1st prize
25th Anniversary of the Universidad Popular of Palencia
PALENCIA
1. Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity:</th>
<th>Universidad Popular de Palencia Rey Alfonso VIII</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>C/ Padilla s/n, Edif. Buenos Aires</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postcode:</td>
<td>34003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City:</td>
<td>Palencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephones:</td>
<td>979 752 182 - 979 702 604</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:univpalencia@gmail.com">univpalencia@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.univpalencia.net">www.univpalencia.net</a></td>
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2. Background

The UPP Association, established in 1984, was driven by the interest of individuals and social organizations to create a project in Palencia for the lifelong education of adults, allowing citizens to access new fields of knowledge and skills helping them achieve a better understanding of the world, ranging from their immediate surroundings to higher global and abstract levels.

On hearing of the project “Popular Universities” they contacted the organisation to implement the project in Palencia.

From the start it was clear that it was not possible to develop it in the same way as other Popular Universities, though it would share the same spirit. Other Popular Universities are created by local institutions, and it is the town halls which embrace the project: sponsors, city councillors, etc. The Palencia project required creating an association –registered as a fully legal association– and finding funds, resources and infrastructures to initiate the project.

25 years on, this characteristic circumstance is still valid and has become one of our trademarks, in both positive and negative senses. The negative, due to the effort required to attain funding; and the positive, for the constant struggle that strengthens us and the positive values which independence creates.

On the 4th of March 1985 the Universidad Popular of Palencia (UPP) opened its classrooms with a programme of courses and workshops grouped into three large areas: Education, Culture and Health. That semester 400 participants –doubling estimates– started attending classes, and the UPP...
was born, guided by over 20 social educators with limited time to dedicate.

The aim of the Association “Universidad Popular de Palencia Rey Alfonso VIII”, according to its statutes, is “to develop and encourage citizens through education and culture, fostering the creation and start-up of organisations that strive to develop a variety of socio-cultural activities.” An essential organisation for this is the Universidad Popular of Palencia, whose reach will soon stretch beyond the town to the entire province.

It should be pointed out here that Palencia’s capital has a population of 80,000 with 102,000 in the rest of the province; therefore nearly half of the population is already city-based. One reason is the appeal of the city over the countryside, strengthening the city, but also showing a clear migration the heavy depopulation of the villages.

In the mid-1980’s, Palencia’s adult Education programme was almost solely limited to the formal education given in EPA centres. It is precisely at this time of political and social change when new social and “private” initiatives arose in this field (Farmers’ Schools, religious centres, specific activities in town quarters, etc.).

The significance and work of the UPP is perfectly reflected in the Palencia Strategic Plan 2000, developed by the town hall jointly with prominent social institutions of the city, in which, among other matters, it states:

“Palencia has an important centre for non-formal education: the Universidad Popular Alfonso VIII (UPP). The UPP is its key focus point, despite not having its own facilities. Of its students, nearly 50% only have primary studies and only 3% are
university graduates. 15% are pensioners and 5% are unemployed. These data attest to the great cultural interest of our citizens, as well as the educational and organisational abilities of the UPP. From a strategic point of view what is truly important regarding the UPP’s activities is the socio-cultural change it generates in its students. It increases the participants’ self esteem, improving their relationships thereby stimulating education and culture.”

Supported by the education project which sustains it –the FEUP– the UPP thus began its activities and is still active today.

FRAMEWORK OF OUR EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

The educational project of the Universidad Popular of Palencia emerged and developed from guidelines and principles set by Organisations and Institutions and which we share and adopt as our reference points, adjusting them to our needs.

We have three fundamental references:

• UNESCO, Hamburg Declaration, 1997. CONFINTEA V.
• Spanish Federation of Popular Universities (FEUP).
• Adult Education Law of Castilla y León, 2002.
• Organic Law on Education 2/2006, LOE.

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The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Education

We agree with this Declaration that:

• Lifelong education is more than a right: it is vital in the 21st century. It is both a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society. It is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equality, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice.

• Adult education denotes all learning processes, formal or otherwise, via which adults develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, and improve their technical or professional qualifications or redirect them to meet their own needs and those of society.

• Though the content varies according to economic, social, environmental and cultural contexts and personal needs, adult education and also children’s and adolescents’ education are necessary elements of a new educational vision in which learning becomes truly lifelong.

• The objectives of this type of education are: to develop the autonomy and sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities.

