



ACTIVITY REPORT

2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

OBREAL Global is an interregional association which unites members and partners across continents with a shared **vision**, to build sustainable South-South-North cooperation based upon reciprocity, mutual knowledge transfer, and a commitment to common global challenges. This vision is one that has evolved since the association's creation in 2006, where it first concentrated on Latin America – Europe relations. Primarily uniting in its membership of higher education institutions and associations as well as research organizations, the vision of OBREAL has grown and been shaped, responding to global trends and the need for more dynamic interregional partnerships.

This year – 2023 - has continued to be a period of growth and expansion, through which OBREAL has further positioned itself in the policy landscape, developed a robust project portfolio, and defined new actions and initiatives for inter-regional dialogue. In addition, OBREAL has officially launched a new Training Platform for short-online courses and professional development. It has also launched a new social media strategy and targeted communications actions.

The OBREAL Secretariat, advised and supported by an 'Inter-Chapter Board', continues to implement the 2022-2025 strategic plan, and has further refined the main focus areas under this plan: **1) Sustainability and the SDGs, 2) Tertiary Education institutional and policy development, and 3) 'Innovating innovation'**.

The following is the second Annual Activity Report that OBREAL has published, which takes stock of actions that OBREAL has taken with members and partners, notably in three principles areas: **Knowledge Production, Capacity Building/Training and Inter-regional Policy Dialogue**. The report also provides an overview of new members which have joined the association and brief summaries of ongoing projects as well as commentary on how projects meet established priority areas.

1.1 MISSION & VISION

OBREAL is an association that unites members and partners in the higher education sector across continents with a shared vision, to build sustainable interregional South – South – North(s)¹ political dialogue and cooperation based upon mutual respect and knowledge transfer, and commitment to innovative solutions to global development challenges.

¹ OBREAL explicitly refers to diverse 'Souths' and 'Norths', hence why the plural form is used.

This vision is one that has evolved since the association's creation in 2004, when it first concentrated on Latin America – Europe relations. Primarily uniting higher education institutions and associations as well as research organizations, the vision of the association has grown and been shaped, responding to global trends. The COVID pandemic and its aftermath sharpened the need to inspire, construct and resource true interregional approaches.

OBREAL's current mission is to

1. Promote dialogue and synergies between governmental, academic, and social sectors, considering the specificities and heterogeneity of each region around the world.
2. Create *interregional bridges* for enhanced development in the higher education and research sectors specifically, via **inter-regional policy dialogue, knowledge production and collaborative multi-regional and multilevel projects**, as well as training and capacity building.

1.2 STRATEGIC AREAS

In 2023, OBREAL refined and sharpened its strategic priorities into three broad categories. These categories respond to the needs and interests of partners, policy makers and members, particularly as it relates to South-South interregional cooperation. They are transversal topics as opposed to disciplinary topics, which accommodate the wide project portfolio that OBREAL continues to have and inspire policy dialogue and knowledge production.

Innovating Innovation

Innovation can and must be promoted by all Higher Education Institutions (HEI), even if they lack the resources to conduct ambitious research. By emphasizing the role of 'contextualized' and 'locally relevant' innovation, HEIs can become development agents, opening a door to their greater participation in internationally funded cooperation projects. OBREAL has decided to place a special focus not just on the role of HEI in innovation ecosystems, but on the importance of 'innovating' more traditional constructs related to innovation, and to understand it better in a development cooperation and educational context.

Tertiary education, institutional and policy development

This broad category embraces several themes that are essential to shaping the development cooperation agenda. Specifically, it pertains to the flexibilization and digitalization of learning, quality assessment and quality standards, flexibilization of learning, and employability and entrepreneurship. From a broader perspective, it tackles the role of HEIs in regional integration processes, which is precisely OBREAL's speciality.

OBREAL believes in the articulation of policy and practice, and in the role of representative associations in the definition of policy. In this sense, university associations are a critical section of the OBREAL membership, and thus largely compose the Inter-Chapter Board that launched in 2021.

Sustainable development

The contribution of the higher education sector to the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals requires higher education institutions to target present and future goals related to employability, economic development, inclusion and citizenship. OBREAL has launched specific initiatives, dialogues and projects in this field, capitalizing on members and partners with complementary initiatives.

1.3 ACTION AREAS

In meeting OBREAL's defined priority areas, three types of intervention/actions are pursued by the organization:

a) Interregional policy dialogue

OBREAL works closely with the governmental, academic, and social sectors to generate interregional policy dialogue on Higher Education for Development. It also leads interregional policy dialogue series on topical key issues of common interest, bringing together different actors, perspectives, and practices from the different Souths and Norths. Policy dialogue is informed by and defines priorities for projects and knowledge production.

b) Knowledge production

To generate new and innovative approaches for education and development, OBREAL produces policy papers and briefs, periodic opinion/think-pieces for the academic world and civil society, and research papers and articles that offer diverse perspectives on South-South-North cooperation. The knowledge production pillar has started to grow in 2023, notably with the publication of an important "White paper" on modularization and flexibilization of learning/curricula in higher education, as well the important work that the association has published on comparable regional integration and the HE sector. This action area will continue to grow in the future, as OBREAL expands its network of experts and collaborators.

c) Capacity building and trainings

OBREAL supports institutional development and contributes to the enhancement of the quality and relevance of graduate student and young researcher training through building institutional, academic, and administrative staff capacities. OBREAL also contributes to strengthening research and innovation capacities through the

consolidation of innovation ecosystems, productive synergies, entrepreneurship, and digital and innovation policies for sustainable development. This is primarily done through capacity building projects that link members and partners, but also through virtual and hybrid trainings that OBREAL has started to deliver on its new Training Platform in 2023.

1.4 OFFICES AND STAFF

OBREAL has strengthened its international presence by establishing staff representation in Rabat, Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Bogotá.

In November 2023, OBREAL signed an agreement with the Universidad Nacional de San Martín (UNSAM) in Argentina. Through this agreement, UNSAM will provide office space for OBREAL's South American headquarters in 2024, marking an important step in the organization's regional expansion and strengthening its engagement in Latin America.

2. PROJECTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND TRENDS

In 2023, OBREAL, with members and partners, launched nine new projects funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union and two new EU service contracts, both of which OBREAL leads (HAQAA3 and SPHERE2). In addition, OBREAL continued to implement nine ongoing projects.

The projects launched this year have a broad geographic scope. They cover the regions of Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, Europe, the Southern Mediterranean, the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership. A notable increase can be seen in projects targeting Sub-Saharan Africa, which OBREAL places at the center of the global South. This can also be attributed to the fact that funding sources have been more concentrated in Africa recently, notably those targeting higher education and research in development cooperation (see the example of the European Union's Global Gateway investment package). At the economic level, the funds come mainly from the EU's *Erasmus+: Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) program*, though OBREAL has also launched a project awarded under *Erasmus+ Alliances for Innovation (EnoTour)* and two projects awarded under *Erasmus+ European Youth Together (MYCOMM and YOUTH WELL)*.

In terms of the main theme of the projects, they cover topics such as climate change and tourism, quality assurance and recognition, local economic development, and the modernization and internationalization of higher education.

Through these projects, OBREAL addresses all three of its strategic areas: sustainable development, tertiary education, institutional and policy development and innovating innovation.

As in the past, the approach to projects has several principles:

- Work collaboratively with members and partners on joint priority areas
- Empower members and partner in developing country contexts to lead projects
- Pool resources with members and partners to enhance competitiveness in winning international projects
- Use projects to inspire policy dialogue and to implement priorities established by policy dialogue processes

2.2 NEW SERVICE CONTRACT PROJECTS

HAQAA 3

The acronym HAQAA3 refers to “Harmonization, Accreditation and Quality Assurance in African Higher Education”. The contract is the third phase of the HAQAA Initiative. OBREAL has also coordinated phase 2 (2018-2023).

- **Geographical scope:** Africa
- **Funding stream:** Global Gateway Africa, European Commission
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is the coordinator of the project
- **Implementing Team:** OBREAL, the Association of African Universities (AAU), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Nine strategic implementing partners are also identified in five regions of Africa.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Modernization and internationalization of higher education, Quality Assurance and recognition, higher education data collection and management, continental and regional integration.
- **Duration of the project:** 60 months
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project achieved significant milestones, including the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with nine strategic implementing partners. The year began with a kick-off meeting and the first steering committee session held in July during the COREVIP conference of the Association of African Universities in Namibia. In September, the project organized webinars in collaboration with the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), aimed at introducing the initiative to the higher education community in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). October saw the organization of a regional focus group on higher education data collection capacity in Johannesburg, South Africa, alongside a webinar on the role of higher education data in policy-making. In November, a webinar on the complexities of

harmonization and its challenges in regional integration was conducted, and the project participated in the African Network for Quality Assurance (AfriQAN) conference in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

SPHERE 2

The acronym SPHERE2 refers to “Centralized Support to the Network of Higher Education Reform Experts”.

- **Geographical scope:** Multi-regional. Central Asia, Eastern Partnership, Southern Mediterranean and Western Balkans.
- **Funding stream:** European Commission – Erasmus+ program
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is the coordinator of the project
- **Implementing Team:** OBREAL and the European University Association (EUA)
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Modernization and internationalization of higher education, the European Higher Education Area, higher education policy reform in EU neighborhood countries.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project launched several key initiatives, including webinars to introduce contract actions to the National Erasmus+ offices and to the Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) from Northern Africa, the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans, and Central Asia. The SPHERE website and virtual community were also launched, providing a platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing. A study visit was organized for the HERE at UCL in Belgium, focusing on internationalization and digitalization in higher education. Additionally, a publication on 'Greening in Higher Education in EU Neighborhood countries' was produced. The project received numerous requests for Technical Assistance Missions (TAM) from ministries and HERE across more than 20 targeted countries. The year culminated in the Annual Conference for the HERE Network, hosted at the University of Barcelona in December.

2.3 NEW ERASMUS+ PROJECTS

Joint QA

The acronym Joint QA refers to “Strengthen national and regional quality assurance mechanisms through joint assessment and accreditation processes in Africa”. The project aims to enhance the quality and coherence of higher education systems across African countries. By promoting joint assessment and accreditation practices, the project seeks to support national and regional agencies in developing harmonized quality assurance standards.

- **Geographical scope:** Sub-Saharan Africa
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is the coordinator of the project.
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 3
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Liège Université, Université de Montpellier, U Louvaine, Agence Pour l'Évaluation de la Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Université Alassane Ouattara, Institut National Polytechnique Félix HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique de Côte d'Ivoire, Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur, Université Norbert Zongo, Université Thomas Sankara, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur de la Recherche et de l'Innovation du Burkina Faso, Université de Douala, Université de Dschang, Ministère de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation de Cameroun.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Modernization and internationalization of higher education, Quality Assurance and recognition, regional integration
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 1/04/2023)
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project marked its launch in June in the Ivory Coast, setting the foundation for its activities. One of the key initiatives was the mapping of various quality assurance (QA) standards across Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, and other African regions. This mapping effort aimed to inform the development of a joint set of standards for institutional and program accreditation in partner institutions, ensuring alignment and improving quality across the regions involved.

DIGIGRAD

The acronym DigiGrad refers to “Internationalization and Digitalization of Graduate Training and Research for the Attainment of African Regional and Global Development Goals”. The project aims to modernize and internationalize graduate education and research in Africa. By focusing on digitalization, the project seeks to improve access to high-quality training resources, enhance cross-border research collaboration, and equip graduates with skills aligned to regional and global development goals. DigiGrad promotes innovative, digitally supported approaches to learning and research, preparing African graduates to address pressing societal challenges and contribute effectively within an interconnected global landscape.

