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The CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus

A Strategic Guidebook for a Shared Community Space

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CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance, is a European University Alliance gathering 11 member universities: Aix-Marseille Université (France), National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece), University of Bucharest (Romania), Université libre de Bruxelles (Belgium), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), Sapienza Università di Roma (Italia), Stockholm University (Sweden), Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (Germany), University of Glasgow (UK), Paris Lodron University of Salzburg (Austria) and University of Lausanne (Switzerland).

Selected by the European Commission as one of the first 17 European Universities pilots, it brings together around half a million students and more than 70 000 staff members, including 37 400 academics and researchers.

In 2022, CIVIS signed a partnership agreement with 6 strategic African partner universities: Université Hassan II de Casablanca (Morocco), University of Sfax (Tunisia), Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (Senegal), Makerere University (Uganda), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique).

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Executive Summary

The CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus presented in this strategic guidebook is understood as the common space built by the manifold connections and joint activities between the 11+6 partners within the CIVIS European University Alliance. The CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus is the core infrastructure facilitating the co-creation of innovative educational offers, the experience of a broad variety of mobility formats by students and (academic and non-academic) staff, institutional learning and scientific collaboration.

Building on strategic documents of the first funding period and evaluating the practical experiences of the first phase, implementing the CIVIS2 project proposal as well as the CIVIS2 Mission and Vision Statement, and further elaborating the CIVIS Inter-University Campus Strategy, discussed and adopted earlier by the Steering Committee, this guidebook refines the strategy for the core infrastructure of the alliance, defining goals and guiding principles, evaluating needs and challenges, and suggesting different tools and processes as well as prioritised actions towards their implementation.

CIVIS Alliance is committed to enabling broadened, diversified, and enriched experiences of students, academic and non-academic staff, intensive and sustainable transnational cooperation, institutional learning, digitalisation, and innovation. In building the shared inter-university and digital campus, the partners agree in four areas of commitment: (1) inclusiveness, equality, and diversity, (2) sustainability and the green dimension, (3) global exchanges and collaboration, in particular with our partner institutions in Africa, and (4) collaboration with local and regional partners. Guided by these principles and objectives this guidebook defines strategic pathways in the fields of mobilities, digital infrastructure, inclusion and diversity, and gives an outlook on local, regional and global partnership. In the different fields of action, 22 goals are identified and an action plan for achieving these goals is outlined, whereby a distinction is made between short-term measures and priorities and a long-term outlook, to which these short-term measures are directed.

The CIVIS Mobility Strategy focusses on a rich variety of classic and modern, short-term and long-term, physical, blended and virtual mobility formats for students and (academic and non-academic) staff. CIVIS Alliance's great success story up to now are the CIVIS Blended Intensive Programmes, which form the core of CIVIS's innovative short-term blended mobility offer, while classic semester mobilities are also greatly enhanced by the opportunities offered in the alliance. Key areas of development are virtual mobilities, as well as doctoral (training and research) mobilities, as well as all types of staff mobility. In all of these, the main focus is on sustainability and green mobility. As concerns the CIVIS Digital Campus, the strategy builds on three guiding principles: (1) Its tools and solutions are as de-centralised as possible, as centralised as necessary, (2) the use and promotion of European standards and solutions as well as Open Source solutions, and (3) making sure that CIVIS Alliance activities and the CIVIS Digital Campus are inclusive for all CIVIS Alliance partners and they can develop the involvement at a pace they can sustain. The inclusion and diversity strategy builds on an evaluation of the different institutional settings and framework conditions shaping the reality at the different partner universities. This includes bridging the disparities in economic and legal conditions, the different cultural traits, legacies and traditions, and in particular overcoming potential language barriers through multilingualism.

The considerations of this guidebook are based on the firm conviction that the common work of our partners will take cooperation, exchange, learning, inclusion and the experience of the European Higher Education Area to a new level. The guidebook is intended as a strategic guide not only to achieve this new level, but also to secure, shape and develop it sustainably, to create a stable and reliable inter-university and digital campus infrastructure on which CIVIS Alliance can thrive as a successful European University Alliance.