Spanish Federation of Popular Universities (FEUP)

The Spanish Federation of Popular Universities provides guidelines and safeguards the specific and unique principles that define Popular Universities as “a social and cultural development project that acts locally, with the aim of promoting social participation, education, training and culture, to improve the quality of life of the people in the community.”

It is a member of EAEA (European Association for the Education of Adults) and belongs to ICAE (International Council for Adult Education).

The Universidad Popular of Palencia shares the strategies and objectives of FEUP, some of which are:

1. To promote lifelong learning and education of adults with dialogue between cultures, the right to learn and equality among men and women, etc, in local, regional, national, European and global spheres.

2. To provide and shape the way for close collaboration between People’s Universities, in the development of activities, projects and programmes of each Popular University.

3. To cooperate with Institutions, enhancing existing collaborative agreements and to achieve others (Women’s Institute, Ministry of Education, AECID...).

4. To develop and promote meetings on lifelong learning, as recommended by UNESCO, in Autonomous Communities and towns where PU’s are based.

5. To help train educators, through seminars and workshops, facilitating communication for educators in the various PU’s.
To hold congresses and assemblies for a joint approach on programmes and activities of the PU’s.

**Adult Education Law in Castilla y León**

The regional government of Castilla y León passed Law 3/2002 on 9th April 2002 to which we comply with from that time; we adhere to it but also demand that the Law be transformed into regulations, specifically regarding certain elements affecting us directly such as: the running of the Council for Adult Education, the participative Organisations, actions, etc.

We accept and share what is understood to be the Education of Adults: “the body of activities and processes for learning, formal or otherwise, that aims to offer adult citizens in Castilla y León the possibility of developing their abilities, enriching their knowledge, accessing cultural and educational arenas, improving their technical or professional competencies, reorienting them to better serve their own needs and those of society, as well as developing their critical thinking and participative skills when facing cultural, social, economic and political realities.”

**Organic Law on Education 2/2006, LOE**

Naturally, our reference points are those referring to Adult Education, though we gladly embrace section d) of Chapter I which supports “education conceived as continuous learning, to be developed throughout life.”

Specifically, we focus on articles 66 to 70 which refer to adult education. From there we highlight some of the principles we believe to be fundamental:

1. Adult education aims to offer all people over eighteen the possibility to acquire, update, complete or broaden their knowledge and skills to enhance their personal and professional development.
2. To achieve this aim, educational Institutions may cooperate with other public Institutions engaged in adult education and, in particular, with labour Institutions, as well as with local bodies and various social entities.
3. We share the objectives established by the Law.
4. Adults may achieve learning both through formal or non-formal learning activities and through work experience or social activities. Links should therefore be established between both routes and measures taken to validate the learning achieved in these manners.

**PROGRAMME LOCATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF PALENCIA**

Type of Socio-Educational Interventions

- General Educational Interventions
- Interventions for the Elderly
- Interventions for Disabled People
- Interventions for Immigrant Groups
- Interventions for Ethnic Minorities
- Interventions for Youths
- Women’s Interventions
- European Programmes
- Social Exclusion

* Tomamos los centros de Acción Social (CEAS) como referencia geográfica de nuestro trabajo en la provincia de Palencia. Todos y cada uno de los municipios están integrados en su Centro correspondiente, siendo éste su referente para la gestión de todas las intervenciones sociales y educativas de las que son destinatarios.
3. Description

OBJECTIVES

The PPU’s main objective is to promote the social participation of citizens, a fundamental condition to enhance democracy and to develop the community socially, culturally, educationally and economically. Participation also implies having and using the means necessary for action.

To develop this objective, the Universidad Popular of Palencia aims to:

a. Motivate and stimulate people to understand their immediate environment, become skilled and organised to enable their contribution to society.

b. Promote conditions that allow people and communities to develop, overcoming cultural and educational barriers that limit their participation.

c. Encourage self-organisation and the sense of responsibility in people, groups and citizens, and help to shape the fabric of society making social participation possible and effective.

d. Encourage work in collaboration with organisations dedicated to this end.

e. Foster and find alternatives that help enjoy leisure and free time in a creative manner.

SCOPE OF INTERVENTION

The Universidad Popular of Palencia project is intrinsically dynamic and closely follows the needs and demands of the community it serves. Initially this was the city of Palencia and, though it continues to be so, new geographical locations in the province and new areas of interest have been added to cover the needs of certain groups that require our attention and commitment.

