

PolyUnderstanding BIP twin teaching and twin learning activities between Africa and Europe

As part of an effort for innovative pedagogies, the BIP is considering the following approaches for twin educational activities between Africa and Europe.

These approaches are presented in a non-committing manner, to be further explored in terms of practical potential on the way to the BIP's publicity timeframe.

The plans presented here concern WITS (Johannesburg, South Africa) and UEM (Maputo, Mozambique) CIVIS Associate African Universities, identified because of two factors: (a) a threat factor, as both Universities are far away located from NKUA (Athens, Greece), thus making for expensive mobility, and (b) an opportunity factor, as both Universities are located in cities which fall on the same time zone as Athens (GMT+2, [link](#)), thus allowing synchronous activities in real time.

twin teaching activities

COIL-style twin teaching activities between Athens- and Johannesburg/Maputo-based classes:

- during the physical teaching week, physical classes operating synchronously in Athens and Johannesburg/Maputo (all in the same timezone), and hybrid-connected
- the Johannesburg/Maputo classes to host African students that could not make it to Athens
- the Athens class to host all students that could make it to Athens
- physical lectures delivered by Athens-based tutors
- for the Johannesburg and Maputo classes, a local tutor accompanies the class and facilitates local and cross-class questions and exchanges
- local students in all three classes interact to request/provide to their other continent's classmates how the class subject reflects on their own lived experiences

such real-time twinning classes could in principle be organized in other (even in all) CIVIS African Universities in a similar manner as well, with local students and facilitators, and bearing timezone differences (the latter however not being prohibitive, ranging between Athens/Johannesburg/Maputo time -2 hours for UCAD, Dakar to +1 hour for MAK, Kampala)

advantages of local class-based twin teaching, as opposed to just considering to allow African students attend individually online

the twinning plans presented above share the underlying idea of bringing attending African students in physical classrooms (located in Johannesburg/Maputo), so that all students are present there at the same time as their Athens fellow students, accompanied by physically present facilitators

this scenario, compared to just considering to allow African students attend online from their own individual places, presents the following advantages:

- avoiding distractions during the lectures, as the University classrooms to receive students will be safe places with controlled conditions;

- making use of higher-capacity ICT infrastructures than those available to households on the average, as University classrooms dispose of better audiovisual equipment and internet connectivity, and thus ensuring a technically smooth interaction experience between remote peers, and avoiding problems of unequal participation opportunity because of not being able to be seen or heard;
- making possible, due to the quality of connectedness enabled by better technical infrastructure, in-class activities that require rich interaction between peers, such as debates and the like, and so much so across peers located in different sites, with pairing instructional scenarios and the like;
- creating better conditions of familiarity and social interaction between peers, thus facilitating social, emotional and cognitive exchanges and, ultimately, social learning;
- creating a better sense of togetherness between both local and remote peers overall, thus helping to leave-no-one-behind instructional processes in practice; and, last and not least,
- allowing, due to the controlled conditions that a classroom offers, to certify by WITS and UEM, upon the Universities' discretion, Johannesburg/Maputo-located students' class attendance in the same substantive way that Athens-located students class attendance can be certified.

controlled open twinning

in this plan, the local classrooms could integrate, in some controlled and pedagogically meaningful manner, a small number of additional participants, that might span

- undergraduate or graduate students
- post-doctoral researchers, or faculty members
- civil society stakeholders

who might wish to integrate these classes as observers, to enrich their own knowledge, and possibly be allowed some opportunities to provide their own short inputs on what is discussed and thus enrich the overall exchange of knowledge and experience

this plan could be applied to both Africa (Johannesburg/Maputo) and Europe (Athens) classrooms in a similar manner