- **Geographical scope:** Sub-Saharan Africa
- **Funding Stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 2
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is a partner in the project, which is coordinated by the African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE)

- **Consortium members:** ANIE, Moi University (MOI), Africa Nazarene University (ANU), Universite du Burundi (UB), Excellence in Education for Development in Burundi (BIU), Laweh University College (LTD), University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Juba (UoJ), University of Upper Nile (UNU), OBREAL, Universidad de Extremadura (UEX), Universiteit Maastricht (UM), Università Degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza (Sapienza), UC Leuven (UCL).
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Graduate and post graduate supervision, Internationalization of higher education and internationalization strategies, digitalization
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 1/04/2023)
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project commenced with a pre-conference held online in March, followed by the kick-off meeting in May in Kenya at Moi University, where ANIE – the coordinator – is based. In October, a meeting with representatives from partner institutions was organized in The Netherlands to further advance collaboration and study the approach of Maastricht University to the management of internationalization and graduate studies. The project also focused on the preparation of guidelines for internationalization and digitalization in higher education. The year concluded with a study visit to Belgium in November (to UCL), providing participants with valuable insights into best practices in the field.

CLIMAR

The acronym CLIMAR refers to “Strengthening research, innovation and knowledge transfer on Climate Change & Tourism in Higher Education Institutions in Latin America”. The project aims to enhance the capacity of Latin American universities in addressing the impacts of climate change on the tourism sector. By promoting research and innovation, CLIMAR seeks to advance sustainable practices and knowledge transfer within higher education institutions, fostering resilience in tourism-dependent regions.

- **Geographical scope:** Latin America
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 2
- **OBREAL’s role:** The project is coordinated by the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canarias (member) and co-coordinated by OBREAL
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Universitat d'Alacant, Università di Bologna, University College Cork, Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Universidad de Caldas, Universidad de Cartagena, Universidad Autónoma de Chiriquí, Universidad de Panamá, Universidad Anáhuac Oaxaca, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Quintana Roo, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, and Universidad Nacional de Cuyo.

- **Main topics covered by the project:** Environment and climate change and its effects on the tourism sector, professional development and skills for tourism and sustainable development.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 13/04/2023)
- **Outputs:** Transdisciplinary research groups, a transversal module for graduate students and climate change and tourism, a professional development short course on climate change and tourism
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the CLIMAR project began with its launch in April at the National University of Cuyo (UNCuyo) in Argentina. In July, a study visit and training in Italy was organized, targeting the members of trans-disciplinary research groups and providing valuable insights into climate change and sustainability practices and inter-disciplinary research. In November, the project conducted a second training for transdisciplinary research groups in Bogotá, fostering collaboration across disciplines. Additionally, working sessions focused on climate change, circular economy, and tourism were held in Colombia, addressing critical environmental and economic challenges in the region.

SUSTURISM

The acronym SUSTURISM refers to “Responsabilidade e Sustentabilidade no Turismo”. This project aims to enhance Angola and Cabo Verde's capacity for sustainable tourism through innovative university training, fostering employability, entrepreneurship, and economic growth.

- **Geographical scope:** Africa (Angola/ Cabo Verde)
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 2
- **OBREAL's role:** The project is coordinated by the INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE VIANA CASTELO. OBREAL is a partner and in charge of the quality assessment workpackage and advising on the development of modules for skilling.
- **Consortium members:** Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo, KOAN Consulting, University of Santiago de Compostela, OBREAL, Lusíada University (Benguela and Huambo), University of Namibe, Jean Piaget University of Cabo Verde, and ISCEE (Cape Verde).
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Sustainable tourism by promoting responsible practices, environmental care, cultural protection, and digitalization. It emphasizes skills development in entrepreneurship, diversity, and inclusion to foster local economic growth through sustainable tourism models in Angola and Cape Verde.
- **Duration of the project:** 24 months (starting 01/06/2023)

- **Outputs:** Development of training modules on sustainable tourism for university faculty and future tourism professionals, a guide on sustainable tourism best practices, and resources for digital transformation and entrepreneurship in the sector.
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project began with virtual training sessions focusing on sustainable tourism, entrepreneurship, and digital skills for faculty members from Angola and Cape Verde. In May, a study trip to Portugal and Spain was organized, including site visits and training to enhance participants' understanding of sustainable tourism practices. Collaborative workshops were also held to design and plan sustainable tourism training programs for students in Angola and Cape Verde, with the goal of promoting local economic development and environmental sustainability.

ENGAGE SDG

The acronym ENGAGE SDG refers to “Developing the capacity of SADC higher educations to use participatory approaches for community-based engagement with selected SDGs”. The project aims to empower universities in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to effectively engage with communities on key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By building capacity for participatory, community-focused methods, the project seeks to strengthen the role of higher education institutions in addressing local challenges tied to specific SDGs. ENGAGE SDG promotes active collaboration between universities and communities, equipping institutions to lead initiatives that foster sustainable development and directly address regional priorities.

- **Geographical scope:** Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 2
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is co-coordinator of the project together with SARUA, one of the members of OBREAL.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, SARUA, University of Mauritius, University Technology Mauritius, University of the Western Cape, University of Zambia, University of Lusaka, North-West University, Universitat de Barcelona, University College Cork, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Università di Bologna.
Call: Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE), Strand 2
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Environment and Climate Change, Local economic development.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 1/12/2023)

QA DOC

The acronym QA DOC refers to Quality Assurance for Doctoral Education and Research in Africa. This project aims to enhance the capacity of African institutions to evaluate

and implement high standards in doctoral education and research. It focuses on developing and applying common evaluation standards for doctoral schools in countries like Senegal, Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as strengthening cooperation between African and European universities to foster research excellence

- **Geographical scope:** Sub-Saharan Africa (Senegal, Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo)
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) - Strand 3
- **OBREAL's role:** The Université Cheikh Anta Diop coordinates; the national QA Agency of Senegal (ANAQ-Sup) and OBREAL form the management team
- **Consortium members:** L'Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Université Gaston Berger de St Louis (UGB), ANAQ-Sup, Ministère (MESRI), Université Général Lansana Conté de Sonfonia (UGLCS), Université Gamal Abdel Nasser, ANAQ – Guinée, Ministère (MESRI) Guinée, Université de Kinshasa, Université de Lubumbashi, ANAQ -ESU, Ministère (ESU) RDC, OBREAL, Universitat Rovira I Virgili, AQU – Agence de Catalogne, Université de Montpellier, Universidade de Beira Interior, A3ES, ENQA (associé)
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Capacity building in research and doctoral education, Establishing and applying quality assurance standards for doctoral training and research in Africa and enhancing cooperation between European and African institutions in research and doctoral education
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 1/12/2023)