The Universidad Popular of Palencia offers the entire population a chance to extend their learning opportunities over their lifetime. Faced with the challenge of motivating and facilitating access to underprivileged people, it has made the effort of adapting its offer to take into account the needs of some less privileged social groups such as women, young people, elderly people, immigrants, the unemployed, underprivileged minors, drug addicts, prison inmates, rural people, socially excluded people, etc.

Work with different groups in the population is carried out with the aim of understanding the educational needs of social groups and focusing our methodology according to those specific needs. We are not stigmatizing the population into new
categories or trying to maintain the categories. We are attempting to encourage interaction among the various groups within the framework of social integration, respecting the individual and striving for the full integration of all social groups in conditions of equality.

To work for and in favour of these groups of people implies: generating and managing funding; providing technical and academic services; and, of course, researching, following up, evaluating and exchanging experiences in these fields.

To help understand the huge educational effort we take into account two fields of intervention. Firstly, the UPP’s original project, the Annual Programme of Courses and Workshops, which year after year is open to everyone over 16 and held at our headquarters. The second field covers all projects and interventions carried out by the UPP at the request of institutions, entities and organisations according to the system established for each case: announcement of subsidies, alliance agreements, contracts, cooperation and collaboration, etc.

The beneficiaries of the UPP project are defined in the general guidelines of intervention:

1. Annual programme of courses and workshops of the Universidad Popular of Palencia.
2. Projects sponsored by institutions and deriving from ties with social and economic entities and organisations.

3. Projects within the territorial and regional framework:

- Educational programme in municipal social centres dependent on Palencia’s Town Hall.
- Joint programmes with the centres for social action (C.E.A.S.) in the province of Palencia.
- Programmes integrated into social action plans of the Diputación de Palencia.
- Programme to promote assets and resources of cultural, environmental, or historical interest in the rural world.
- Leisure and culture programmes in locations around the province sponsored by town halls.

4. Design and implementation of European plans and projects:

- Policies for equal opportunities.
- Work placement: Equal Programme.
- Rural development: Leader and Leader+.
- Cultivation and appreciation of natural and cultural heritage.
- Recovering traditional culture and spreading heritage awareness.

5. Socio-educational intervention projects with specific-needs groups:

- Programmes for the elderly.
- Programmes for disabled people.
- Programmes for people at risk of social exclusion.
- Programmes for immigrant groups.
- Programmes for young people.
- Programmes for ethnic minorities.

6. Women’s programmes.
4. Strategies

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE UPP: SERVICES

Our project is broad and diverse and therefore needs to be sustained by a functional, organizational and educational structure that we call Services.

The purposes of this structure of Services are as follows:

- To provide a practical organizational response. Each of the courses, workshops or programmes conducted within a Service share a common aim regarding end goals, methodology and general activities. Each Service is appointed a coordinator whose purpose is to call and moderate meetings, and to guarantee that the guidelines established by the centre’s educational project (PEC) and the centre’s curricular project (PCC) are followed up in the team work.

- To provide pedagogical support to all the teachers within the Service. The space serves as a meeting point in which to discuss problems, concerns, ideas, share experiences, as well as being the appropriate place for covering the teachers’ training needs.

- To provide a balanced programmatic response. The various Services are an ideal element to ensure a good balance between all the educational and socio-cultural angles of the aforementioned interventions.

Over time we have made changes in the Services, both in the terminology used as well as in the internal structure of each Service, yet always trying to give meaning to increasingly complex educational and social actions.

One of such alterations arose when it became evident that some Services could be divided into departments or sections when the fields in which
they operated broadened and specialised. Currently the following Services and their corresponding sections are:

**EDUCATION SERVICES**

This Service develops activities aimed helping citizens complete their basic education, as well as acquiring new and more specialised skills needed to increase their quality of life.

**Lifelong learning programme**

Recent demographic studies show that in Palencia there is a large part of the population lacking in basic education.

They require learning methods and subjects adapted to their needs and interests thus empowering them to develop their personalities integrate into today’s society and subsequently take an active part in its transformation.

Women require special attention. Although in Palencia women have benefited from noticeable progress, certain aspects are still lacking and this makes their full participation in society difficult.

The low educational level of women is the main problem since it directly excludes women from the work place and, indirectly, isolates them from the outside world turning their family into their sole frame of reference.

Hence, the first step is to design and implement programmes with the key purpose of attaining women’s participation, thus making women themselves their own agents of change.