1

A CIVIS Strategic Guidebook

Introduction to Context, Aims and Methodology

This introductory chapter provides an orientation on the nature of this guidebook and the methodology that was employed in its creation. We, as CIVIS Alliance, differentiate clearly between long-term strategic aims that we have set as the ultimate goals we are targeting our efforts towards and on well-defined, manageable short-term objectives that can be achieved within the CIVIS 2 project and, backed by CIVIS Alliance as it is currently set up. Those short-term objectives are in line with our long-term aims and serve as building-blocks and achievable towards these aims.

On the Nature of a CIVIS Strategic Guidebook

This guidebook presents our vision for the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus, which we envisage as a shared community space to inhabit and to move in freely for the students and staff of the universities of CIVIS Alliance, outlining the goals by which such a vision can be realized (Chapter 2). It outlines the structures governing physical and virtual mobilities for both students and staff in the CIVIS alliance (Chapter 3). It presents an overview of the existing and future interconnected digital infrastructure of CIVIS Alliance (Chapter 4), focusing on the need to integrate the student and staff experiences locally at their home universities to create a seamless experience within the shared community space of CIVIS. It suggests a vision for an inclusive and diverse, multilingual, local and global community of staff and students in the CIVIS alliance (Chapter 5), fostering freedom and equality in access to education and the activities of CIVIS.

This guidebook posits the emergence of a paradigm shift away from the way European universities have been structured and thought of in the past. Never before the advent of the European Universities Initiative was launched have universities entered strategic partnerships beyond individual mobility to actively co-creating collaborative spaces of shared teaching, learning and research, resting on a mobility-by design principle and thereby stepping back from some of their individuality and embracing commonality, while maintaining their traditions and identity.

Heretofore universities in Europe have been governed by local rule, controlled by national or regional governance. With the vision of European Universities and the re-shaping of the EU-wide higher education system (in particular through European Degrees, BIPs, micro-credentials, etc.) there has come about a fundamental, even a paradigmatic change. By their very nature, European University Alliances are co-creative, collaborative, communal constellations, focusing on the commonalities rather than the peculiarities of their constituent partner universities. To achieve their goals, European University Alliances and their partner and associated partner universities are required to think beyond the local or national fit-for-purpose. For such an alliance to succeed, it is required to think globally, establishing structures, processes and infrastructures that enable co-creation, collaboration and co-operation. While universities within such an alliance will retain their individual identities and functions, and thus their individual structures and systems, they will need to gain a fitness for connectivity to the other partners in the alliance, a fitness for connectivity that is potentially global in outreach.¹ This, then, is the paradigm shift: Universities need to think in ways that **go beyond the local fit-for-purpose toward a global fit-for-connectivity and interoperability**. This guidebook outlines the long-term vision of CIVIS Alliance for such a globally connected inter-university and digital campus, which embraces this paradigm shift.

Changes to the very bones of university (campus) structures and to how university campuses are conceived and thought of, such as those necessitated by the paradigm shift from isolated local to connected global, can only be achieved over time, with a long-term strategic perspective in mind. This guidebook is intended to present the current state of CIVIS Alliance's strategy to build a shared inter-university campus. It reflects the strategic decisions and practical experiences made in the first phase of CIVIS Alliance and, from these, evolves a vision for the short-, medium- and long-term future, open to updates and re-evaluations based on further experiences yet to come. This guidebook contains

¹ In some countries, local universities have long been involved in administrative co-creation, even co-operation on a national level, often under terms mandated by national legislation. These universities and countries certainly have had a head start in terms of standardizing and connecting some of their local operations. However, to attain the level of connectivity aimed at by European University Alliances, much more must be done than even these universities and countries have achieved. At the same time, individual universities within such shared systems must somehow manage to make these systems compatible with the needs of their respective alliances – conflicts of interests are bound to occur.

concrete procedures and guidelines, which will continue to evolve as the CIVIS alliance grows in maturity, scale and scope.