MYCOMM

The acronym MyComm refers to “Migrant and Refugee Youth COMMunication and advocacy for equity and inclusion”. The project aims to improve their ability to advocate for migrant and refugee issues, particularly through communication, audiovisual training, and public policy engagement. This initiative will empower these organizations to promote intercultural dialogue, raise awareness, and foster social inclusion, while also improving their visibility and advocacy at local, national, and EU levels

- **Geographical scope:** Europe.
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus +: European Youth Together
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is the coordinator of the project.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, CARDET, Young European Federalists (JEF), Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization (KOKEN), The Rural Hub, Regarddons, Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE), GIE.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Civic Engagement and Inclusion, Common values, Youth.
- **Duration of the project:** 24 months (starting 1/01/2023)

- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the MYCOMM project began with a pre-launch event held online in January, followed by the official launch in Spain in April. In June, a "Makeathon" creative communication workshop was organized in Nice, France, where consortium partners collaborated to develop innovative solutions for raising awareness on migrant and refugee issues. In July, preparation for training sessions took place in Cyprus. Throughout the year, a series of training programs were designed to enhance the communication skills of youth organizations, focusing on audiovisual techniques, social media strategies, and public advocacy. These sessions aimed to empower staff to effectively influence policy and address migrant integration challenges. The year also included preparations for communication campaigns targeting youth organizations, centered on migrant integration.

YOUTH WELL

The acronym YouthWell refers to focuses on fostering resilience and democratic engagement among youth, emphasizing mental health and active citizenship. The project aims to improve the capacity of young people to advocate for mental health, enhance their participation in democracy, and develop their leadership and communication skills to foster social inclusion.²

- **Geographical scope:** Europe
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ under the European Youth Together initiative.
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is a partner in this project, supporting the implementation of activities and helping promote the project's objectives across Europe.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, CARDET, KOKEN, The Rural Hub, KMOP, Right Challenge, CESIE, and Western Balkans Institute (WEBIN).
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Mental Health, Active Citizenship, Youth Empowerment, Civic Engagement, and Social Inclusion.
- **Duration of the project:** 24 months (starting 1/01/2023)
- **Activities in 2023:**

The project engaged in multiple activities, such as developing a training package for youth workers, organizing conferences, and launching awareness campaigns about mental health and democratic participation among youth

ENOTOUR

The acronym ENOTOUR refers to the project "Alliance for Innovation in Enotourism". It focuses on the development and transformation of the enotourism sector, particularly in European wine regions. The goal is to support the professionalization, digitalization, and marketing of the wine industry while promoting collaborative, sustainable tourism

strategies. The project involves the creation of a multifunctional training platform aimed at enhancing the wine and tourism industries.

- **Geographical scope:** Europe
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Alliances for Innovation
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is a partner in this project, supporting the implementation of activities and helping promote the project's objectives across Europe.
- **Consortium members:** Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Spain)- coordinator, Université de Bordeaux (France), Università degli studi di Padova (Italy), Universidade do Porto (Portugal), OBREAL (Spain), Eurecat (Spain), Gramona (Spain), Vignobles de Larose (France), Massimago (Italy), Quinta do Portal (Portugal), Escola Enoturisme de Catalunya (Spain), Lycée d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme de Gascogne (France), Isiss Francesco da Collo (Italy), Escola Profissional de Vila do Conde Unipessoal (Portugal), and several associated partners, including tourism organizations and chambers of commerce.
- **Main topics covered:** Wine tourism, innovation, digital transformation, sustainability in enotourism.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months (starting 01/09/2023)
- **Activities in 2023:**

In 2023, the project focused on the establishment of a comprehensive training platform designed to support the wine and tourism sectors. Key activities included the preparation for regional collaborations, aimed at enhancing the capacity of local stakeholders and promoting sustainable growth in the wine tourism industry. OBREAL led trainings on the development of MOOCs with academic groups and a recognition plan for how micro-credentials developed by the project would eventually be recognized. Work also commenced on the development of the EnoTour Platform, which includes a self-assessment tool for wineries and virtual enotouristic experiences.

2.4 SERVICE CONTRACTS FINALISED IN 2023

HAQAA2

The acronym HAQAA2 refers to the second phase of the “Harmonization, Accreditation and Quality Assurance in African Higher Education”.

- **Geographical scope:** Africa
- **Funding stream:** Global Gateway Africa, European Commission
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is the coordinator of the project
- **Implementing Team:** OBREAL, the Association of African Universities (AAU), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the European Association for

Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Five strategic implementing partners are also identified in five regions of Africa.

- **Main topics covered by the project:** Modernization and internationalization of higher education, Quality Assurance and recognition, higher education data collection and management, continental and regional integration.
- **Duration of the project:** 38 months
- **Activities in 2023**

The HAQAA2 initiative, coordinated by OBREAL, concluded in February 2023. OBREAL, together with its consortium partners, was responsible for preparing the final reports on the implementation and impact of the project. The initiative aimed to enhance the quality and harmonization of higher education across Africa, focusing on strengthening quality assurance (QA) systems and improving student mobility. It built on the outcomes of HAQAA1 and emphasized the implementation of the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA), regional cooperation, and the development of the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF).

2.5 ERASMUS + PROJECTS FINALISED IN 2023

HERESA

The acronym HERESA refers to “Higher Education Reform Experts South Africa”, the project aimed to support the reform of higher education systems in South Africa by providing expertise and guidance to strengthen institutional capacities. The project focused on promoting the adoption of innovative practices in areas such as curriculum development, Work Integrated Learning (WIL), and enhancing employability.

