education). These networks of international projects provide the UNIEZ with attractive funding to promote activities to support and strengthen internationalization.

It was agreed that all university stakeholders should be involved as partners in setting the broad goals and the action plan. Administrative and academic staff as well as teachers must actively participate. Thus, UNIEZ offers a solid institutional organization for the implementation and evaluation of the strategic plan. This organization is a hierarchical organization in which the whole institution is involved from the presidency to the members of the administrative staff. In fact, the staff responsible for internationalization is threefold: a) Those who set the general rules and guidelines for the internationalization strategy; principals and rectors. b) Those who manage the internationalization strategy, namely the general secretaries and heads of the international office. c) Those who execute the internationalization strategy.



## DETAILS OF THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT TO REACH THE OBJECTIVES

Details are given here on the curriculum and co-curricular activities that your institution has designed and is willing to design in the future to ensure that all students and staff can have a meaningful internationalized university experience. It should promote formal and non-formal learning of mobile and non-mobile students and lead to the development of relevant competences and/or skills for IaH.

- **Program development**: how to develop activities helping to incorporate international and intercultural perspectives into educational program;
- **Professional development and recognition**: how to foster the international and intercultural skills of all university staff (teaching, research, administrative);
- **Student experience (teaching and evaluating)**: how to enable students to achieve the expected international and intercultural learning outcomes at program, course and class level;
- **Student support and services**: all institutional actions offering practical support to home and international students in order for them to make the most of their internationalized on-campus student experience;
- **Student organized activities**: student-organized activities that encourage cooperation/interaction among local and international students and thus create the conditions for developing intercultural awareness for all students.

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM / MI-TERM / LONG-TERM
Promotion of multilingualism : encouraging language up skilling for students	Investing financial and human resources to develop language skills of students (English as well as other languages)	Systematic choice of a second foreign language course in addition to English		mid-term (2022-2023) Short-term (2021-2022)

Example of how you should fill up the table:



#### 1. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM /MI-TERM/ LONG-TERM
Embed IAH in the curriculum development process	Design well-defined learning outcomes to develop international/ intercultural competences. Integrate intercultural communication, language studies, international literature, texts, and research, mandatory course(s) in intercultural communication into core curricula.	Integration of intercultural communication in some of the advanced English courses	<ul> <li>Integrate developing the local students' global citizenry skills especially intercultural communicative competence as an official learning objective in the official curricula of the UNIEZ.</li> <li>Integrate 21st century skills in the students' certification process.</li> <li>Boost research on methods to develop global citizenry skills</li> </ul>	mid-term (2022-2023)
Improving the academic success of international students	with the help of supervision and integration measures	Diversity of international students is already available in the UNIEZ.	- Allow for more cultural diversity within the student population in UNIEZ .	mid-term (2022-2023)
International Degrees	Complete academic degrees taught in a second language. Classes, teaching materials, references, etc. in English or another foreignlanguage.	Some students prefer to continue their studies in foreign languages.	- Encourage local and international students to defend their master's or doctoral thesis in a foreign language, especially English by offering them a certain number of ECTs.	short-term (2021-2022)
International student engagement	Increasing the number of mobile students at your institution and involving a higher number of international students	More than 23 nationalities of students oncampus.	- Making the students partners in the internationalization strategy and process by asking them about their needs and preferences within well structured questionnaires/ surveys.	short-term (2021-2022)



OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM /MI-TERM/ LONG-TERM
Promotion of Summer / Winter Schools on intercultural issues	Organizing intensive language and intercultural teaching courses for students and teachers		-Participate in cultural days or festivals organized by other universities and involve the UNIEZ international and local students in the organization of these events.	short-term (2021-2022) mid-term (2022-2023)
Virtual mobility and online collaboration	Offering online courses organized in cooperation with foreign universitiesand/or virtual mobility		<ul> <li>Engage UNIEZ students in more institutional virtual exchange programs.</li> <li>Integrate virtual exchange in the certification process of the students: Virtual mobility.</li> <li>Encourage UNIEZ students to participate in virtual exchange by offering them ECTs, certificates, and open electronic badges.</li> <li>Establishing a platform for virtual exchange programs for UNIEZ students.</li> <li>Enrolling the students into MOOCs that have global citizenry skills and intercultural awareness as themes</li> </ul>	short-term (2021- 2022) mid-term (2022- 2023) long-term



