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INCLUSION THROUGH LANGUAGE- MIGRANT WOMEN AS ACTIVE AGENTS. EXAMPLES OF THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: There is an increasing prominence given to the so-called third-mission role of universities beyond the traditional core functions of teaching and research. Globalization and migration are two leading topics in international, national and local debates as new challenges and the need to give an answer. Communication is a key element as a large part of the migrant population brings with them practically unknown languages and cultures. These Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLD) are a barrier to information, health, and other necessary services, making migrants even more vulnerable. There is an increase in interest of civil society to get involved in the advancement/ improvement of multilingual/multicultural societies, however migration policies do not currently take language planning into much consideration. This article explores and analyses two actions as examples of the third-mission role of the University of Alcalá and FITISPos. The main focus is in the social engagement of all stakeholders to facilitate quality communication through the role language- migrant women as active agents.

Keywords: Third mission; inclusion; migrant women; globalization; multicultural societies

INTRODUCTION. CONTEXTUALIZATION

There is an increasing prominence given to the so called third-mission role of universities beyond the traditional core functions of teaching and research. The two traditional functions of universities are the generation of knowledge (research) and its transmission (teaching). However, empirical evidence shows that there has been an intensification of industry-academia- society relations in the past twenty years, mainly as a response to public budgetary strictness and because of the increasing role of the university in society development (Pinheiro, et al 2105, Elena-Pérez 2017, Compagnucci, F, Spigarelli, *202).

This new mission –conceptualised under the term «third mission» or «third stream»– refers to all those activities whereby universities can directly address social welfare needs and private or public economic objectives (Molas-Gallart, 2005).

The «third-mission» of universities has gained more attention in recent years not only in the academic literature (Loi and Di Guardo, 2015; Secondo *et al.*, 2017) but also in policy developments at European level. The agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems (E3mProject 2012) called on universities to adapt to new challenges by taking into account the needs of the labour market in their activities and by engaging more intensively with public, private and non-governmental entities with the aim to enhance regional development.

The Third Mission of universities involves activities aimed at transferring the results of academic endeavors into tangible benefits for local and regional environments. This concept includes an extensive array of activities performed by higher education institutions which seek to transfer knowledge to society in general and to organizations, as well as to promote entrepreneurial skills, innovation, social welfare and the formation of human capital.

Globally, approximately 2.3% of the world population live outside their country of citizenship. This highlights the growing complexity of human mobility, which will increasingly be driven by factors like climate change, conflict, divergent demographic trends, and income inequality. As the World Bank Organization points out (2023), the debate over migration policy is often polarized and controversial. In their own words, "while empirical studies show positive impacts of migration on labor markets, business performance , and health outcomes, in host countries, public opinion often views immigration with apprehension and fear".

This paper tries to be an example of Third Missions activities about the quality of communication with migrants performed by the University of Alcalá (UAH)(Madrid, Spain), FITISpos and NGOs.

THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES AT THE UAH AND FITISPos

A large part of the migrant population brings with them practically unknown languages and cultures. These Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLD) are a barrier to information, health, and other necessary services, making migrants even more vulnerable. The migrant population continues to grow globally and a part of this population brings with them unfamiliar languages and cultures (LLD), which increase communication barriers.

Three main aspects have been the focus of a significant number of empirical research: 1. challenges caused by the increase in the migrant population with LLD (Valero-Garcés 2024; Foulquié and Sánchez-Pedreño 2019; Jiménez-Andrés 2020); 2. Analyses of the quality of communication between the main recipients of migrants (Administration and NGOs), and their users (Vitalaru 2023, Ruiz-Cortés 2021, Policastro and Merino 2023, and Vigier and Relinque 2023; and 3. Advances in the use of technology with migrant population (Ricart Vayá and Jordán Enamorado 2022, Tesseur 2022, Rico 2023), Stengers et al (2024), and Valero -Garcés & Kemp 2024.