**Specific education programme/ Knowledge routes**

Over the last decades, Western culture has undergone rapid changes thanks to the introduction of new technologies; ignorance of these may become a discriminatory factor for finding a job or even for managing daily life successfully.

In addition, proficiency in three European languages is one of Europe’s educational objectives as set forward in the European Commission’s White Paper “Teaching and Learning. Towards a Learning Society.” A vision of a bilingual and multilingual Europe is clear. Proficiency in three European languages is one of the European Union’s goals and, in the European Commission’s White Paper “Teaching and Learning towards a learning society,” the objective of a multilingual Europe is evident.

**Language classes**

Learning languages has become a very complex educational need requiring careful thought when designing specific courses:

- Proficiency in foreign languages as a result of formal education is distressingly low (there are people with university degrees unable to use the language they have studied in depth).
- The need for language skills is not only work-related or to improve education, but also due to new communication situations (internet use, coexistence with immigrants who speak other languages, more leisure travel among the elderly, influence of languages not covered by formal education, etc.).
**Digital literacy teaching**

The field of information technologies has been traditionally approached from a purely technical perspective. Currently however, the generalised use and need for these technologies places them in an unconventional limelight directly related to this Service’s specific objectives.

Age is no longer a barrier in the demand for these technologies. Their use also has to be compatible with more general basic learning processes (for instance, many people who enrol for digital education courses have literacy problems). This requires a more specific methodology than that which teaches IT to people who use technology on a daily basis.

We must also include the communication and productive features inherent in these technologies to ensure they are comprehended and useful to those who become initiated in them.

**HISTORY AND TRADITIONAL CULTURE SERVICES**

From the start, the UPP has contributed to the recovery, safeguarding and dissemination of our local culture and traditions, trying to broach all “expressions” of our immediate past and which are within our historic process of development.

We aim to revive our traditional culture and make it meaningful in everyday life. With this in mind we have set up several hands-on Workshops for the
recovery of trades and other theoretical Workshops providing information and training on the aforementioned matters, fomenting the understanding and appreciation of tradition.

ARTS SERVICES

The community requests leisure time events that allow people to develop their personalities through creative activities that go beyond their normal daily life at work and home. Often however, citizens have not had the opportunity to develop in this direction.

The UPP offers a wide array of options for teaching creativity through various workshops. In addition, the Universidad Popular of Palencia offers local artists’ groups the use of its resources (human, material and financial) to carry out their activities.

SOCIAL INTERVENTION SERVICES

“Youth” section

The period of youth is considered to be a phase of personal development in which individuals are faced with many new situations to which they must find solutions and take decisions. At this time individuals are also confronted with their own need for emancipation (to define themselves as autonomous, independent people with their own identity) often limited by a lack of autonomy and economic dependence.

Youngsters, for these reasons, while having huge potential for innovation and change, find it very difficult to actively be part of community life and participate using their own initiatives.

In the last decade many projects addressing young people have been created, at national, regional and local levels; at the initiative of both social and public groups. However this is not enough, since there is a large segment of young people who do not take part at all, who have fewer means and feel discouraged, and to whom it is necessary to reach.

It is these young people that the UPP targets, striving to contribute to transforming and improving social relations.

“Elderly” section

Spanish society has changed. According to the latest demographic data, there has been a significant increase in the over 60 age group. In Palencia over 32,000 people are over this age, representing approximately 16% of the population.

Not only are there more people, they are also healthier and more active than before. The average life expectancy of 65 year olds is another 15 years. Hence, if we wish to avoid an increase in age-related problems, it is necessary to offer them a better quality of life during those years.

Though the value of leisure and free time is increasingly recognised, our elderly people have hardly had the opportunity to learn to enjoy leisure and free time for this time in life. Therefore, by investing in educational and cultural learning we are helping to improve the community’s health.

The UPP has developed a participative learning methodology that is structured as a public service for the underprivileged. The purpose is to
encourage social coexistence through developing participatory platforms and also skills that help adapt to social change and therefore useful to cover the needs of elderly people.

“Disabled people” section

The social intervention section implements actions to professionally train, develop and retrain disabled people as a first step of its global job placement project designed for employed or unemployed disabled people. These activities can be “personalised” and try to cover, as far as possible, the specific needs of the participants.