For that reason, this guidebook is maybe not exactly what our readers may have expected it to be. It is not, on the face of it, a cookbook-style guidebook that offers easy recipes for others to follow: Take 11 large, excellent, renowned, research-oriented European universities, add 6 equally formidable strategic partners from Africa, stir in a generous amount of innovative educational offers, sprinkle with some civic engagement and – voilà – you are done. It is the best of our knowledge, experience and conviction, as CIVIS Alliance and as the CIVIS universities, each with a long and multifaceted history of excellence as institutions facilitating teaching, learning and research, that the building of the inter-university and digital campus of CIVIS Alliance is a long-term undertaking, a strategic paradigm shift, a change project that each of the CIVIS universities has willingly embraced. Such a change project must be guided by a strategic vision and working towards strategic aims. This is the guidebook to the strategic aims of CIVIS Alliance for building a shared infrastructure serving as the space on which future excellence in collaborative and co-created teaching, learning and research will take place. Serving as a strategic, long-term guidebook, it provides strategic, long-term aims. At the same time, it embodies a set of strategic decisions taken by CIVIS Alliance and embraced by the CIVIS universities. From these strategic aims and decisions, this guidebook derives a set of short-term objectives that can take the CIVIS alliance some seemingly small, but significant and targeted steps towards achieving its strategic aims. Therefore, when discussing processes and process steps, this guidebook will always clearly identify the estimated time

This document is part of a concerted effort during the current, second phase of building the CIVIS alliance in all the dimensions of our collaboration. The present document should be read alongside key policy objectives of the European Universities Initiative, the CIVIS Joint Mission Statement and the guidebooks on the development of the CIVIS challenge-driven approach (*Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach*) and the CIVIS shared educational offer (*Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*) as well as relevant other documents of CIVIS Alliance, including those of the first phase. To name but a few, the *CIVIS Communication and Dissemination Strategy*, the *CIVIS Innovative Pedagogies Strategy*, the *CIVIS Educational Framework* and *Digitally Enhanced Mobility – CIVIS Handbook on Virtual Mobility* (Iucu, Romiță, et al.) are important points of interaction for this document. The present document has been developed in collaboration among several strategic groups of the CIVIS alliance. It is based on earlier internal milestone documents that helped shape the internal discussions within CIVIS Alliance, most notably the *CIVIS Inter-University Campus Strategy*, approved by the CIVIS Steering Committee on 21 September 2023. An abbreviated version is included here as Chapter 2.

The CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus – A Guidebook for a Shared Community Space has been validated by CIVIS Alliance governance, by decision of the Steering Committee on 17 June 2024.

A Note on Methodology

The Methodology behind this Guidebook

This guidebook, in the form and including the content presented here, is the result of the work and input of many people, using a multi-faceted approach. It is based on the underlying premise that the building of the CIVIS alliance in this, second project phase is organized in three streams. Stream 1 is responsible for challenge-based education and civic engagement and thus informs the thematic and methodological scope of (educational) content creation within CIVIS. Stream 3 is tasked with the embedded joint educational offer, meaning the way (educational) content is structured into educational formats, such

as modular offers and study programmes. Stream 2, on the other hand, provides the infrastructure facilitating the activities of the other streams: the shared space we call inter-university campus, the mobility management, the digital campus and its tools, as well as the guidelines enabling a diverse, inclusive, multilingual participation and CIVIS identity, open to local and global partnerships. Building on this overarching methodology of the CIVIS 2 Project, Stream 2 has adopted the methodologies described subsequently, resulting in this guidebook.