Through the analysis of these research studies, the general conclusions indicate that:

1. There is a greater awareness of the importance of languages, but also a lack of language policies that could bring closer theory and practice, and 2. There is also a need to review the importance of linguistic communication as well as the role of the interlinguistic intermediaries in LLD.

As a result, in Spain, as in many other EU countries, we still continue to find the same strategies and lack of resources as at the beginning of the 21st century, that is: a) the use of family members, friends or bilingual volunteers who know LLD and Spanish acting as translators and interpreters (Tr&In) without any testing of language(s) proficiency or specific training, with the support on verbal language; b) the use of a lingua franca; c) the use of easy language; d) or certain advance in the use of technology, but it is not risk-free; e) the lack of available training for Tr&In in LLD, but also for Administration and NGOs staff.

These studies show the plurality of practices and profiles of those who facilitate communication in the Administration or third sector organisations, and the lack of funding and planning of language services in these organisations. The situation is quite similar in other EU member states. European universities often face challenges like limited funding, bureaucratic hurdles, and the difficulty of balancing academic priorities with entrepreneurial initiatives.

The University of Alcalá (UAH) stands as a leading example of overcoming communication challenges with foreign populations through its research and Third Mission activities. The multilingual research group FITISPos (in Spanish, *Formación e Investigación en Traducción e Investigación en los Servicios Públicos - TIPS*), in English, Training and Research in Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) plays a significant role in its mission.

The FITISPos' PSIT program and active project collaborations with a wide range of stakeholders help UAH to achieve three main objectives: 1. Raising awareness of the importance of the quality in communication in this diverse society; 2. Providing training for language service providers and bilinguals in the field of PSIT; and 3. Promoting research on PSIT from a multidisciplinary perspective.

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Since the early 2000s, FITISPos has been a pioneering force in the field of PSIT with unparalleled expertise in intercultural communication and significant achievements in promoting inclusion and empowering vulnerable migrants (specially women) in national and international environments. In the last years, FITISPos has succeeded in engaging a wide range of stakeholders and community members – migrant women from diverse linguistic backgrounds, university volunteers, local NGOs, academics, researchers, and the wider community in innovative and holistic initiatives to facilitate integration. An example is the multiproject called *VOCINARES* (Voices from the Henares). This project is a good example on how universities through the Third Mission activities can promote inclusion through education, effective collaboration among communities, and the diversity of participants, as well as showcases the vibrant cultural tapestry of the area of Alcalá de Henares, a town close to Madrid with a large migrant population.

This article is dedicated to present the last two projects included in VOCINARES multiproject. These are: *Conocer para no olvidar* (in English Get to Know to Keep in Mind) and FEIMEM.

TWO PROJECTS AND TWO EXAMPLES OF THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES

The last two projects included in VOCINARES gained recognition and funding to expand its holistic approach to specific migrant communities. First, the project, in Spanish, *Conocer para no olvidar. Conversaciones con mediadores, traductores, intérpretes y refugiados* (in English *Get to Know to Keep in Mind. Conversations with mediators, translators, interpreters and refugees*) was developed thanks to the funding by Casa Asia, Beca Rui de Clavijo (2022-2023). In 2024 , the project

FEIMEM took the lead. FEIMEM (in Spanish, *Formación e Investigación con/para mujeres de etnias minoritarias.* In English, Research and Training with/for foreign women speakers of languages of lesser diffusion). Both projects, with some differences explained below, aim at improving and giving visibility to the outstanding work of qualified migrant women.

The starting point is based on two hypotheses: First, a mutual knowledge of the traditions, cultures and languages of the countries involved (Spain and the migrant countries) will lead to an advance in the integration of the migrants, and secondly, this mutual knowledge will also help as a stimulus for greater international cooperation and greater work and training opportunities from and to both sides.