Professional development and retraining activities for disabled people cover five areas:

- Training
- Counselling
- Job promotion
- Support for retraining and professional qualification
- Job placement

Within the Universidad Popular’s programme are various courses and workshops focusing on work-related learning techniques. In these courses 5% of free places are reserved for disabled people who may wish to enrol.

“Immigrant groups” section

It cannot be denied that immigration is a relatively new development in the province of Palencia; the presence of foreign citizens in our society is generating certain issues which were previously unheard of in this country. These are issues related to the adaptation of immigrants to our work conditions and to their need for decent living conditions, similar to those of national citizens. Easily identified, they refer mainly to: work, housing, education, health and coexistence.

We believe that education and/or socio-educational intervention are indispensable elements to attain this end, keeping in mind in two important areas of action: on the one hand, increasing the general population’s awareness of interculturality and, on the other, specific education for immigrant groups.

Regarding specific education for immigrant groups, we regard learning Spanish an important factor that facilitates adaptation to a new environment, since language is the first big hurdle these people must confront.

In addition, immigrant women are increasing in number and often coming from cultures where they are treated as inferiors or segregated. It is necessary to ensure their equal opportunities by providing a space for meeting and learning.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

In the last few years we are witnessing how environmental problems have become part of our daily life and shape human and urban realities. Populations are increasingly more concerned with these problems and with future possible alternatives and options.

Environmental education traditionally addressed youngsters and children but the Universidad Popular’s project aims to extend these learning processes to other social and age groups.
The environmental education model we believe to be most pertinent pinpoints values and clarifies concepts with the aim of encouraging the right attitude and behaviour towards interaction between people, their culture and their environment. It also includes practical decision-making and the design of a code of behaviour in relation to issues regarding the quality of the environment.

The study of the local environment, UPP’s field of action, should encourage the finding of solutions for the immediate environment, as well as recognising factors that have impact at a global level.

**TRAINING AND WORK PLACEMENT SERVICES**

The Universidad Popular of Palencia believes in the importance of education for life and work, and also as a strong contributor to socio-economic development.

The UPP’s general objectives encompass educational aspects that aim to place people in jobs, covering all areas: counselling, updating or acquiring new knowledge, or its vocational education variants, with courses or counselling services.

We live in an uncertain and ever-changing work environment. An important challenge of this Service is to promote learning and working alternatives that facilitate the social integration of diverse groups of underprivileged people. It is therefore necessary to include the gender factor in training and job placement programmes since, though women have increased their presence in the workforce, they have not done so on equal terms with men.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**

We conceive health not only as an absence of illness but also as wellbeing on physical, psychological and social levels. These three elements are influenced by socio-cultural action and, therefore, must be approached jointly.

In the Community Health Service we attempt to optimise everything that can be described as healthy, encouraging behaviours and lifestyles compatible with physical, psychological and social health. This is corroborated by three precepts: prevention, promotion and education, with a comprehensive approach combining social and biological aspects, healthcare activities with education on self-care.

Likewise, the UPP believes in the importance of making these programmes accessible to people with special needs (the mentally ill, compulsive gamblers, drug addicts...), since taking part in a real environment such as this helps them to reintegrate socially and rehabilitate. With this in mind, specific programmes will also be designed for various associations or organisations, including courses that address the special healthcare needs of these individuals.

**CULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES**

In the future social analysts will describe this period as one of fast moving cultural change; change is happening so rapidly that we can affirm that everything has changed, but almost nothing has disappeared. This is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to conceptualise reality properly, especially when attempting to analyse cultural change.
However, there are irreversible phenomena, trends and criteria that have become widely accepted. Let us review some of these:

- **Expansion of the culture concept.** If culture was traditionally linked to the artistic-professional, to heritage and in general to humanities, today culture spans everyday elements, science and even technology, and alters the meaning of heritage by going beyond monuments and archaeology, even influencing lifestyles. Rather than as a source of knowledge, culture today is understood as civilisation, as a way of life and as behaviour.

- **Expansion and pinpointing of cultural problems.** The role of public associations; voluntary work and how it is recruited; social networks on internet; reorganisation of museums; management of cultural activities; support of scientific activities; management of cultural infrastructures; cultural sponsorship and patronage, etc.

- **The impact of internet and digital media.** These means make an indisputable contribution in spreading culture with their ability to offer human cultural heritage to everyone.