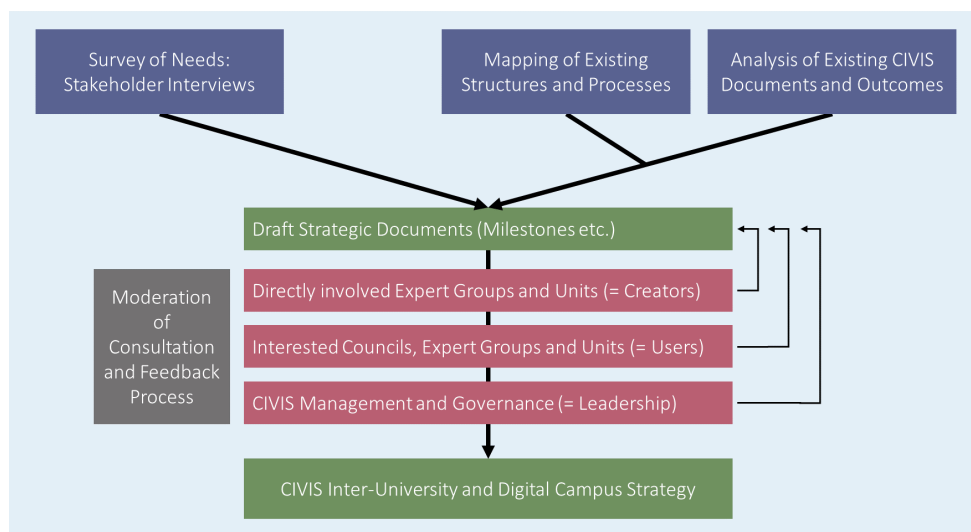


Figure 1: Methodology of the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus Guidebook

As the basis of developing this guidebook on the inter-university and digital campus, it was necessary to conduct a survey of needs, a mapping of existing structures and processes and an analysis of existing outcomes of the first phase of CIVIS. In the next step, Stream 2 initiated and moderated an extensive process of discussion, deliberation and consultation. This consultative process was conducted in three main steps, involving different groups and bodies with their respective roles, expertise and level of involvement: firstly, the expert groups and units directly involved in the (strategic) design of the shared campus, secondly, the users of the shared campus, and thirdly the management and governance of CIVIS Alliance.

The internal structures set up for achieving both the creation of this guidebook and the realisation of the strategic and operational aims and goals set out in this guidebook already reflect a core strategic decision taken by CIVIS Alliance: We are not building a separate “CIVIS Campus” that is both an annex to and a link between, but that is fundamentally separated from our university campuses. Instead, CIVIS Alliance has made the strong strategic decision to build a CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus that is fully integrated with the campuses and campus systems² of the CIVIS universities. To achieve this level of integration, the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus needs to be created by the people who can also implement it – integrated as it is into the local campuses. Broken down to a very abstract level, the main areas of development of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus are providing the infrastructure in terms of campus IT systems, mobility processes and provision for multilingualism and diversity – the groundwork on which the CIVIS educational offer (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint*

² Here, as elsewhere in this guidebook, “campus systems” is not only used to refer to the digital IT systems of a university campus, but also to refer to underlying administrative and governance systems, structures and processes that are supported by the IT architecture. This reflects the realisation that campus IT systems do not exist as an end to itself, but rather are a tool, a means to efficiently and effectively implement the governance and administrative structures needed to excel in teaching, learning and research – a realisation that amounts to a truism, but that nevertheless is often forgotten when discussing a digital campus architecture.

Education) can, in fact, be offered by and to academics, non-academic staff and students. Thus, apart from a small core team at PLUS and UT, this guidebook was co-created with the help of Expert Groups with a linking function into the high-level administrative and governance level of the CIVIS universities, with specific expertise in the areas of IT, mobility, multilingualism, as well as inclusion and diversity. The dimension of the administrative structures within CIVIS Alliance has been added through close collaboration with the Mobility and Digital Campus Units, linking into the practical aspects of both CIVIS Alliance and the CIVIS universities. In future work packages, this will be supplemented by Task Forces specifically addressing concrete goals.