In this context, the general objectives of the projects are:

1. To encourage the level of interdependence between the different active agents,

2. To share cooperation practices,

3. To contribute to the integration of people hosted in Spain in line with the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals (DGS), and

4. To contribute to the government and institutions´ efforts in migrants inclusion itineraries.

This leads to a series of more specific objectives, which are:

1. To promote joint actions and interventions by social agents, mediators, psychologists, educators who are collaborating with the migrant population,

2. To get to know the necessary work of experts in communication with the foreign population (interpreters, mediators, and translators), and their situation in conflicts such as the one in Afghanistan, and

3. To disseminate strategies or guidelines to facilitate linguistic and cultural communication aimed at untrained bilingual people who wish to go further and to be trained as a professional translator and interpreter.

The methodology applied by FITISPos involves: Research + Development + Action + Service (R+D+A+S). This brings together research - action and training, which allows the application of a quantitative and qualitative methodology together with more innovative methodologies such as debate forums or focus groups and which results in:

- Multidisciplinary workshops,

- Reciprocal development of tasks or activities: UAH, town council, NGOs, society or other interested agents,

- Search and exchange of information/material (face-to-face or online),

- Training activities,

- Design of materials to facilitate communication.

- Creation/expansion of a network and committed work teams.

As resources, both projects were developed in collaboration with members of the FITISPos Research groups and the working group Agenda 2030 TISP*- ODS-UAH- *(Translation and Interpreting in Public Services), both at the UAH, as well as the non-profit organization AFIPTIPS (Association of Translators, Interpreters and Professionals in PSIT), and the working group *EU-DGT EMT PSIT and languages of lesser diffusion* (LLD) (PSIT WG 2020), a group supported by the Commission Europe through the European Masters' in Translation Network (EMT network). It must also be mentioned the generous support and collaboration of two Education Innovative Groups: 1. EMPATIAS (In Spanish, *Educación Mediante Proyectos de Aprendizaje: Integraci-*

ón, Avance y Servicio. In English, *Education Through Learning Projects: Integration, Advancement and Service*) and 2. Intercultural Communication and PSIT, as well as several NGOs and/or migrant associations such as *Abrazando Ilusiones*, ACUDEVA (In Spanish, *Asociación para la Defensa de Valores Africanos*. In English, Association for the Defence of African Values); AMAE (In Spanish, *Asociación de Mujeres Afganas*. In English, Association of Afghan Women), ARIA-E (In Spanish, *Asociación para la Amistad Afgano-Española y el Refuerzo Intercultural*. In English, Association for Afghan-Spanish Friendship and Intercultural Reinforcement),*Aria Project for Afghanistan, España*. In English, Aria Project for Afghanistan), CEAR (In Spanish, *Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado*, In English, Spanish Refugee Aid Commission), GUADA ACOGE (In Spanish, *GUADA ACOGE*, in English, GUADAWELCOMES); KARIBU (In Spanish, *Amigos del Pueblo Africano*. In English, Friends of the African People), or Translatel Ucrania.

In the following page the two projects will be developed.

THE PROJECT GET TO KNOW TO KEEP IN MIND

The project *Get to Know to Keep in Mind. Conversations with mediators, translators, interpreters and refugees (*with a focused in Afghanistan) was developed in two main phases.

FIRST PHASE. SETTING THE WORKING GROUP AND REPOSITORY

Two actions were taken in the first phase: 1. Creation of a multilingual, multidisciplinary and multifunctional working group (WG), and 2. Compilation of materials to create a repository

Action 1. Creation of a multilingual, multidisciplinary, and multifunctional working group (WG).

The WG was initially composed of 6 people: two professional interpreters and translators who were present at the arrival of the first Afghan refugees at the Torrejón de Ardoz airport in 2021, and who have continued to collaborate with NGOs and the Government to date; a psychologist specialized in mental health and with experience in working with host families, refugees and collaborating with NGOs in the inclusion of some Afghan families in the central area of Spain called Corredor del Henares; and two Afghan women who had arrived a year ago as refugees. One of them was a lawyer and activist of human rights in her country as an advisor in an NGO, and the other was a student with a degree in computer science from the Polytechnic University of Kabul, and at the moment studying a master's degree in computer science at the University of Valencia, where she has been admitted through a programme to help Afghan refugees. Later on (second phase) members of the AriA-E, interpreters who collaborate with UNHCR and other NGOs have joined throughout the development of the project. The group remains still open for the incorporation of new people interested in the subject.