- **Expansion of new forms of communication and personal growth derived from digital means (especially web 2.0 and social networks).**
FUNCTIONAL AND INTERNAL PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE

Association Universidad Popular of Palencia Rey Alfonso VIII

ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Board of Directors

- Chairman
- Vice-president
- Board Members
- Political Group Representatives
- Student Representatives
- Teacher Representatives

2 Representatives

2 Representatives

Teaching Staff

Delegate Assembly

6 Representatives

6 Representatives

Board of Institution

Committees for Social and Cultural Actions

METHODOLOGY

Our general academic methodology is based on guidance principles, providing guidelines ensuring that all UPP teachers share a common framework and can work coherently with the project’s philosophy.

The characteristics of our methodology principles are as follows:

- A comprehensive approach enabling the addressing of problems, situations and events within a context and also globally. This approach refers to how reality is perceived within its context and to how we come to understand it.
- Linking learning activities to the participants’ own life, using their own experiences whenever feasible as a starting point. Their lives within and outside the UPP must be at the core of this learning.
- Dovetailing the participants’ previous knowledge with new subjects.
- Both the teaching and learning processes must guarantee usefulness in two ways: firstly, the potential practical application of the acquired knowledge, and secondly, it should serve as a foundation for further learning.
- Developing strategies and skills for people to learn on their own (learning to learn).
- Regulating activities from a lower to higher complexity, thus avoiding loss of motivation by the participants.
- Teachers must take into account the singularities of each group and of each specific participant, developing strategies for group work and also strategies that take into account individual diversity, giving positive value to this diversity.
• Promoting relationships among the participants by providing guidelines so that points of view can be contrasted and modified, interests coordinated and decisions taken collectively, driving team work, overcoming conflicts through dialogue, etc.

• Creating an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and cooperation, promoting team work, distributing tasks and responsibilities. Teachers should propose group goals that are appealing and stimulating, entailing various methods of organisation and cooperation: teams for specific tasks, distributing responsibilities and functions, etc. At the same time, group awareness must be encouraged.

• Designing activities beyond the classroom and within the scope of the group, the Service and the UPP, facilitating the achievement of objectives.

Evaluation systems

General principles

Given the need to establish an evaluation process allowing us to continuously assess and correct the project’s progress, an evaluation system was designed responding to the following issues:

• Usefulness: it must serve to readjust our programmes to new needs and situations.
• Feasibility: it must be sufficiently clear and simple for straightforward implementation.
• Objectivity: to facilitate data collection and provide us with enough space to avoid preconceived ideas.
• Precision: it must comprise the participation of all involved in the evaluation. It must be continuous and structured, enabling data to be systematised.

Survey on educational quality

The evaluation system corresponding to these principles has been put into practice under the title of “Survey on the quality of education.” This system, initially only used in the classroom, collects quantitative and qualitative data via a general questionnaire (to all participants, not a sampling). Generally the survey is conducted annually, though quarterly if specific processes require it.

Monitoring

In addition to the annual quality survey carried out during “Evaluation days” at the end of the school year, the control committees (technical committee and teaching staff) are in charge of identifying and monitoring the issues brought to light in the year’s evaluation processes.

Funding systems

The Universidad Popular of Palencia has several sources of funding. The general funding framework is an agreement signed by the three administrative bodies responsible for adult education (Junta de Castilla y León, Diputación de Palencia and Palencia Town Hall). This is a multi-year agreement renewed according to the periods established in the agreement itself and subject to a monitoring commission of the signatory Administrative bodies.

In addition, agreements with other institutions on concrete actions are established, which complete the funding of the project (Caja España
and other banks). Also, special programmes are developed with European funds and with the collaboration of other educational or social entities. Finally, the contributions made by the participants themselves cover a small percentage of the costs (the enrolment fee is affordable for virtually the entire population but if it not possible, is waived).

Human resources

A staff of 67 people currently carry out the various programmes and activities.

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<tr>
<td>2 Academic coordinators</td>
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<th>TECHNICAL STAFF ASSIGNED TO PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES</th>
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<td>COLLABORATORS</td>
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Contributing organisations

Spanish Government:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.

Junta de Castilla y León:

- Department of Education.
- Department of Labour.
- Department of Family and Social Services.
- Department of Agriculture and Farming.
- Department of the Environment.

Palencia Council:

- Social Services.
- Public Works and Development Services.
- Cultural Services.

Palencia Town Hall

Town Halls in the province of Palencia:

- Ampudia.
- Autilla del Pino.
- Carrión de los Condes.
- Cervera de Pisuerga.
- Dueñas.

