



Working Package 1

Mapping 3M activities in partner universities

Deliverable 1.1

Good practices of 3M in University of León

Final report

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**U3M-AL PROJECT - DEVELOPING THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES IN
ALBANIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Short profile university (type of university, size, special features)

The *Universidad de León* (ULE) is a comprehensive public university located in the province of León, in the region of Castilla y León in the North-West of Spain. ULE was established in 1979 as a public institution with autonomous legal entity and its own patrimony, and has financial and academic autonomy under the regulations of the Spanish university law. The roots of the University go back to mid nineties when several studies depended on the *Universidad de Oviedo*: Veterinary (taught since 1943), and studies of Life Sciences, Education, Mines, Agriculture, Arts and Law.

Nowadays, the University is organised into two Campuses, in León and in Ponferrada, which include 26 departments and 13 centres (Faculty of Veterinary, Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences, School of Industrial Engineering and Information Technology, Higher Technical School of Mines Engineering, Higher Technical School of Agricultural Engineering, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Economics and Business Studies, Faculty of Labour Relations, and the School of Social Work which is an associated private centre). ULE is a small public university (35th of 48 Spanish public universities in number of students¹) that offers educational programs on all levels. In the academic year 2011-12, ULE enrolled 17,284 students in 37 Bachelor programmes, 41 Master programmes, 22 Doctoral programmes and other expert and specialist degrees (see table 1). Considering its staff, ULE employs 1450 employees, approximately 60% of whom are academic teaching and research staff and 40% administrative staff.

Table 1. Enrolled students by degree level (academic year 2011-2012)

| Degree | | n | % |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------|-----|
| Graduate | Bachelor | 14274 | 83 |
| Postgraduate | Master degree | 1799 | 13 |
| | Expert/specialist/other | 487 | |
| | Doctoral program | 724 | 4 |
| Total | | 17284 | 100 |

Under the international **mobility programmes** (mainly Erasmus and Amicus -non EU-), in the academic year 2011-12, 558 Bachelor students from ULE studied abroad and 355 foreign students studied in ULE. Additionally, almost one out of three students enrolled in **doctoral programmes** were foreign students, mainly from Latin American countries. In terms of teaching activities, almost 40% of the students

¹ INE (2011). *Estadística de la Enseñanza Universitaria en España. Curso 2010-2011*

<http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t13/p405&file=inebase>

enrol in programmes in the field of Social Sciences & Law, whereas most of the research is performed in the fields of Experimental Sciences (Biology, Biotechnology, and Environmental Sciences) and Health Sciences (Biomedicine, Health, Veterinary).

Although most research activity is performed at departmental level, ULE has 9 **research institutes** (University Biomedical Institute –BIOMED-, Institute of Molecular Biology, Genomics and Proteomics –INBIOMIC-, Institute of Food Science and Technology –ICTAL-, Vineyard and Wine Institute, Joint Mountain Livestock Institute -in partnership with the Higher Science Research Council-, Institute of the Environment, Natural Resources and Biodiversity, Institute of Medieval Studies and the Institute of Humanism and Classical Tradition,) and it is associated with 2 **technological institutes** where university research staff also carries out work of applied research and technology transfer (Institute of Automation and Manufacturing –IAF- and the Institute of Biotechnology –INBIOTEC-). Research institutes are very varied in terms of research groups involved, focus on fundamental and applied research, postgraduate teaching activities, staff, revenue from third parties, etc. The most active institutes in terms of research-industry links in the region are the *University Biomedical Institute* and the *Institute of the Environment, Natural Resources and Biodiversity*.

However, within Spanish public universities, ULE is 42nd of 48 Spanish public universities in research productivity². In 2012, the total **revenue** of ULE is 86 million euros; ULE granted almost 11,5 million euros to support its research activities of which 2,2 correspond to contracts with public and private entities.

1.2 Regional context³

The region of Castilla y León is one of the 17 Spanish autonomous regions. It is situated on the North West of Spain, and it is comprised by the provinces of Avila, Burgos, León, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid and Zamora, being the largest area of Spain. In 2011, Castilla y León has a population of around 2.5 million inhabitants (the province of León is the 2nd of the region in terms of population, and the city of León with 131,411 and the city of Ponferrada with c.a. 68,000 inhabitants, represent the 4th and the 6th respectively). Population concentrates in the provinces of Valladolid, León, Burgos and Salamanca, which are also the provinces of the region with a public university. However, the population of Castilla y León represents only the 5.4% of Spanish population, and the density of the region is 27.15 inhabitants/km² compared to 93.27 inhabitants/km² in Spain.