Once the WG was consolidated, this initial team participated in a round table organized at the University of Alcalá to celebrate the Translator's Day. The topics and subjects discussed and their protagonists were: Family life and customs by a professional mediator and interpreter; health care by a psychologist helping Afghans in different NGOs; women by a woman professional interpreter and mediator who has been helping Afghans since their first arrival; education, by an Afghan refugee, lawyer and activist on the defense of human rights in her country; and work and technologies in our lives by an Afghan refugee student. The speakers tried to compare the issues in both countries so as to increase knowledge from both sides. The recording is available on you tube at: https://youtu.be/CmQKujm-818.

Action 2. Collection of materials about Afghanistan and Afghans in Spain to get well informed and increase awareness on both sides: Afghans and Spaniards. Using google drive a link was created and circulated to upload all type of the materials (institutional reports, news on national TV or the social media, NGOs memorandum, news from international channels about Afghanistan…) in the repository in order to get first-hand knowledge of the communicative needs of the Afghan population in Spain.

SECOND PHASE- SURVEYS
AND ACTIONS

Two activities were carried out: 1. To develop two surveys to get quantitative and qualitative data and 3. To collect first- hand information about specific topics to help integration.

Action 1. The two surveys were designed with the tool provided by UAH, Microsoft Forms, completely anonymous and voluntary. Each one of these surveys was addressed to a specific group of people: 1. Spaniards, 2. Afghans in Spain. Both surveys were distributed by email and social channels (WhatsApp, social networks, etc.) to all those people and/ or associations that could be interested in this project.

Results of action 1:

A summary of the answers to the survey addressed to Spaniards indicates the following:

25 responses were obtained. 80% were women and in terms of age, the highest percentage was for people between 16 and 26 years of age (13) and with a difference between 36 and 45 (7). This is followed by 46-55 (4) and only one person indicated that they were between 26 and 35 years of age.

A summary of the answers to the survey targeting foreigners (Afghans) follows: 14 Afghans responded: 4 men and 10 women. Age: 26-35: 6; 36-45: 3; 45-55: 3; 16-25: 2 (the rest 0); 54% say they speak English; +70% know

+3 languages; most (78%) have been in Spain for less than 2 years. Among those who have worked or assisted as interpreters or mediators, when asked about the code of ethics, confidentiality was ranked first, followed by neutrality and fidelity - but only 1 person valued linguistic and cultural competence. This leads us to consider the differences between bilingual and translators and interpreters in the training materials.

Most relevant data extracted from Afghans' answers indicated that:

- Most of them speak 3 or more languages or dialects demonstrating the large number of dialects that can be found in this country.

- The most frequently spoken languages are: Dari, Pashtun, English, Spanish and Persian.

- Most of the participants learned Spanish in Spain through language courses.

Action 2. First- hand information to know each other.

The next activity developed to increase awareness and knowledge was to ask both groups to write or record an audio for the following situations:

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1. Afghans: Write or record an audio (in Spanish or in your native language):

Some cultural differences between Spain and your country of origin (clothing, food, services offered, etc.)

Some topics that most caught your attention when you first arrived in Spain (gestures, posters, clothing, etc.).

The main difficulties you encountered when you arrived in Spain (communication, culture, customs, etc.).

Some suggestions or advice to people (from the same country of origin as you) who have just arrived in Spain on how to integrate more quickly

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2. Spanish: Write or record an audio for the following:

First impressions when you met foreigners who did not know the Spanish language and/or culture.