- **Geographical scope:** Africa.
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is co-coordinator of the project with THENSA – the Network of Universities of Technology in South Africa
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, THENSA, CPUT, WSU, CUT, DUT, South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), TAMK (Finland), UPolito (Italy), MUT (Ireland), (KTH) Sweden
- **Call:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building in HE
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Local economic development, Modernization and internationalization of higher education (Work Integrated Learning and Entrepreneurship Education)
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months.
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the HERESA project undertook several key activities aimed at strengthening higher education in South Africa. In February, the third study visit was held to Europe

(Cork), followed by a strategy development meeting in South Africa in March. In September, the THENSA theme made a strategic visit to Catalunya, including meetings with Catalan universities to foster collaboration around the HERESA themes. The project also conducted Technical Assistance Missions to South African university partners, supporting the implementation of strategic plans related to Work Integrated Learning (WIL), Experiential Education (EE), and Community-Based Learning (CBL). Additionally, a policy brief on Work Integrated Learning (WIL) was published by SAQA. The project culminated in a final event held in Johannesburg in October, marking the successful completion of key objectives.

SUCCESS

The acronym SUCCESS refers to “Sustainable University-Enterprise Cooperation for Improving Graduate Employability” aimed to foster stronger university-enterprise collaborations within the Western Balkans. By modernizing higher education institutions in the region, the project sought to better align educational programs with labor market needs, thereby improving graduate employability. The project also worked to enhance international cooperation and create networks between universities and enterprises, facilitating knowledge transfer and the exchange of best practices. Through these efforts, the initiative aimed to equip students with relevant skills for the evolving job market, helping to bridge the gap between academia and industry.

- **Geographical scope:** Europe.
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is a partner in the project.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Visokoskolska Ustanova Internacionalni Burc Univerzitet-Intern, Univerzitet U Novom Sadu, Hochschule Fur Angewandte Wissenschaften Kempten, Wyzsza Szkola Przedsiębiorczosci I Administracji W Lublinie, Asociacion Observatorio De Las Relaciones Union Europea Americ, Univerzitet U Istocnom Sarajevu, Univerzitet Dzermal Bijedic U Mostaru Sa Supsidijarnom Odgovorn, Javna Ustanova Univerzitet U Tuzli Universitas Studiorum Tuzla, Javna Ustanova Univerzitet Crne Gore Podgorica, Turgut Ozal Education SHA, Universitetit Te Vlores, Universeti I Shkodres Luigj Gurakuqi, Development Association NERDA, Javno Preduzece Elektroprivreda Bosne I Hercegovine DD, Drustvo Za Proizvodnju Promet I Usluge Export Import Hiperion, Chamber Of Commerce And Industry Of Vlora Region.
- **Call:** Erasmus +: CBHE: Joint Projects.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Local economic development, Modernization and internationalization of higher education.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months.
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project achieved significant milestones, including the organization of a Startup competition in Bosnia in May, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. In

June, a study visit was held in Serbia, providing valuable insights and opportunities for cross-border collaboration among project participants.

NEPREV

The acronym NEPREV refers to: Next Production Revolution (NPR), which focuses on advancing skills related to emerging technologies, including 3D printing, advanced robotics, and smart manufacturing. The project aimed to create a multidisciplinary joint Master's degree program that addresses the industrial needs related to the next production revolution. It aimed to bridge academic research with industry, enhance educational tools, and support innovation and socio-economic integration, particularly in Tunisia, Europe, and Africa.

- **Geographical scope:** Tunisia, Europe (Italy, France, Spain)
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is a partner in the project.
- **Consortium members:** Politecnico di Torino (Italy), Politecnico di Milano (Italy), CentraleSupélec (France), OBREAL (Spain), National Engineering School of Tunis (ENIT), National School of Engineers of Gafsa (ENIGA), Institut Supérieur de Gestion Industrielle de Sfax (ISGIS), Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Management Sciences of Jendouba (FSJEGJ)
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Emerging technologies in industrial production, including advanced manufacturing, smart production, IoT, artificial intelligence, and sustainable energy. It also focuses on bridging the gap between academia and industry, fostering innovation and socio-economic development.
- **Duration of the project:** 42 months (15/11/2019 – 14/04/2023)
- **Activities in 2023:**

The project focused on finalizing curriculum updates, fostering research and industry collaboration, and enhancing training through workshops and joint programs. The master's program was fully launched in Tunisia, and students participated in mobility and internships, including in European partner institutions. There were also developments in research labs focusing on advanced manufacturing and smart production.

ONLINE HE

The ONLINE HE project focused on enhancing the integration of eLearning into higher education. The project aimed to build the capacity of higher education (HE) faculty, teaching staff, and learning designers, providing them with the tools and resources necessary to adopt eLearning strategies effectively.

- **Geographical scope:** Europe
- **Funding stream:** Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership

- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is a partner in the project.
- **Consortium members:** Universitatea din Pitești (UP), Romania, University of Nicosia (UN-CY), Cyprus, Vilniaus Universitetas (VU), Lithuania, OBREAL (Spain), CARDET, Cyprus (Coordinator)
- **Main topics covered by the project:** integrating eLearning into higher education, enhancing the capacity of faculty, teaching staff, and learning designers to incorporate innovative digital tools in their courses.
- **Duration of the project:** 24 months (1/05/2021 – 30/04/2023)
- **Activities in 2023:**

OBREAL's role in the project in 2023 involved supporting international cooperation and contributing its expertise in higher education, particularly in promoting the integration of innovative educational practices.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND RELATED MATTERS

- **Funding stream:** Grants to support the internationalization of Catalan entities in the field of foreign action of the Generalitat of Catalonia 2022-2023.
- The purpose of these subsidies is to finance the expenses derived from the promotion and projection of Catalan entities or the European and international organizations and networks with which they are actively related.

2.6 ONGOING PROJECTS IN 2023

PRICNAC

The acronym PRICNAC refers to “Promotion de la Recherche, l’Innovation et la Culture Numérique en Afrique Centrale”, the project aims to strengthen research, innovation, and digital culture in Central Africa. By focusing on improving digital literacy and fostering innovation in higher education institutions, the project seeks to promote sustainable development and economic growth across the region.

- **Geographical scope:** Africa.
- **Funding Stream:** ACP Innovation Fund
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL oversees network development, training and communications and sits on the selection committee for the innovation projects
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) – Office of Central Africa and the Great Lakes (coordinator), Conseil Africain et Magalache pour l’Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES), Association of African Universities (AAU).
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Local economic development, Modernization and internationalization of higher education
- **Duration of the project:** 48 months.