Together with the work done in the first phase of CIVIS and the needs identified there already³, the Expert Groups (EGs) Heads of Mobility (comprising the heads of the international / mobility offices of the CIVIS universities) and Heads of IT (the heads of the IT departments) form the nucleus of the survey of needs conducted as part of writing this guidebook. In their respective areas, these groups alone bring an impressive amount of expertise to the table, regarding the needs of running a university campus and a university's mobility package on the one hand, and current developments in these fields on the other. This last is perhaps the most important aspect of the methodology informing this guidebook: With the help of our expert advisors, we have striven for this guidebook, especially the digital campus parts of it, to take into account the many relevant initiatives now in progress at EU level and beyond. After all, we are building our CIVIS Digital Campus at a time of rapid change towards digitalization of almost every area of life, not least administration and universities. The CIVIS universities and CIVIS Alliance intend to be among the front runners in bringing these technological shifts to our students and staff – our IT departments are already gearing up to implement these shifts and CIVIS Alliance aims to be the focal point of changes that will benefit the CIVIS universities in all their work – within CIVIS and beyond.

With the growing of the CIVIS alliance and its scope, the administrative Mobility Unit and Digital Campus Unit can also increasingly identify concrete needs, but also challenges and obstacles that need to be addressed. The same applies to other areas of CIVIS, for example the Education Council and Education Unit, the Research Council and the Council of the Open Labs, as well as the work packages producing the *Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach* and the *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*, who, even in the writing phase of this guidebook and even more so in the feedback phase, have voiced the inter-university and digital campus needs of their respective areas of endeavour and expertise. Flanking and supplementing these all-important sources, a survey was conducted among the users of the digital campus as represented in CIVIS's Participative Council (composed of students, academic staff and non-academic staff populating CIVIS Alliance), confirming the strategic direction we are taking. Elsewhere, further surveys were conducted to gather the needs for non-academic staff training on the one hand, and inclusion, diversity and multilingualism aspects on the other. All of the needs identified have been validated through the feedback process.

The last-mentioned diversity, inclusion and multilingualism survey also served the dual purpose of mapping the existing structures of the CIVIS universities in these dimensions, so that they can be built upon by CIVIS Alliance. Similarly, a much less sophisticated mapping was carried out for the digital campus (data table survey). Elsewhere, the current CIVIS Digital Campus was mapped (see Chapter 4) to enable seamless further development. In this regard, too, the outcomes of the first phase of CIVIS have been analysed. The most important and the most tangible outcome of the first phase of CIVIS is, of course, the digital campus and the mobility flows and processes (as well as the educational offer) as it stood at the end of that phase. Apart from this “physical” evidence, these outcomes are set down in various documents, including (though by no means limited to) *CIVIS Digital Campus*, the annual mobility

³ Much of the work done in this first phase is reflected in the current setup of CIVIS and the overarching goals and structures the CIVIS Alliance has adopted and has been incorporated into the vision and mission of CIVIS.

reports done by the Mobility Unit, *Digitally Enhanced Mobility – CIVIS Handbook on Virtual Mobility* and a variety of other outcomes and deliverables.

As the final step, this guidebook was made available to all relevant people and groups within CIVIS for comment, feedback and validation. Over several rounds of feedback, very rough sketches on paper have come together to form the guidebook we are now proud to put before our readers. For the time and diligence taken in giving feedback, the core team would like to offer our most sincere thanks to the CIVIS Alliance community. This is a truly collaborative effort which would have been impossible to achieve without the help of so many enthusiastic “CIVISens” and their invaluable contributions.