Some cultural differences that you have observed in Afghans who have just arrived in Spain.

Some suggestions or advice for people who have just arrived in Spain about culture, communication, customs, etc.

Some tips on how to integrate better in Spain if you are a foreigner.

ANSWERS AFGHANS

Question 1
Some cultural differences between Spain and your country of origin (clothing, food, services offered, etc.)

• Sometimes they (Spanish people) speak too loudly.

• They gesticulate a lot when they speak.

• There is a lack of interaction/knowledge of each other each or with other countries and nations which has decreased drastically in the last 40 years in our country.

• As for clothes, in Spain it is like in the Kurdish region, very beautiful and colourful, especially for women, but this goes against the Islamic culture which suggests dark colours.

• The Afghan cuisine is very diverse, we have a variety of delicious and different kebabs and stews served with rice. We use lot of rice and carbohydrates as well as special spices which are used less here in Spain.

Question 2. Some topics that most caught your attention when you first arrived in Spain.
• Very friendly and smiling.

• They always try to help (positive).

• The first thing that struck me about Spain is the architecture and ancient buildings that have been common in this country for decades and even centuries.

• The language of the people of this country has its own rhythm and beauty.

• The climate

Question 3. Main difficulties you encountered when you arrived in Spain (communication, culture, customs, etc.).
• Communication (both verbal and non-verbal).

• Space (invasion of personal space).

• The language. This is the most important problem for a foreigner. People who are not from Latin America do not know Spanish, and Spaniards are not familiar with English, especially in small towns.

• An important difference in Spanish culture is the excessive relaxation of its people. It is good in some respects, but it really requires patience when it comes to administrative work.

Question 4. Some suggestions or advice to people from your country who have just arrived in Spain on how to integrate more quickly
• Ask your neighbours and the people to trust on you more.

• Accept that Spanish bureaucracy is slow.

• If you don't know the language, ask for an interpreter service.

• Try to find out everything you need to know before you do anything.

• Take part in the various workshops organised by the associations.

• Use public transport is cheaper and everything is very well connected.

ANSWERS BY SPANISH PEOPLE

Question 1. Some recommendations you would make to newcomers to Spain (refugees, immigrants, foreigners, etc.)

• Participate in neighbourhood activities, cultural centres.

• If you do not understand the language well, ask to communicate through interpreters.

• Explain their rights and obligations as well as the administrative procedures to regularise their situation.

• Try to do a professional course in order to have more job opportunities.

• Don't refuse to do the customs of the country, and invite your neighbours to participate in your customs (e.g. New Year's celebration/your New Year...).

Question 2. Some cultural differences that you have observed in foreigners who have just arrived in Spain
• Language
• Food and drink
• People skills
• Clothing, customs
• Timetable

Question 3. Some tips on how to integrate better in Spain if you are a foreigner
• Seek support from public bodies and establish relationships with neighbours.
• Live with the citizens by participating in everything they can: cultural activities, activities in libraries...
• Adapt to the neighbourhood where they want to live, be good people, go to an association that can help them.
• Practice Spanish and get to know Spanish traditions and culture better.

Question 4. Tell us about your first impressions of a foreigner or refugee living in Spain
• Accept that Spanish bureaucracy is slow.
• If you don't know the language, ask for an interpreter service.
• Try to find out everything you need to know before you do anything.
• Take part in the various workshops organised by the associations.
• Use public transport is cheaper and everything is very well connected.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

With these data and experiences the last step has been the creation of a repository of different materials based on the experience, contacts and results of the different actions carried out throughout the year to fulfil the objectives of the project. It is our intention to continue reaching out to Afghan and national populations in search of better communication, either by presenting the results in congresses or in publications.

As a final point, the conclusions we have reached can be summarised in the following points:

1. The project has allowed us to get closer to the Afghan and foreign population

2. We have established contacts with people who are acting as linguistic and cultural bridges, helping in communication - some as professionals and others as simple bilingual friends or relatives or volunteers who know the languages to a certain level although they do not master them.