- **Activities in 2023**
 - In January, Results-Oriented Monitoring review by the EU
 - Further implementation of the ‘micro-projects’ in Cameroun and DRC in diverse sectors (digitalization, indigenous knowledge)

Start Circular

Start Circular refers to “Integrated Entrepreneurship Management Model for Circular Economy”, the project aims to promote sustainable entrepreneurship through the development and implementation of an integrated model for circular economy management. The project seeks to equip entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools necessary to transition from traditional linear business models to more sustainable, circular practices.

- **Geographical scope:** Europe
- **Funding Stream:** Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships
- **OBREAL’s role:** OBREAL is co-coordinator of the project with the Université de Montpellier.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Université de Montpellier, Universidade Beira Interior, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of Latvia, Nova Univerza, Green Berry Solutions, ELUM Solutions, ASSEC Consultores, RENTEH, Red de Economía Circular de las Islas.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Environment and Climate Change, Local economic development
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months.
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the START Circular project focused on key activities aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in the circular economy. The project developed a comprehensive ‘Model’ for entrepreneurship within the circular economy, providing a framework for sustainable business practices. Additionally, a state-of-the-art analysis of innovation labs and incubators at partner universities was conducted, identifying best practices and opportunities to enhance the support for circular economy ventures across the partner institutions. These efforts laid the groundwork for fostering innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship in the region.

AGREEMED

The acronym AGREEMED refers to “Innovative Aquifers Governance for Resilient Water Management and Sustainable Ecosystems in Stressed Mediterranean Agricultural Areas”. The project aims to address water scarcity and promote sustainable water management practices in agricultural regions of the Mediterranean. By focusing on innovative governance models for aquifers, the project seeks to improve the resilience

of water resources and ecosystems under pressure from climate change and increasing water demand.

- **Geographical scope:** Cross-regional.
- **OBREAL's role:** OBREAL is co-leading the project.
- **Consortium members:** OBREAL, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, The Technische Universität Berlin (TUB), Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier (IAMM), Water Research and Technology Center (CERTE), Euro-Mediterranean Information System on know-how in the Water sector (SEMIDE), The German-Jordanian University (GJU), DELTA Umwelt-Technik GmbH, The University of Ibn Zohr (UIZ), IRIDRA SRL.
- **Call:** PRIMA.
- **Main topics covered by the project:** Environment and Climate Change, Local economic development.
- **Duration of the project:** 36 months.
- **Activities in 2023**

In 2023, the project began with the first Project Management Team (PMT) meeting held online in January, followed by the first workshop on "Introductory Workshop on Aquifer Agreements" in Tunisia. This workshop aimed to provide foundational knowledge on aquifer management and agreements. In June, the project organized a second workshop in Morocco, furthering the exchange of expertise and strategies related to water resource management and aquifer agreements among stakeholders in the region. These activities marked the project's progress in fostering collaboration on sustainable water management.

STRENGTH OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND RELATED MATTERS

- **Funding stream:** Grants to support the internationalization of Catalan entities in the field of foreign action of the Generalitat of Catalonia 2023-2024.
- The purpose of these subsidies is to finance the expenses derived from the promotion and projection of Catalan entities or the European and international organizations and networks with which they are actively related.
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3. INTERREGIONAL DIALOGUE

OBREAL hosted or helped organize more than 30 other events, some linked to ongoing projects and some as OBREAL's initiatives to promote dialogue and cooperation between regions.

3.1 INTERREGIONAL DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND EUROPE

One of the highlights of 2023 has been, without a doubt, the celebration of our first Interregional Dialogue on Education and Cooperation in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. The international dialogue was organized in the framework of a letter of intention signed between OBREAL and the Ministry of Education of Argentina, representing CELAC where it was agreed that both institutions were going to work together to foster a more comprehensive and systematic policy dialogue between Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe.

The Dialogue was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 28 to 31 March., co-organized by OBREAL, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Argentina and the African Union. The dialogue brought together high-level representatives from the different regions involved in this dialogue. That included government representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and representatives from the African Union. All of them, and some others, were part of an ambitious program that brought together the views and experiences of people from 3 different continents.

The Buenos Aires Dialogue was followed by two other physical meetings between Latin American and Caribbean and African Authorities, to pave the way for the next phase.

3.1.1. The Namibia Meeting

OBREAL promoted, together with the African University Association, a follow-up meeting on July 6th between Latin American, Caribbean, African and European stakeholders in the framework of the COREVIP 2023 conference in Namibia. Participants included: The African Association of Universities, Ghana; Inter-University Council of East Africa, Uganda; Conseil africain et malgache pour l'enseignement supérieur, Burkina Faso; The Southern African Regional Universities Association, South Africa; Conselho Nacional de Avaliação de Qualidade do Ensino Superior – Mozambique; Pan African University; African Union Commission; Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior, Mexico; Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Colombia; Consejo Interuniversitario Nacional, Argentina; Coordenação de aperfeiçoamento de pessoal de nível superior (CAPES), Brasil; Ministry of Education of the Argentine Republic; European Association of Universities; Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), Germany.

As a result of the meeting, it was decided that the second interregional dialogue was going to be co-organized in 2024 by OBREAL, the Ministry of Education of Brazil, CAPES and the African Union Commission and held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting

made, also, possible to establish a common agenda based on these four areas of development: common research agendas, food security, labor and climate change.

3.1.2. The Barcelona meeting

In early December 2023, an operational meeting gathering CAPES (Brazil), FAUBAI (Brazil), CIN (Argentina), ASCUN/ENLACES (Colombia-LAC), AAU (Africa) and the African Union was held in Barcelona. The meeting provided the inputs for the design of the 2024 Interregional Dialogue on Education and Development program as well as positioned it as one activity of the African Year of Education 2024. Moreover, it was agreed that the associations and organisms that participated launch a call for proposal for the preparation of bi-regional online courses / webinars on the strategic areas decided to pave the way to activity in Addis 2024.