A Note on Goals and Aims: Project vs. Alliance, Strategic vs. Operational, Short vs. Long Term

To close this section on methodology, we would like to add a short note on the nature of goals and aims, as we understand them in this guidebook. Throughout the genesis of CIVIS Alliance (through a first and now a second, current Erasmus+ project) and also in discussions while writing this guidebook, there has been a confusion about what, exactly, is a goal, what are its outcomes and what is the target timeframe of achieving it. In this guidebook, we focus on **strategic goals and aims for building the CIVIS alliance**. Over the past few years of building this alliance, many people have become alienated by a singular lack of goals – clear goals of what CIVIS Alliance stands for and where it is headed. This is for the very simple reason that, after the first CIVIS project (2019-2022, which was taken as a pilot phase, a sandbox for experimenting with a huge number of ideas and small projects), the current CIVIS2 project (2022-2026) is precisely tasked with **finding, defining and agreeing** on the strategic goals for building the CIVIS alliance. This is what we set out to do in this paper: We would like to define **long-term aims for CIVIS Alliance** to achieve. Each and all of the aims are far beyond the CIVIS2 project to achieve, nor is the project intended to achieve them. Rather, these aims (or targets) are there to serve as the direction CIVIS Alliance is working in, as the ultimate long-term outcomes we want to achieve for CIVIS Alliance when it is fully operational. Thus, these aims are purely strategic in nature and we need to be aware that they may change in time. Nevertheless, these are the long-term aims for the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus.

In addition to these long-term aims, we also provide a set of **short-term goals for the remainder of the CIVIS2 project**. These are for inclusion in the upcoming work packages until the end of the CIVIS2 project (Sept. 2026) and possible for a short follow-on project (2026-2028), as currently envisaged by the European Commission. Consequently, these are not always very concrete outcomes – even in the short term, the work packages should be able to set their own priorities and, of course, we always need to be flexible and ready for the unforeseen (a lesson learned from the first CIVIS project during the COVID-19 pandemic). However, these short-term goals show the beginning of a pathway, some first steps to embark on the longer journey toward the long-term aims. As such, they are quite heterogeneous in nature: Some have the potential to produce very tangible, operational outcomes, such as a roadmap for including the African partners (see Chapter 6 below). Many, however, are also strategic in nature, since many of the goals cannot be achieved by a (or one) work package alone, such as, for example, joint degree programme mobility – there need to be joint programmes and students need to enrol in them, before there can be joint degree programme mobility. Thus, anyone expecting a clear action plan, consisting of concrete actions and covering all aspects addressed by this guidebook until the end of the CIVIS2 project, will be disappointed. This is not what this guidebook is about, nor was it ever intended to be. Instead, the intention of this **strategic guidebook** is to offer a strategic pathway towards the strategic, long-term aims of CIVIS Alliance towards building its CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus, supported by a set of short-term strategic and operational goals to take the first steps on this pathway during the CIVIS2 project.

2

The CIVIS Inter-University Campus

A Strategic Vision for a Shared Community Space

This chapter details the strategic objectives for the development of an Inter-University Campus in the framework of CIVIS Alliance. It lays out the guiding principles for this strategy and a shared understanding of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus, our key objectives and commitments, and a set of specific goals and the actions through which CIVIS Alliance will be enabled to realise them in line with their the long-term aims and in a sustainable way.

Introduction: A Strategic Vision on the Inter-University Campus

This strategic vision provides orientation and objectives for the development of an Inter-University Campus in the framework of CIVIS Alliance. It lays out basic orientations and a shared understanding of a CIVIS Inter-University Campus; our key objectives and commitments; and a set of specific goals and related actions. This strategic vision will also enable the Alliance to set strategic priorities and engage in medium, but also long-term planning.

The primary time frame of this strategy is the period until autumn 2026. This is the period of the second funding phase of the European Universities Initiative, with a possible extension to 2028, as mooted by the European Commission. However, many of the processes and structures that we aim to construct will not only last far beyond that short-term period, but will also need continuous development, scaling up, enlargement, improvement, and adaptation in the long-term future existence of CIVIS Alliance. This is particularly true for some of the shared IT infrastructure that will be a fundamental dimension of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. Thus, the secondary, but ultimately far more important time frame of this strategy is the long-term development of CIVIS Alliance.