3. We have learned, through all these collaborators, the main difficulties that this population has in integrating.

4. We have exchanged information on strategies or guidelines to facilitate linguistic and cultural communication.

5. We have brought different groups (psychologists, social workers, interpreters, translators, refugees) to the same table to gather information based on experience and day-to-day life. (For more information Valero-Garcés 2023).

THE PROJECT FEIMEM

The FEIMEM project was developed thanks to the funding of the Spanish *Ministerio de Igualdad. Instituto de las Mujeres* (in English Ministry of Equality- Women's Institute). The project is framed within other previous actions in the same line with the purpose of giving visibility and showcasing the work of qualified migrant women in their communities and in the society. The participants were women who are proficient in Spanish and other LLD with experience as interpreters and mediators.

Considering some characteristics of the female migrant population in Spain, FEIMEM pays specific attention to four majority groups whose mother tongues are defined as "lesser-used languages" or language of lesser diffusion (LLD) (Valero-Garcés 2022; 2024, Valero-Garcés & Alcalde Peñalver, 2023).

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The specific objectives were:

1. Giving voice and visibility to a twofold minority group (migrant women and speakers of LLD) to empower them and give them the possibility of accessing the labor market as interpreters or cultural and linguistic mediators.

2. Contextualizing the situation of migrants in general and the Afghan, Ukrainian, Arab and Sub-Saharan population in particular, within the Spanish panorama.

3. Disseminating strategies or guidelines to facilitate linguistic and cultural communication through training workshops in interlinguistic and intercultural communication online and in person, aimed at untrained bilingual people, and as a preliminary step to promote and recognize the work of interpreters and/or mediators.

4. Facilitating the necessary training for migrant women from Afghan, Ukrainian, Arab (Moroccan) and sub-Saharan populations so that they can act as a cultural and communication bridge.

The methodology applied is basically the FITISPos one explained before. The method followed is mainly qualitative in this study. It is based on six actions: two round tables or discussion forums and four seminars or workshops with the active participation of researchers, trainers and LLD migrant speakers. The workshops were delivered by qualified migrant women representing their communities.

The project was developed in 6 sessions. The first session (activity 1) was the inaugural session which consisted of a plenary conference and a round table in which all the NGOs participated. The last session (activity 6) was the closing of the face-to-face part of the project with the participation of the researchers, trainers and representatives of the NGOs. The other 4 remaining sessions (activities 2,3,4, and 5), were each dedicated to a specific group of migrant women, given by a qualified migrant woman integrated into society.

The titles of the conferences and the diverse research profile of the speakers give an idea of the topics covered. The objective was to deal with topics of interest to the migrant population. The names of the speakers and titles follow:

Migrant women, communicative strategies and ethical testimony, by Sonia Núñez, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (Madrid).

Communication with the migrant population in the field of maternal and child health, by Almudena Nevado, San Jorge University, Zaragoza.

Intercultural communication strategies, by Silvia Damianova, University of Alcalá (Madrid).

Migrant woman and fiction. Representing in order to exist, by Diego Muñoz, Alcalá University, (Madrid).

African cultures and migration. Approach from psychology, by Xana Mateo. Psychologist in GuadAcoge.

The workshops were each one dedicated to a specific topic related to intercultural communication, and were delivered by a representative of each of the groups, as shown below:

Oksan Stopets. Communication with migrant population and LLD. Ukrainian women.

Roya Daliri. Forms of communication and LLD. Afghan women.

Houria Yousfi. Codes of conduct and good practice guidelines and LLD. Arab & Bereber women

Nicole Ndongala. Social mediation, emotion management and teamwork and LLD. African women.

The closing session brought together representatives of the four groups as well as researchers, PhD students, and members of the FI-

TISPos group and other collaborators to recap on the development of the project in previous sessions, establish common ground and design strategies for further progress.

