




**UNISERVITATE**  
Service-learning in Catholic Higher Education

**SERVICE-LEARNING  
IN CATHOLIC HIGHER  
EDUCATION**






**The Service-Learning in Catholic Higher Education Programme “UNISERVITATE”** aims to generate a systemic change in Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs), through the institutionalization of service-learning (SL) as a tool to fulfil their mission of an integral education.

Most recent Vatican documents on the mission and identity of CHEIs call to articulate science and faith, academic excellence with the concrete testimony of a **socially engaged University**.

In the last few years, the teaching of Pope Francis has insisted on the need to break out of the isolation of the Church to **“go out and head for the periphery”**, and has repeatedly asked the CHEIs to offer their students the opportunity to involve **“heads, hands and hearts”** in addressing the challenges of the world outside the walls.

However, many CHEIs are suffering an identity crisis, weakening their possibility to offer a truly **“integral education”** because of the institutional fragmentation between academic and pastoral goals and departments, and contradictions between the formal statements and the institutional practices. In many CHEIs service-learning is confused with mere volunteerism, is practiced without rigorous standards, or is not yet institutionalized in such a way that it could influence the entire university life.





**Quality service-learning** may offer a specific pedagogical contribution for CHEIs, helping them articulate their social outreach and spiritual identity with the academic activities, and offering innovative ways to achieve integral education, as evidenced by research and some experiences of CHEIs.

The pedagogy of service-learning (SL) has been especially spread in the last 50 years all over the world, changing education with impact in the teaching methods, research projects and social outreach through the integration of academic activities with community involvement. The current global service-learning movement is thriving, expressing itself in active national and regional networks, where several CHEIs are already participating. Different theoretical and cultural roots are emerging and starting a promising dialogue.

In this context, there's a growing interest in **exploring the specific contribution of service-learning to the mission and identity of CHEIs, and promoting their institutionalization also as a contribution to the overall global service-learning community.**