The first part of this chapter lays out the major orientations of this strategy: an understanding of the inter-university campus of a European University Alliance; the overarching objectives we follow with an inter-university campus and the commitments that inform our work. A second part then outlines five fields of action. In each section, a limited number of specific goals, referring to the overall objectives, are laid out. Each goal is then linked to a set of actions for its development. This chapter will not go into detail as to the implementation of the specific goals. Such detail will be given in the subsequent chapters that cover some aspects of implementation. More importantly, such detail will be the realm of continued strategic development of CIVIS Alliance and its inter-university and digital campus.

Strategic Background of the Inter-University Campus

Orientations of the Inter-University Campus

The Inter-University Campus is a common space that is created by manifold connections and activities among the eleven CIVIS universities and the six CIVIS associated partner universities, a space that empowers students, academics, non-academic staff, universities and the wider higher education landscape with a reliable and secure decentralized digital ecosystem, ensuring trusted and seamless transactions and that enables the CIVIS community to move and collaborate freely.

The CIVIS Inter-University Campus Vision

The CIVIS Alliance aims to promote European values, cultures, and citizenship among new generations of students and will act as a bridge between Europe, the Mediterranean, and Africa. To foster these goals, it aims to create a truly unique European inter-university campus, where students, academics, researchers, and non-academic staff will move and collaborate freely. The CIVIS Inter-University Campus is a common space created by manifold connections and activities among the eleven CIVIS universities and the six CIVIS associated partner universities. It empowers universities and the wider higher education landscape with a reliable and secure decentralized digital ecosystem, ensuring seamless transactions. In line with the aims of the CIVIS Alliance, it aims to be a node for change and innovation in the following areas: Health; Cities, Territories and Mobility; Climate, Environment, Energy; Digital and Technological Transformations; Societies, Culture and Heritage.

The European University Initiative: the fundamental context of CIVIS Alliance and its Inter-University Campus strategy – CIVIS Alliance has been founded as part of the European Universities Initiative (EUI) as a major instrument by the European Union to advance the Europeanisation of Higher Education and pursue both political-cultural and political-economic aims. The EUI provides the major policy goals that we want to contribute to through our collaboration within CIVIS Alliance:

- Strengthening the self-understanding of a new generation of students as Europeans and as European citizens, with the key aims to *“Promote common European values [...] and a strengthened European identity by bringing together a new generation of Europeans who are able to cooperate and work within different European and global cultures, in different languages, and across borders, sectors and academic disciplines.”*
- Ensuring and facilitating that graduates from our universities can find and engage in meaningful and productive work throughout Europe to *„contribute to the European knowledge economy, employment, creativity, culture and welfare by making best use of innovative pedagogies and striving to make the knowledge square a reality.”*
- Creating a more integrated European Higher Education Space by being an accelerator for the implementation of the Bologna Reform, a more general modernisation of teaching and learning at universities and advancing and innovating the instruments of the Erasmus Programme. The collaboration within CIVIS Alliance is aimed at furthering all of these.

CIVIS Alliance is a European endeavour, committed to a unified European continent based on the values of a free, democratic, just and sustainable society. At the same time, it is essential for us as an alliance of historically grown institutions and diverse communities at each CIVIS university that these overall political goals are interpreted and specified in view of the characteristics, interests and resources of the universities constituting CIVIS Alliance. This also includes finding our own language to understand our common endeavour and to set priorities and is particularly true for the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. The concept of an inter-university campus has a key role in the two calls of the EUI in 2019 and in 2022, where the term is given a meaning that encompasses all the essential features of a European University Alliance, so that:

- students, doctoral candidates, as well as academics, researchers, and non-academic staff benefit from seamless mobility opportunities (physical, blended mobility or virtual learning);
- new joint, flexible and innovative curricula are delivered, where relevant, in the three cycles;
- flexible learning opportunities and alternative learning pathways are offered to learners at all stages of life, across disciplines and sectors;
- practical and work-based experience and traineeships supported by external mentors are provided to foster entrepreneurial mind-sets and civic engagement;
- university communities better reflect the social, economic and cultural diversity of the global population, including lifelong learners, part-time and non-traditional students;
- diverse career paths are rewarded and valorized, while academic, teaching, research careers are strengthened.