There are many differences between the various communities - language, culture, how and when and why they arrived, etc. However, The FITISPos team and collaborators believe that- apart of considering these particularities – some similarities are also important elements for the training of interpreters and/or mediators in LLD.

As a summary of the development of the project, following there are some conclusions /recommendations by the representatives of the four communities and trainers of Arabic, Dari, Swahili and Ukrainian workshops.

Recommendation 1. Being a professional implies to follow the code of ethics and guides of good practice and training is needed to know and manage them.

Recommendation 2. Training on the emotional and psychological skills is important as the different contexts and situations you may need to face also involve different strategies and skills to act professionally.

Recommendation 3. Importance of being not only bilingual but also bicultural in the broadest sense of the word, which includes to know the functioning of the two administrations, the laws, customs, etc.

Recommendation 4. Importance of comprehensive training, including training on access to the labor market, laws & necessary preparation.

Recommendation 5. Importance of knowing the cultural codes of each community beyond the language to act in a professional manner.

Recommendation 6. Create referents for the community as a tool for change based on training, cooperation and teamwork.

Recommendation 7. The importance of cooperation of all actors involved, including cooperation between the different communities.

Recommendation 8. Importance of language: Guidelines to encourage language proficiency adapted to the needs or environment.

Recommendation 9. Importance of training on extra-linguistic aspects such as mental health in order to be authentic transmitters of information.

All sessions were developed in a hybrid way, face-to-face at the University of Alcalá and in streaming. All interventions were recorded, and simultaneous interpretation was provided in English and remote interpretation via Zoom in each of the languages (Arabic, Dari, Swahili, Ukrainian).

The last step of the project is the publication of the open access e-book entitled *Estrategias para construir sociedades inclusivas: Universidad y mujeres migrantes* (in English*, Strategies for building inclusive societies: University and migrant women)*. The e-book includes:

a. Video of the original recording in Spanish (Conferences and workshops)

b. Adaptation and transcription of the text of the workshops into Spanish for the 4 workshops.

c. Translation of the Spanish text of the 4 workshops into the 4 languages of lesser diffusion: Arabic, Farsi, Swahili, Ukrainian

d. Audio recording of the text of the 4 workshops in the 4 languages of lesser diffusion: Arabic, Farsi, Swahili, Ukrainian).

Mos of this information is also available at the FEIMEM web site: https://feimem.web.uah.es/. (For more information see Valero-Garcés 2025).

CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

In the dynamic landscape of academia, the concept of the Third Mission has emerged as a pivotal force, driving universities to extend their impact beyond traditional education and research. As the transition to a new model of universities unfolds, it is critical that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) engage in a continuous process of self-reflection, identifying the structures and capacities that can best serve their strategies. Similarly, policy makers can maximise the impact of HEIs on society by acknowledging the specificities of different institutions and their relations to the territory.

Whilst the road ahead is challenging for HEIs, which face a policy environment that is changing faster than their organizational culture, the case studies/ projects described provide an optimistic outlook, with universities showing both resilience and initiative in taking up the challenge of being a key actor for local development.

It serves as a crucial avenue for universities to showcase the value of knowledge in human development, going beyond the traditional roles of education and research. The social influence generated through Third Mission activities is a testament to its significance in fostering innovation and engagement.

The projects *Conocer para no olvidar* y FEIMEM have proven to be enriching actions and a tool for empowerment and visibility of qualified migrant women as referents in their communities, and a strategy to train migrant women as professional interpreters and /or mediators, thus given them the possibility to have access to the labor market.

Educated and multilingual migrant women play a key role in facilitating communication between local institutions and newly arrived migrants. These women are not often given the recognition they deserve. Higher Education Institutions have an opportunity and obligation to give these migrant women a platform to speak and work together, which will help demystify certain stereotypes and show that migrant women acting as mediators, translators and interpreters of LLD, are active agents of communication with the foreign population, and essential architects for the creation of inclusive societies.

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