² Buela-Casal, G. *et al.* (2012). Ranking 2010 in production and research productivity in Spanish public universities. *Psicothema*, 24(4), 505-515 [in Spanish].

³ Main source of information: National Statistics Institute (INE, 2011): Censos de Población y Viviendas (2011) y Población, superficie y densidad por CCAA y provincias; Principales indicadores provinciales 2011; Economically Active Population Survey (EAPS, 2012); España en cifras 2012

Castilla y León has an important primary sector. Agricultural activity concentrates in cereal and livestock farming, with farms of cattle, pigs and sheep development are oriented both to meat production and the supply of milk to cooperatives (milk production is the second largest in Spain). The most developed industrial hub is comprised by Valladolid-Palencia-Burgos, where traditionally there has been a major automotive, paper, aviation and chemistry industry. The food industry derived from agricultural and livestock production, flour, sunflower oil and wine, are also important. In general terms, industry is characterised by a shortage of companies with high and medium-high technology, the concentration of regional innovative activity in a small number of companies and low participation of companies in the financing of R&D in relation to the EU average. On the other hand, since the nineties, tourism has grown in Castilla y León driven mainly by the historical and cultural value of their cities, being the region in Spain with more awards as a World Heritage Site, and the natural attractiveness of different areas.

However, as in most Spanish regions, the economic crisis is affecting all sectors: at the end of 2012 the unemployment rate in Spain is 26%; 20.7% in Castilla y León and 23.7% in the province of León (unemployment rate had been reduced significantly from mid-nineties, from 19.4% in 1996 to 7.2% in 2007); the GDP per capita: 25,134€ in UE-27, 23,271€ in Spain and 23,146€ in Castilla y León.

The regional government of Castilla y León, represented by the “Junta de Castilla y León” consists of the presidency and the regional ministries (*Consejerías*). The regional government promotes the strategy on Research, Development and Innovation that has its origins in 1990 with the approval of the Order of Technology Incentives and the creation of the first Technological Park (*Boecillo*). The Regional Technology Plan (1997-2000) was the first structured plan to support technology development and innovation in the region together with the establishment of the Commission for Coordination on Science and Technology (2001), which joined the efforts of different regional ministries. It continued with the Regional Strategy for Scientific Research, Technological Development and Innovation (2002-2006), which first integrated the areas of research and innovation. In the period 1998-2003, spending on R&D in Castilla y León was the highest in Spain; it should also be noted that progress in terms of total spending on business innovation has been slower. Nowadays, the *Regional R&D&I Strategy (ERIDI) 2007-2013*⁴ is the framework for the *R&D&I* to be renewed in the coming months.

1.3 Changes in the role of universities in the context of regional economy and change of the UEP role

The *Regional R&D&I Strategy (2007-2013)* reinforces the coordination of the main players in the regional R&D&I system. In this strategy, universities as main public research entities in the region (public research institutes in Castilla y León play a minor role in the R&D&I system as compared to other Spanish regions), are

⁴ http://cordis.europa.eu/castilla-y-leon/strategy_en.html

recognised to be contributors to the economic development of the region. This strategy is split up in eight mainstream programmes with its corresponding specific measures; some of these measures are specifically directed to the role of universities:

- *Programme 2 - Promotion of excellent R&D&I nationwide and abroad:* Incentives to the research capability of universities
- *Programme 5 - Fostering entrepreneurship:* creating the concept of enterprising university and orientation of University teaching and research towards the promotion of entrepreneurship and business creation.
- *Programme 6 - Creation, development and consolidation of support infrastructures:* definition and development of a strategy of science parks around the universities.

So, it can be said that the role of universities has changed from being considered mainly as teaching and research institutions, which made an impact in the region through the upgrading of human capital, to institutions that can contribute to the growth of the entrepreneurial culture and the development of the industrial sector in the region. However, it should be noted that some of the intended measures (e.g. increasing the financing per researcher or developing science parks around universities) have been not carried out due to financial restrictions both in the public and the private sectors.