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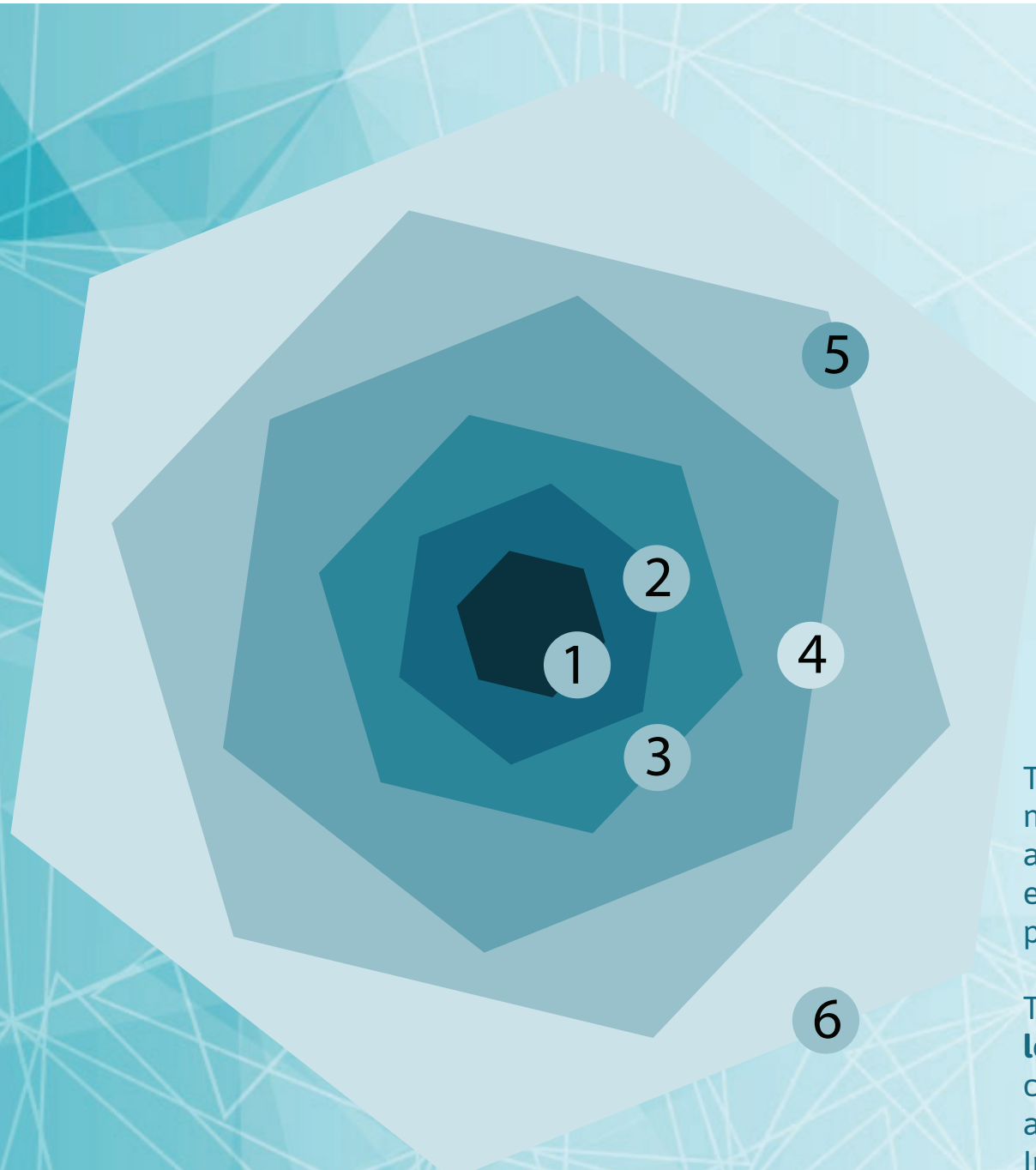
***UNISERVITATE aims to articulate teaching, research and social outreach in a way that contribute to the central mission of the Catholic Institutions of Higher Education to integrate their spiritual identity in an innovative way, in order to engage active youth as real agents for social change who critically engage for a “civilization of love”, according to the social teaching of the Church.***



## The UNISERVITATE Programme includes:

- **Research and reflection on the spiritual dimension of SL in CHEIs** around the world, to develop appropriate models for CHEIs identity and mission considering multicultural contexts.
- **Implementation of a CHEIs SL global network with regional hubs**, to contribute to a permanent promotion through critical mass building, a communication system including a digital platform, and a Global Award to offer recognition and visibility to best practices and propose global standards of quality SL.
- **Development of a capacity building program to institutionalize SL**: training for trainers, capacity building program for 20 selected institutions to start or develop their SL institutionalization processes.





- 1 **Coordination:**
  - Porticus CHEI<sup>1</sup>
  - CLAYSS<sup>2</sup>
  - Sounding Board
  - Spiritual and Research Team
- 2 **7 Regional Hubs and Partner Universities**
- 3 **20 Supported Universities**
- 4 **Associated Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs)**
- 5 **CHEIs in general**
- 6 **Public and non-confesional Higher Education Institutions**