3.2 G20 AND U20: PUNE, INDIA

In the framework of the G20 education meeting and co-organized by Symbiosis International University and OBREAL, the event served as a complementary education initiative to the G20 Forum, which was also held in India this 2023. Distinguished higher education leaders from all G20 countries attended the conference, which aimed to discuss the future of universities and their transformative role in creating a better world.

3.3 STATEGIC EVENTS

In addition to the interregional dialogue held in Buenos Aires, OBREAL has organized and participated in many other events around the world in order to contribute its vision and experiences.

EVENT	LOCATION	DATES
<p>40th session of the Council of Ministers of CAMES</p> <p>OBREAL attended the Network of Technical Partners of CAMES and addressed ministers of education in the CAMES space.</p>	Niger	May
<p>Meeting with representatives from the Colombia’s Fundación Universitaria Área Andina and the Universidad del Istmo</p> <p>To discuss nutrition, gastronomy and science of the food. The meeting explored potential avenues for collaboration within these domains.</p>	Spain	September

<p>“Camino a FIESA” (road to FIESA)</p> <p>A preparation meeting to prepare for the FIESA event that will take place in 2024. The event revolved around a series of discussions on policy trends in internationalization of Higher Education such as the use of Artificial Intelligence or virtualization and digitalization in higher education.</p>	Argentina	September
<p>12th Annual East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Systems</p> <p>OBREAL gave a keynote, and expressed the need to take QA out of its traditional box and try to find ways so that QA can respond to the changes in the higher education sector.</p>	Burundi	September
<p>Africa-EU conference “Applied Sciences as drivers for regional innovation ecosystems in Africa”</p> <p>OBREAL co-organized the event together with the EU Commission, DAAD, and Nuffic among others. The conference sought to explore and promote the benefits of applied sciences as drivers for regional innovation in Africa.</p>	Brussels	September
<p>13th ANIE conference</p> <p>The conference addressed the re-framing knowledge of partnerships for mutual benefit and Africa’s needs.</p>	Zanzibar	October
<p>“Development of agricultural value chains in Central Africa with a South-South cooperation approach”</p> <p>Organized by the Government of Equatorial Guinea and the Organization of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States on the Development of the Agricultural Sector. OBREAL discussed the potential of industrialization and the development of agricultural value chains in Central Africa with a South-South cooperation approach.</p>	Equatorial Guinea	October
<p>DHG Forum: “Impact and innovation – Effects of higher education development collaboration”</p>	Norway	November

<p>ORBEAL led a workshop in this edition of the Donor Harmonization Group Forum of key funding agencies for higher education in development.</p>		
<p>Partners Working Group at the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)</p> <p>OBREAL met with regional economic communities to strengthen collaboration and transform education and skilling.</p>	Botswana	November
<p>Erasmus+ regional cluster meeting seminar in Latin America and the Caribbean</p> <p>OBREAL attended the European Commission event to promote interregional cooperation and dialogue with a South-South-North view.</p>	Montevideo	April
<p>Meeting with ASCUN and AQU Catalunya</p> <p>To explore ways of collaboration between Colombia and Catalonia in accreditation and quality assurance in higher education.</p>	Barcelona	December
<p>Conference of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities (COREVIP)</p> <p>OBREAL presented the panel “Building interregional relations in Higher Education in Latin America and Africa”.</p>	Namibia	July
<p>IUCEA’s 14th Annual Conference</p> <p>OBREAL participated to strengthen South-South-North cooperation in higher education for development.</p>	Rwanda	June
<p>EU-LAC Knowledge Forum</p> <p>On the Common Area of Higher Education between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean</p>	Online	April
<p>Latin America and Caribbean-Europe-Africa Strategic Triangle Meeting</p>	Online	March

OBREAL participated in the panel on the role of science and innovation in Latin American, African and European companies.		
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4. TRAININGS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

One of OBREAL’s pillars of action is capacity building and training, which supports institutional development and contributes to the enhancement of the quality and relevance of graduate student and young researcher training through building institutional, academic, and administrative staff capacities.

OBREAL participates in and designs trainings, online seminars and workshops within the framework of cooperation projects, but also designs and delivers self-funded training courses, physically, hybrid and online.

This year, OBREAL launched a new Moodle based **Training Platform**. The platform provides training programs, workshops, and capacity-building activities aimed at enhancing skills and knowledge in areas such as internationalization of higher education, research management, and academic cooperation.

It serves as a resource for higher education institutions and professionals to improve their ability to engage in international collaborations, manage research projects, and navigate global trends in education and development. The platform will offer a range of online training opportunities, often tailored to the needs of universities, researchers, and policymakers, particularly in the context of interregional collaboration.

In addition, as part of the Central American Chapter, OBREAL and CSUCA have continued to organize online trainings on Collaborative Online International Learning, with the support of members U. Veracruzana and ANUIES. Finally, OBREAL has developed adaptable course material related EU project management, which it has offered to many members and partners.

4.1 OTHER TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS IN 2023

DATE	ABOUT THE TRAINING	LOCATION
February 7	Training session of the practical toolkit for integrating eLearning in Higher Education Curricula	Online training
June 1	Webinar on sustainability and impact of multi-regional projects	Online training

June 9	Workshop on competitive project proposals design in the framework of European calls	Argentina
June 21-23	International workshop on climate change, tourism, and education	Colombia – Hybrid training
November 15	Workshop on applications for EU funding	Argentina – Hybrid training
December 4-6	Series of workshops on EU funding opportunities and project design for Central America	Costa Rica – Hybrid training

5. KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

One of OBREAL’s action pillars is the production of knowledge to contribute to policy debate and to generate new and innovative approaches for education and development. This is done through the production of policy papers and briefs, periodic opinion/think-pieces for the academic world and civil society, and research papers and articles that offer diverse perspectives on South-South-North cooperation.

5.1 MODULARIZATION, FLEXIBILIZATION AND INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

OBREAL, in the framework of the Vita Global Erasmus+ Capacity Building for HE project, has developed a publication on “Modularization, Flexibilization and Internationalization in Higher Education”.

The document takes as its starting point the need to promote a new way of conceptualizing learning and teaching in higher education, notably by placing learning at the center of the agenda via the diverse forms and paths it may take. It provides a research review on the topic of modularization and flexibilization of learning, citing current trends with micro-credentials, and promotes experiences and lessons learned from developing and piloting study modules in the context of the Vita Global project.