However it should be noted that there is a specific project, the **project T-CUE**, the acronym of Knowledge Transfer University-Industry, initially started at university level and later adopted by the regional government and incorporated within the *Regional R&D&I Strategy (2007-2013)* that has had good results, mainly in terms of sensitisation towards innovation and entrepreneurialism at universities in Castilla y León. The project T-CUE seeks to enhance the number of filed patents and to improve transfer of research results at the eight universities of Castilla y León (four public and four private) through their University Foundations (Enterprise Foundation in the case of University of León). T-CUE is funded by the regional government (*Junta de Castilla y León*) and has been articulated through bilateral agreements with each academic institution. The actions implemented in T-CUE are the following:

- Strengthening of Structures University Knowledge Transfer
- Identification and consolidation of demand and supply of technology
- Cooperative R&D&I
- Protection and Exploitation of Knowledge
- Fostering entrepreneurship culture and the creation of technology-based companies

- Dissemination

Besides these priorities, the project aims to develop a R&D&I network involving the eight partners coordinated and managed by the Foundation of Universities of Castilla y León.

2 INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO U3M ACTIVITIES

2.1 What are the main types of U3M developed in this university? What are the main characteristics of the partnerships involved in U3M activities? (E.g. What are their levels of formality? Who is the university's counterpart in the partnership? (e.g. individual academics, central level entities); Who is the external/enterprise's counterpart in the partnership? What is the number and type of staff involved in the partnerships? How much are the funds invested and revenues obtained? What are those funds' sources? What are the main types of activities developed? What are the main governance structures responsible for the U3M activities?)

2.2 How have the number and intensity of the different types of U3M activities evolved at the institutional level? (e.g. which types of U3M activities have increased more? Which are the most important ones for universities?)

Third mission activities at ULE include mostly technology transfer and cooperative research by means of contract research, life-long learning programmes and courses designed to respond to the needs of society, and a wide variety of social and cultural activities in order to serve and engage the citizens of the region.

The main governance structures at ULE, also responsible for U3M activities are the following. At the top of the Universidad de León structure is the Governing Board that consists of the Rector, the General Secretariat, the Manager and six Vice-rectors that deal with different issues: Research, Academic Affairs, International and Institutional Relationships, Campus and infrastructures, Students, and Academic Staff; apart from the Manager, all of them are academics appointed by the Rector, also an academic elected by majority by the university community (academic staff, administrative staff and students).

Supporting the governing board, there are university structures or services in charge of dealing with the administrative and managerial aspects, some of them more related than others to third mission activities (e.g the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office –OTRI–, the Postgraduate unit, etc.). The General Foundation of the University of León and the Enterprise (FGULEM) is also a key player in this governance model; FGULEM is a non-profit organisation, legally independent from the university that realises much of the relationships between the university and the

external counterparts (enterprises, society in general). The governing board of the FEGULEM is chaired by the Rector (*president*), the president of the Chamber of Commerce (*vice-president*), an academic Director, and several public and private entities that constitute the patronage.

1) Technology Transfer and Innovation

Consultancy, Research and Technology Transfer **contracts** are the most relevant U3M activity in the field of knowledge Transfer and Innovation in ULE. The main support structure at the university level to manage these activities is the SEGI (Research Managing Unit), dependent on the Vice-rectorate for Research. Overheads for the university are 15%.

Table 2. Total income from contract R&D&I (ULE, 2006-2011) and examples of big contracts

| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Income | 3.925.049 € | 2.978.940 € | 4.063.164 € | 3.293.826 € | 2.618.848 € | 1.628.803 € |
| N of contracts | 156 | 164 | 182 | 173 | 199 | 105 |
| Average income por contract | 25.161 € | 18.164 € | 22.325 € | 19.039 € | 13.160 € | 15.512 € |
| Maximun contracted | 468.182 € | 298.270 € | 627.489 € | 422.727 € | 617.229 € | 143.466 € |
| External counterpart | Enterprise | Enterprise | Public Administration | Enterprise | Public Administration | Foreign University (charity) |
| ULE counterpart | Institute of the Enviroment | Molecular Biology | Applied Physics | Institute of Food Science and Technology | Institute of the Enviroment | Animal production |

Contracts are concentrated in a few research groups, mainly in the fields of experimental and health sciences, and also engineering (environmental, chemical, etc.); approximately 20 groups out of 104 have contract research with private or public entities. Furthermore, some groups have a tendency to establish contracts mainly with public entities whereas others do it with private entities at regional or national level. For example, the Institute of the Environment has contracts with big national industry enterprises such as INDRA or IBERDORLA, whereas in Health Sciences there is a continuous relation with local laboratories (Siva, Ovejero, etc.). Total income form contracts from 2006 to 2011 vary considerably depending on the amount of a few contracts. Over the years, income generated from contracts – though lower– is not far from income granted by competitive funds (83% of incomes coming from competitive funds both in 2011 and in 2012). However, the effect of the

economic crisis in the industrial sector is already affecting the investment on R&D&I contracted to the university.