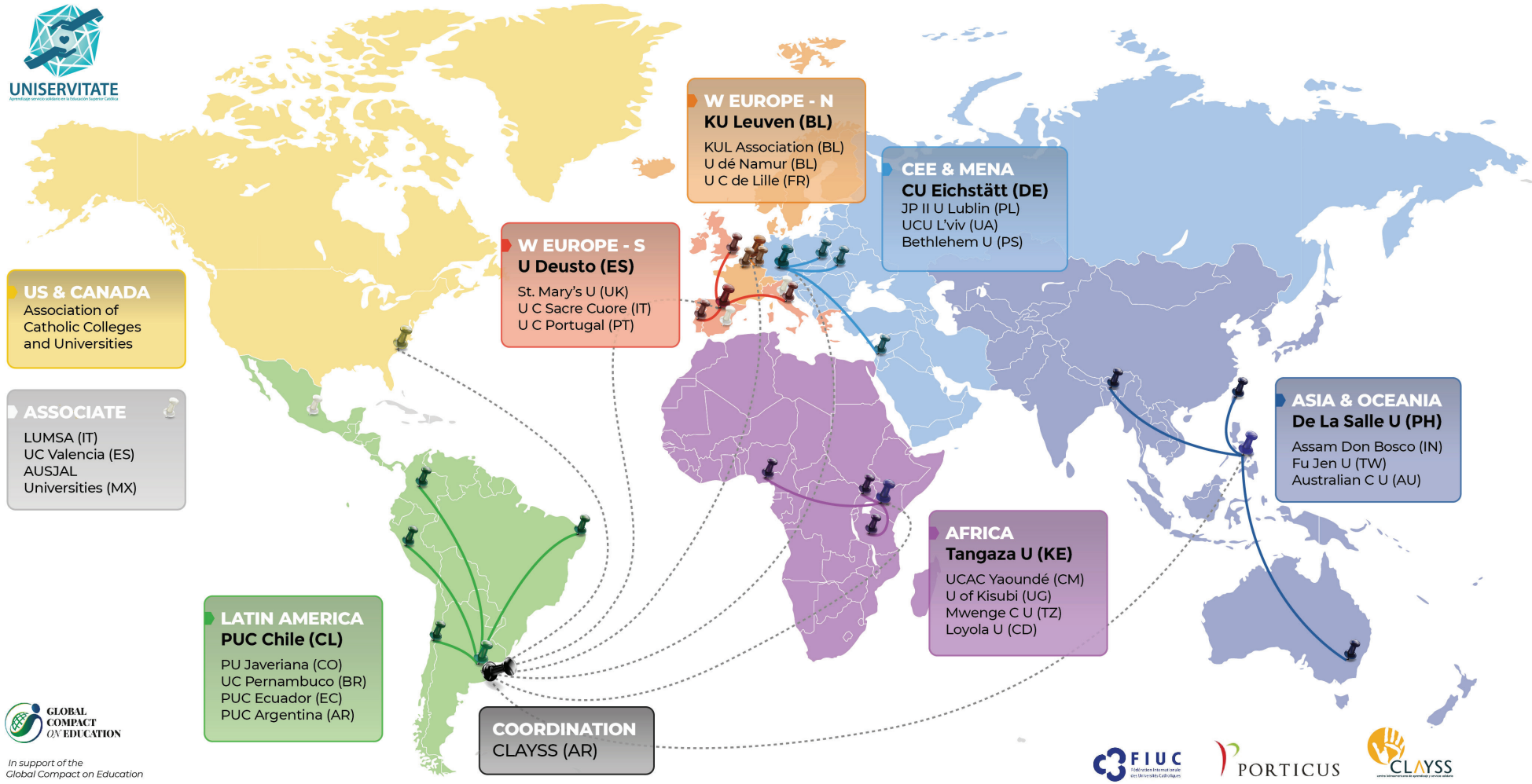
The **“Catholic” (= universal) approach** of this Programme networking has a unique potential to include institutions and cultural perspectives from the Global South on equal footing with the Global North institutions and their perspectives in global HE forums.

The Programme aims to contribute with the **global service-learning movement**, by establishing alliances with the current service-learning regional and national networks, and with other global networks gathering Higher Education Institutions around concepts like engagement, social responsibility and such.

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1 Porticus: <https://www.porticus.com/>  
 2 Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario (CLAYSS): <http://www.clayss.org/>

# Uniservitate Global Network



**5 continents, 26 countries, 15 languages, 5 religions,  
525.000 students, 70.000 teachers, +30 universities and educational institutions.**





UNISERVITATE is an initiative of  
Porticus  
and is coordinated by the Latin American Center for Solidarity  
Service-Learning (CLAYSS).



[www.uniservitate.org](http://www.uniservitate.org)

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