5.2 EUA-ENLACES STATEMENT

OBREAL promoted a joint EUA-ENLACES statement highlighting higher education, research and innovation as key pillars of the EU-CELAC agenda. The declaration urged governments to prioritize cooperation and recognized the need for knowledge and skills based solutions to address global challenges.

6. PROMOTION AND VISIBILITY

One of the objectives that the organization set for 2023 was to professionalize the communication of all actions and events in order to achieve a greater impact.

In this sense, OBREAL has given a boost to its communication tools through the design of a new website, the creation of specific content for social networks and the design of new communication activities, launching in 2024.

6.1 PRESENCE ONLINE

OBREAL's online presence is articulated through the website www.obreal.org, where we publish news about the events, projects and initiatives that we organize or in which we participate.

6.1.1 Website

In 2023, OBREAL has designed and developed a new, more visual and interactive website, to be launched in early 2024.

The web design process has forced the team to better analyze and organize the areas of action of OBREAL, categorize projects and collect data on them. This exercise was intended to help better explain who OBREAL is and what it does.

6.1.2 Social Media

OBREAL's social media profiles are used to disseminate the content that it posts on the website but also to engage with stakeholders.

OBREAL has accounts on X (former Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, and Youtube. Each of these has a specific use for the organization, but the general objective of all is to promote OBREAL and all its activities, increase the impact of these activities, interact with people and organizations of interest and to be in contact with our supporters and stakeholders.

6.2 PRESENCE IN MEDIA

In addition to online presence, OBREAL has also given a boost to more traditional communications. During 2023, it has been working on a strategy to expand the association's presence in traditional media.

As an example, two publications in which the association was mentioned can be highlighted, both in "University World News": One on "[Strengthening leadership capacity will drive vital change in HE](#)", and the other on "[Policy entrepreneurs' acknowledged for HE reform efforts](#)".

7. OVERVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP

7.1 NEW MEMBERS IN 2023

In 2023, OBREAL's membership has grown, with the addition of several new members who bring valuable expertise and perspectives to our association:

Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza", Italy

With over 700 years of history, this Italian university is one of the most important in the region and has over 115.000 students.

Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain

This Catalan university is located in Tarragona, where more than 15.000 students take advantage of the nearly 60 Bachelor and 60 Masters degrees available.

Stellenbosch University, South Africa

This South African institution is home to a university community of 32.535 students, including 2.900 international students from 64 countries.

Donation & Transplantation Institute (DTI), Spain

This institution is a non-profit organization committed to improving the quality of life of society through the donation and transplantation of organs, tissues, and cells.

University of East Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

This university in Bosnia and Herzegovina has more than 13.000 students enrolled in its 15 faculties and 2 academies.

Yenepoya (Deemed to be University), India

Located in Kuthar, Karnataka, this Indian institution provides access to quality Higher Education ensuring equity, creating a vibrant knowledge capital and producing inspiring leaders of tomorrow.

University of Vlorë "Ismail Qemali", Albania

Located in Vlorë, Albania, it offers degrees in economics, public health and humanities, as well as engineering and technology.

Fundación LINED, Argentina

This Argentinean foundation is committed to the creation and development of global quality educational ecosystems and is composed of a multidisciplinary team of educators and researchers.

Nova Univerza, Slovenia

Located in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, it aims to become an elite educational institution based on the quality of its study programs, selection of applicants and international comparability.

Afro-American University of Central Africa, Equatorial Guinea

Located in the City of Peace in Equatorial Guinea, AAUCA is committed to

excellence in science, technology and culture.

[Technological Higher Education Network South Africa \(THENSA\), South Africa](#)

The Technological Higher Education Network South Africa (THENSA) is recognised as a vibrant, innovative consortium for advancing technology-focussed institutions with a transformative societal impact.

[Institut Supérieur d'Informatique et de Gestion \(ISI-GOMA\), Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)

The Institut Supérieur d'Informatique et de Gestion (ISI-GOMA), located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), is a higher education institution that specializes in training students in fields related to information technology (IT) and management.

[Kalasalingam Academy Of Research and Education \(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY\), India](#)

The Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education (KARE), formerly known as Kalasalingam University, is a deemed-to-be university in India. It offers undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs across a variety of fields, including engineering, technology, management, science, humanities, and social sciences.

[Réseau des Entreprises et Institutions de Formation en Afrique Centrale, Cameroon](#)

REIFAC stands for Réseau des Entreprises et Institutions de Formation

en Afrique Centrale (Network of Enterprises and Training Institutions in Central Africa). It is a regional network that aims to foster collaboration between businesses, educational institutions, and training centers in Central Africa.

[Universidad Nacional de Entre Ríos, Argentina](#)

The Universidad Nacional de Entre Ríos (UNER), located in Argentina, is a public university that offers a wide range of academic programs in various fields of study. It provides undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs across disciplines such as social sciences, engineering, health sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and agricultural sciences.

[Fundación Universitaria del Área Andina, Colombia](#)

The Fundación Universitaria del Área Andina is a private higher education institution located in Colombia. It offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs across multiple disciplines, including business administration, engineering, health sciences, education, social sciences, and communication.

[Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, Perú](#)

The Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (UNALM), located in Lima, Peru, is a public university specializing in agriculture, environmental sciences, veterinary medicine, engineering, and related fields. Established in 1902, it is one of the leading institutions in

agricultural education and research in Peru and Latin America.

7.2 ALL MEMBERS: MAP OVERVIEW

OBREAL is proud to have partners in all latitudes of the planet. This is essential to establish a dialogue between the different Souths and the different Norths and fulfill the mission of the association. More information about all of them can be found on [our website](#).



As we look back on a year of growth, collaboration, and impact, OBREAL remains steadfast in its mission to support higher education development and interregional dialogue. The projects, initiatives, and dialogues highlighted in this report underscore our collective efforts to promote innovation, sustainability, and inclusiveness in education. With an expanding membership and a forward-looking agenda, we are excited to build on the successes of 2023 and continue advancing our goals in the coming years.