In contrast to the relatively good performance of ULE in terms of contract R&D&I, the commercial exploitation of results derived from research lags behind. However, the situation might be changing in the last years: the number of **patents** has moved from one patent every five years, to having five to seven per year. On the other hand, the generation of **spin-offs** is very low, but there are some successful examples, such as BIOGES Starters created in 2002 as a biotechnology company for the food industry, or AQUILON CyL that has been created in 2012 to prevent and control bacterial infections in animals through an innovative alternative to antibiotics. There are other examples of technology-based companies that mainly offer technological services to society (such as CENTROTEC, 2001, for artificial insemination in porcine; or INDILAB, 2008, for veterinary clinical analysis).

Main obstacles to the exploitation of knowledge are:

- the lack of a “one-stop-shop” structure for supporting Research and Knowledge Transfer that saves time and effort to entrepreneurial academics (both the OTRI-Research and Knowledge Transfer Office of the ULE and FGULEM offer similar services, whereas in practice the university staff working at OTRI is insufficient for the needs of some ULE researchers).
- the lack of support and infrastructure to generate a spin-off: not technology park at the university to allocate spin-offs, difficulties to get seed capital, amongst others.

Strengths for Technology Transfer and Innovation:

- Several programmes have created an entrepreneurial culture in some sectors of the university, mainly academics and research groups, but also to some students. These programmes are the already mentioned T-CUE and the Plan Legio, the ULE institutional Plan to support the creation and development of enterprise.
- Clusters in the region: the regional policy of R+D+I has contributed to the reinforcement and alignment of some industries: bio-pharmacy, automotive industry and food industry.

2) Continuing Education

University of Leon promotes continuing education offering postgraduate education mainly comprised of Master degrees, expert and specialist courses, other diplomas, language courses and a variety of short courses. In terms of management and recognition, two types of Master degrees can be identified, those receiving public funding and those entirely private. Private funded **Master degrees** (17 out of 41) together with **expert/specialist degrees and diplomas** are characterised, in most

cases, for being directed by an academic form ULE and managed by an external entity to the university with whom a bilateral agreement is approved. The main counterparts in these partnerships are FUNIBER, -the Ibero-American University Foundation-, IAEU –the Institute of High University Studies-, professional associations, and other entities.

Table 3. Enrolled students in continuing education

| <i>Number of students</i> | <i>2011</i> | <i>2012</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Master degree | 1246 | 1799 |
| Expert/Specialist/other Diplomas | 556 | 487 |
| Foreign language courses | 1570 | 1496 |
| Spanish language courses | 884 | 776 |
| Summer courses | c.a. 800 | 740 |
| Extension courses | c.a. 2000 | 2150 |

Table 4. Main external counterparts in continuing education

| Degrees | Partner institution |
|---|--|
| Master in Oral Surgery, Implantology and Periodontology | Official Professional Associations of Odontology and Stomatology |
| Master in Physical Activity and Health | FUNIBER |
| Master in Management and Tourism Consultancy | |
| Masters in Design, Management and Project Management | |
| Masters in Gerontology | |
| Master in Management and Environmental Audits | |
| International Masters in Nutrition and Dietetics | |
| Expert in Applied Nutrition and Dietetics Sport | |
| Gerontology Health Expert | |
| Expert in Sports and Healthy Living | |
| Masters in Clinical Psychology | |
| Masters in Mental Health | |
| Specialist mood disorders and anxiety | |
| Specialist hyperactivity and attention deficit | |
| Master in Security | National Institute of ITC |
| Master in Addictions | PROYECTO HOMBRE (Nonprofit) |

| Degrees | Partner institution |
|---|-----------------------------|
| | organisation) |
| Master in Health Emergencies and Disasters (new 2013) | Nursing Foundation CyL |
| Master in Applied Gerontology and Geriatrics (new 2013) | |
| Master in Lexicography Hispanic (new 2013) | Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) |
| Diploma: Veterinary Assistant | Royal Canin (Enterprise) |
| Diploma: Beauty and Hairdressing Course Canine and Feline | |