- Perazancas.
- Ribas de Campos.
- Tariego de Cerrato.
- Venta de Baños.
- Villada.
Universidad of Valladolid:

- University School of Education
- Seminar on Non-Sexist Education
- Services on Expansion and Culture
- Vice-chancellor of Universidad de Palencia Campus

Other organisations, associations and groups:

- Caja España.
- Caja Círculo Católico.
- Federación Española de Universidades Populares (FEUP).
- Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias.
- Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos de Palencia.
- Federación de Grupos de Teatro Aficionado de Castilla y León.
- Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT).
- Unión de Pequeños Agricultores (UPA).
- Cáritas Diocesana.
- Cruz Roja (Red Cross).
- Asociación para el Desarrollo de la Montaña Palentina (ADEMPA).
- Asociación de Mujeres Gitanas Romí.
- Asociaciones de Personas Mayores.
- Asociación para la Coordinación de Educadores y Colectivos de Educación de Adultos de Castilla y León (ACECEA).
- Asociación Regional de Participantes de Educación de Personas Adultas (ARPEA).
- Federación Provincial de Asociaciones de Vecinos.
- Asociación de Madres y Padres de Alumnos/as.
- Consejo Provincial de la Juventud.
- Amnesty International.
- Colectivos de Mujeres de Palencia.
- Asociación Palentina Pro-Deficientes psíquicos.
- Comunidad Terapéutica de Drogodependientes.
- Asociación de Amigos del Cine.
- Asociación Musical Palentina Euterpe.
- Asociación Fotográfica Palentina Contraluz.
- Asociación Lapsus Teatro.
- Asociación Cultural Universitaria Palentina.
- Centro Cultural de Sordos.
- Asociación Cultural y Rehabilitadora de Minusválidos Físicos (ACREMIF).
- Escuelas Campesinas.
- Fondo Patrimonio Natural Europeo.
- Minusválidos Unidos para la Integración.
- Asociación de Fibromialgia Afectados de Castilla y León (AFACYL).
5. Achievements to date

Qualitative considerations


Trend of students over time UPP 1985 – 2009

Trend of direct/indirect students over time UPP 1985 – 2009
Over its 25 year history, the Universidad Popular of Palencia project has experienced many difficult situations that seriously placed its continuity at risk. The conviction that the model of association of a social nature was the most suitable way to achieve its goals encountered conflicting views, generally due to the political tone of the moment. The core concept behind it is that autonomy guarantees the quality of our educational approach. This concept has generated difficulties on several fronts, but mainly with regard to funding. For long stretches of time the team has had to sustain the programmes in a virtually voluntary way and under conditions of extreme hardship.

The increasing number of students highlights the need for a proper infrastructure via which to carry out our activities under decent conditions. The lack of adequate premises has been a constant problem in the history of the Universidad Popular. Our ability to take on new students to satisfy current demand is severely limited since it is impossible to increase available space.

Another major difficulty we face is the lack of regulation on matters related to Adult Education. The lack of proper regulation subjects our programmes and activities to the ever-changing positions of the various acting institutions. Working with such a broad and complex project as ours, this situation sometimes generates a sense of insecurity, of precariousness and a lack of clarity as to how to further develop our current work environment.
7. Future plans

We look ahead from a vantage point which allows us to design our future plans based on our past experiences. Many programmes, in addition to the project itself, are long-term given that the matters they deal with are substantial in nature rather than circumstantial.

If we review the educational project and the programmes, the overlap between the programme and society is clear. This is due to the intermediary character of our organisation, serving both society and the institutions that manage it.

The agreements, signed with the idea of continuity in mind, give vitality and boldness to the UPP because it has to deserve its future, but a strong and stable one, as the foundations and diversity of its work are rooted in the involvement with the society where it has developed.

From this perspective, we believe the following is necessary to ensure its future:

- To continue to explore our educational and socio-cultural project as the key to our educational development will be found there.
- To continue to fight in favour for the consolidation of adult Education, both on an institutional level –with our presence in the regional Educational Council for adults of Castilla y León– and on a social level –with projects that make us indispensable–.
- To continue the training, both of teachers and of specific individuals, allowing employability.
- And, finally, to continue to strongly support the value of participation from all walks of life, but especially our students –our participants–, promoting organizations such as ARPEA and all kinds of committees that foster debate and the involvement of people in this educational, dynamic and socially supportive project.