#### 2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM/MI-TERM / LONG-TERM
Promote multilingualism : encourage language up skilling for staff	Investing financial and human resources to develop language skills of teaching and / or administrative staff (English as well as other languages)	the staff to enhance their	<ul> <li>Systematic and regular linguistic training that integrates the intercultural aspect of the language (lingua franca).</li> <li>Encourage staff to interact and write in the English language.</li> </ul>	short-term (2021-2022)
Support and enhance the teaching staff capacity to understand and implementIAH practices	IAH-based criteria in teachers' career models, job descriptions and performance evaluations Reward academics for innovative IAH practices through existing institutional infrastructure	Participation of some of the UNIEZ teaching staff in basic and advanced training sessions on the design and implementation of virtual exchange.	- Offer certificates, financialreward or physical mobility to academics as a reward for conducting innovative IAH practices.	long-term
Design a specific recruitment strategy	New recruitments to have a defined set of language and intercultural communications skills, whether in teaching or administrative staff	Recruitment of teaching staff on the basis of educational and professional background not on the international nor the linguistic skills.	<ul> <li>-Include international</li> <li>experience (studies, training, work) in</li> <li>the teaching staff recruitment criteria.</li> <li>- Include English language proficiency</li> <li>as a criterion for teaching staff</li> <li>recruitment.</li> </ul>	long-term





OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	- WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM/MI- TERM / LONG-TERM
Develop staff intercultural skills	Training of teaching and administrative staff in interculturality to facilitate working with and supporting international students and staff	Some of the UNIEZ staff were involved in virtual exchange programs	<ul> <li>Train staff in intercultural communication through the organization of internal workshops that have intercultural communication as a theme.</li> <li>Train the UNIEZ staff in 21st century skills through organizing workshops of hands-on activities.</li> <li>Involve the UNIEZ staff in virtual exchange with staff of international universities and organizations.</li> <li>Involve staff in international projects so that they can communicate with staff from different cultural backgrounds.</li> </ul>	short-term (2021- 2022) mid-term (2022-2023)
Give opportunities of experiences abroad	Develop the opportunitiesfor any kind of staff to have a mobility abroad	Some physical mobility opportunities were ceased for the benefit of the international cooperation department staff members.	<ul> <li>Involve all teachers and staff in Study visits in international universities.</li> <li>Involve al UNIEZ staff in job shadowing in international universities</li> <li>Involve all UNIEZ staff ininternational projects.</li> </ul>	long-term
Give the possibility to share mobility experiences	Bringing together teachers and administrative staff members who have returned from stays abroad to share experiences and practices	The formulation of a document by the teaching staff to report back their experience abroad over their return to the UNIEZ.	<ul> <li>Afford a rubric in the UNIEZ website to publish UNIEZ staff testimonials on their mobilityexperience.</li> <li>Share staff testimonials on/ pictures.</li> <li>Videos of their mobility experiences onTrello and LinkedIn.</li> <li>Publish staff testimonials on their mobility experiences on the UNIEZ face book page.</li> <li>Provide a regular press release that summarizes the mobility experiences and what the staff learns from them.</li> </ul>	short-term (2021- 2022) mid-term (2022-2023)



OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM/MI- TERM / LONG- TERM
Promote networking at institutional level of existing international projects	Bringing together teachers, researchers and administrative staff members to report on international projects carried out at their institution	Writing a report after the physical mobility by teachers.	- Write articles that involveteachers, researchers, and administrative staff to share their experience in international projects.	mid-term (2022- 2023)long-term
Promote networking, round tables and seminars	Organizing seminars and round tables in order to share experiences, initiatives and projects at a wider institutional level.	Organization of international conferences.	- Organizing conferences to discuss the different scopes of international projects in which the UNEZ is a partner.	mid-term (2022- 2023)long-term