Language courses are offered at the *ULE Language Center* and managed by the FGULEM. These courses are offered not only to the university community (academic and administrative staff, international and local students) but to the society in general. As estimation, in the first semester 2012-13, 1772 students are enrolled in foreign language courses, 53% from the university community, 39% are citizens of León and 8% are tailor-made to meet enterprise's needs. Also the *ULE Language Center* organizes summer camps for children.

Finally, most short courses are commonly referred to as **extension courses**, which are offered not only to the university members but also and mainly to the rest of society, as a university projection over its environment. Several of these courses are jointly organised with other organisations such as trade unions, professional boards, associations, etc (around 100 extension courses per year were organised in 2011 and 2012). Moreover, during July and September, **summer courses** are offered in both of our campuses, in the city of León and in other towns in the León province, addressed to society in different areas (around 25 summer courses per year were organised in 2011 and 2012). These short courses are necessarily directed by an academic from ULE and are managed by the Unit of Extension dependent from the Vice-Rectorate for International and Institutional Relations.

3) Social Engagement

University of Leon offers both to the university and to the local community a wide range of activities mainly organized by the Vice-Rectorate for International and Institutional Relations and the Vice-Rectorate for Students and Social Affairs. The main areas are: Cultural activities; Inter-university Program for Older Adults; Accessibility, volunteering and social support; and Leisure and Sports.

- **Cultural activities:** from its beginning in 1988 more than 3000 activities related to music, dance, photography, drama, etc., have been organised with the permanent financial support from Caja España (local bank), and occasional support from local, national and international organisations. In the academic year 2011-12, 170 events were offered: 28 concerts, 21

performances (scenic arts), 34 exhibitions, cinema (87 sessions) and collaboration in projects (15), workshops (25), and own productions (37).

- **Inter-university Program for Older Adults:** with the financial support of the regional government, public and private universities in Castilla y León offer this three-year program to people older than 55 who may not have secondary studies as an opportunity for personal learning and self-development. In the academic year 2011-12, 730 people enrolled in the Programme in León, Ponferrada and Astorga.
- **Accessibility, volunteering and social support:** students cooperate with a variety of local, national and international non-profit organisations (a local mental health hospital, Veterinarians without Borders, Engineers without Borders, etc.); within the intergenerational program students can live at the home of older people. This program is intended to promote social and cultural development of older people as well as solidarity between generations; other programs are related to international development cooperation.
- **Leisure and sports:** ULE offers a wide variety of activities in this field. It is worthwhile outlining those related to sky and snowboard, trekking, climbing, multi-adventure and the popular jogging with a running school. Over 5000 students compete in the ULE inner league at sports such as tennis, Paddle, Football 7 and indoor, etc. The Varsity teams compete and represent ULE at national tournaments and are linked to the elite teams in our city, representing our university every weekend of the year. ULE also attends high outputs among its students by strengthening links with professional teams in diverse sport disciplines. Although mainly directed to people belonging to the university community (or their families), sports activities are open to the whole society.

2.3 University policy and strategy towards 3M activities

2.3.1 Are there any institutional policies to foster 3M activities? Who is in charge of developing them? Which are the main types of U3M activities encouraged? To what extent are policies contextualized in innovation or third mission institutional strategies?

2.3.2 Are there policies to encourage U3M activities via human resources management incentives?

2.3.3 To what extent the U3M activities described above are a consequence of institutional policies? Have national/regional policies played a key role in their development? Have these activities been impelled by the involved enterprises?

ULE encourages and supports third mission activities as a means of fulfilling one of its core missions, which is serving society and its local community. Institutional programmes such as the *Plan Legio*, also supported by the regional programme T-CUE, has contributed to bring into some sectors of the university a more entrepreneurial culture. However, although establishing closer relations to society and being more entrepreneurial is shared by most actors, in general, third mission is not high in the institutional agenda as a comprehensive activity, but rather as isolated activities promoted by different vice-rectorates or units. For example, in relation to *Continuing Education* the institutional idea is to offer and explore more options of on-line training; Spanish language training is also being promoted by the Language Center. In relation to *Technology Transfer and Innovation*, priorities are to plan for a coherent administrative structure that supports academics in applying for competitive and non-competitive funds, both in the country and abroad. Finally, in the area of Social Engagement the idea is to maintain existing activities that might be at risk under economic restrictions by university and by the entities that have traditionally sponsored these activities (local banks, endowed chairs, etc.).