#### 3. STUDENT EXPERIENCE (LEARNING AND EVALUATING)

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM/MI- TERM / LONG-TERM
Promote multilingualism: encourage language up skilling for students	Investing financial and human resources to develop language skills of students (English as well as other languages)	C2i and IT are already taught at the UNIEZ .		mid-term (2022- 2023)long-term
Develop teaching methods and intercultural pedagogy for amulticultural classroom	Offering flexible teaching programs (readings and exam formats) and practical methodologies in order to support international students Inclusion of diverse students' perspectives in the classroom	None	<ul> <li>Organize workshops of hands-on activities instead ofregular class.</li> <li>Organize webinars in which foreign teachers andresearchers are involved as speakers.</li> <li>Organize workshops and activities that may develop students' global citizenryskills such as sustainability, human rights, culture, environment.</li> <li>Providing open access to open resources to widen UNIEZ students' vision towards what researchers of the world publish.</li> </ul>	mid-term (2022-2023) long-term
Increase the international teaching and research staff	Appointing scholars and researchers from abroad up to run course units, seminarsor single lessons	Some visiting professors are invited to the study days of the UNIEZ doctoral school.	<ul> <li>Provide the systematic involvement of visiting teachers in non-permanent teaching staff.</li> <li>Provide teaching mobility programs to the UNIEZ under ERASMUS+</li> </ul>	
Train students in interculturality	Organizing specific initiatives and trainings for students to foster interculturality	None	- Organize Workshops to students on intercultural awareness and communication in relation to their future profession.	short-term (2021- 2022) mid-trem (2022-2023)



#### 4. STUDENT SUPPORT AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM / MI-TERM / LONG-TERM
Offer the possibility of sharing accommodation buildings	Facilitating access to residences to international students. Enabling international and home students to share accommodation on campus	None	Provide an accommodation building with a restaurant to international students.	long-term
Integrate asylum seekers and refugee students on campus	Promoting projects for the integration of refugee students at university	None	- Organize open days for refugee students for more information and support.	long-term
Promote welcome week /orientation week	Organizing events and initiatives at the beginning of each semester dedicated to welcoming and orientation activities for foreign students arriving in a country. The welcome weekrepresents an opportunity for home students to meet international students	- Organize welcoming week to international students whoparticipate in the organization by presenting elements of their cultures such as clothes, food, festivities.	- Adding the celebration of the national day of the foreign students in UNIEZ coming to the activities' campus calendar	mid-term (2022- 2023)
Offer a clear support structure for incoming foreign students and staff		International cooperation department deals with the logistics of the integration of foreign students.	<ul> <li>Provide a systematic institutional support structure for incoming</li> <li>students.</li> <li>Provide a sound communication platform dedicated to foreign students.</li> <li>Provide a QA rubric on the UNIEZ website to answer the most asked questions by international students on accommodation, enrollment, etc. Provide an enquiry email address in order to respond to the enquiries of international students.</li> </ul>	long-term



#### 5. STUDENT ORGANISED ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	ALREADY IN PLACE	WILLING TO DEVELOP	SHORT-TERM / MID-TERM / LONG-TERM
Organize intercultural activities	Organizing cultural weeks, festivals, events, seminars, initiatives dedicated to a specific language and culture		<ul> <li>Organize cultural days in which UNIEZ students (local and international) are involved in the organization.</li> <li>Organize English languagedays during which UNIEZ administrative and teachingstaff as well as the students communicate in English.</li> </ul>	short-term (2021-2022) mid-term (2022- 2023)
Participate in student associations	Promoting international student participation in regular home student clubs/unions/associations	None	- Facilitate the integration of international students in the university clubs, unions, andassociations.	mid-term (2022- 2023) long-term
Celebrate cultural and religiousfestivities	Organizing events and initiatives to raise awarenesson cultural and religious festivities	None	- Encourage international students to celebrate their cultural and religious festivities with the support of home students and the financial support of the UNIEZ.	short-term (2021-2022) mid-term (2022- 2023)
Involve the local community	Organizing events and initiatives aimed at raising intercultural awareness andinvolving the local community	None	- Involve local socio-economicpartners in the international conferences organized by the UNIEZ.	short-term (2021-2022) mid-term (2022- 2023)
Informal meeting, events	Informal meeting, events initiatives offering both local and international students the opportunity to meet in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere	None	<ul> <li>Involve both international and local UNIEZ students as partners in linguistic and intercultural exchange in theFriends Teahouses.</li> <li>International and home students organize intercultural events in the Friends Teahouses with theactive involvement of teachers as mentors.</li> </ul>	short-term (2022-2023) mid-term (2022- 2023)