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF U3M ACTIVITIES (OF THE ONE OR TWO CASES FROM EACH OF THE MAIN TYPES OF ACTIVITIES ASSESSED MORE IN DETAIL)

3.1 Qualitative aspects

3.1.1 Brief description of the U3M activity

3.1.2 Stakeholders involved (public authorities will be included in the reports only if relevant to the analysed cases)

3.1.3 Governance/ management

- 3.1.3.1 General governance structure
- 3.1.3.2 Decision- making procedures/ strategy development
- 3.1.3.3 Funding/ financial system
- 3.1.3.4 Internal and external accountability
- 3.1.3.5 Steering tools (e-g. customer- relation management)

3.2 Quantitative aspects

3.2.1 Funding/financial figures (e.g. revenues, budgets, financial incentives)

3.2.2 If available, figures on staff involved, results, valorisation, depending on particular aims

The University Biomedical Institute (IBIOMED)⁵

With a research team of about 40 people, IBIOMED combines activities related to the three areas of third mission activities: Technology Transfer and Innovation, Continuing Education and Social Engagement. Its origins go back to mid-nineties with the creation of the Research Association: Institute of Biomedical Research and the cooperation with the public Hospital in León. IBIOMED was later established in 2006, and since 2009 has the right to be in charge of postgraduate studies both at Master and Doctorate level. Although with the inconvenience of not having a Faculty of Medicine in the University, IBIOMED has built close relationships with the Hospital and other health institutions in the region. One of its strengths is the consolidation of a research line on physical activity and sports recognised nationally in their Doctorate Programme (Excellence awarded), and also the external recognition of the research group. The prestige of both the research activity and the Doctorate Programme has been the stepping-stone for other activities on **continuing education**:

- Master on Medicine Research, together with the public Hospital in León, it is a tailor-made degree addressed primarily to physicians who are making the period of specialized training and, at the same time have the opportunity to acquire advanced training as well as the introduction to research in Medicine. Academic staff from ULE, IBIOMED and Doctors from the Hospital are involved in teaching activities and in the supervision of a Final Project. ULE acts as the academic coordinator and the Hospital as the clinical coordinator.
- Together with FUNIBER offer the following on-line degrees: Master in Physical Activity and Health, Master in Gerontology, Gerontology Health Expert, Expert in Sports and Healthy Living and Expert in Applied Nutrition and Dietetics Sport.
- Master in Oral Surgery, Implantology and Periodontology in partnership with the Official Professional Associations of Odontology and Stomatology.

Within the social engagement area, around 2000 students aged from 6 to ten coming from 17 schools in León participated in the workshops about nutrition, physical activity and health organized by the Municipality in partnership with IBIOMED.

In the field of TTI, **Aquilon CyL** is a recently established spin-off that has been able to succeed under a difficult context to increase its capital. This spin-off has just got 2 million € to develop products that improve animal productivity. Genome Spain Foundation, through its program InnoCash, has granted a loan of 0.43 M € related to the capital increase. The contract signed on June 2012 involves an injection of € 2M for the company, which aims to expand during 2013 to € 3M. With these resources,

⁵ <http://institutobiomedicina.unileon.es/>

the company completed the development of three projects of high economic potential which constitute the foundation of the business project basis. The first two projects developed by the company are the result of research conducted at the ULE: a vaccine against swine dysentery and a probiotic product aimed at replacing the use of antibiotics to combat digestive problems for lactating pig. Both projects have already demonstrated their effectiveness, with notable improvements in productivity even compared to animals treated with antibiotics.

As previously mentioned, the **Inter-university Program for Older Adults** is a good practice on social engagement that started in 2000. As an indicator of its demand, the first day of the registration, all places were occupied. Despite less financial support from the regional government, ULE considers that it is important to continue offering this training of three academic years to older people. Apart from academics from ULE, other teachers have been professionals from the Hospital, Health Centres, Secondary Schools, etc. Additionally, between trimesters, these students are offered two cultural weeks in cooperation with their Older Adults Alumni Association.