The functions that are ascribed to a European higher education inter-university campus are very broad and go far beyond the exchange of students, a broadness that will be reflected on the CIVIS Inter-University Campus of CIVIS Alliance. Taking the calls seriously and as starting points, the ambitions of creating CIVIS Alliance and of building the CIVIS Inter-University Campus can only be viewed together. At the same time, the CIVIS Inter-University Campus must combine and connect the strategic positions adopted by both CIVIS Alliance and by the CIVIS universities.

CIVIS Alliance: a deep network to Europeanise our universities and for our mutual benefit – CIVIS Alliance and the CIVIS Inter-University Campus it aims to create are based on the initiative and the interests of the CIVIS universities, in line with the EUI:

- The purpose of CIVIS Alliance, and its Inter-University Campus, is a partial Europeanisation and the enhancement of the interests of the CIVIS universities in selected areas of cooperation.
- The CIVIS alliance is an instrument to advance and improve objectives that each university holds, not the least in terms of addressing needs of making our universities fit for the future. As such, CIVIS Alliance is and will remain dependent on the structures, resources and foremost members of each CIVIS university.
- The CIVIS Inter-University Campus is in large parts the connections, also in terms of infrastructure, between the CIVIS universities. Its operation will largely be done by the staff of the partner universities. A small, effective central office will coordinate these operations.
- Our model of a European University Alliance is thus based on the mission and vision statement approved by the heads of the CIVIS universities: Strongly interconnected institutions for the movement of people, ideas and information and for intensive collaborations.

A CIVIS Inter-University Campus: Our understanding – Deriving from the deliberations of the CIVIS universities and the experiences of the first development phase, as well as the concept of a European higher education inter-university ‘campus’, the CIVIS Inter-University Campus is defined by:

- The infrastructure, including instruments and formats, that creates a sustainable, strong, and intensive network of autonomous universities. Students, academics and non-academic staff of our universities can move, learn and collaborate as freely as possible within this network.
- The building of infrastructures and processes will provide gains in efficiency. The digital infrastructure – under the label CIVIS Digital Campus – is a key prerequisite for enhancing this. It must be integrated into the modernisation efforts in the realm of IT at each university as well as into the ongoing digitization of both the European Union and of universities in general.
- The CIVIS Inter-University Campus will not entail the unification of the partner universities and their ‘campuses’ (both physical and virtual). The vision and mission statement clearly affirmed the continuing autonomy and identity of each partner university. The statement declares the diversity among the universities to be a key asset, to be reflected in our shared spaces.
- The Inter-University Campus is a space serving the provision of opportunities for our universities and their students and staff to interact and cooperate on a new level.
- The concrete educational and research formats – the content of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus – will be produced by academics, and the framework and strategies for this dimension will be prepared by other actors in CIVIS Alliance. This is also the case for the civic engagement, the local and global outreach dimensions.

Key Objectives of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus

Deepened experiences, intensified cooperation, modernised institutions – The basic purpose of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus is to establish easy connections between the member universities as well as to other universities, in particular the strategic partner universities in Africa and to societal actors. These connections are new, both in their form and in their quality, while the key objectives that these connections serve are, fundamentally, not new, but long-standing objectives of the CIVIS universities. Through CIVIS Alliance, as an instrument to the mutual benefit of all CIVIS universities, we want to realise these key objectives in an efficient, qualitatively high way and through new formats. We pursue the following **three key objectives** by building the CIVIS Inter-University Campus as common space:

Key Objective One: Broadened, diversified and enriched experiences of students, academics, and non-academic staff – Broadening the experiences of students has been fundamental rationale behind exchanges and mobility between universities for a long time – often under the label ‘intercultural experience.’ We reaffirm this goal and update it for CIVIS Alliance.

- **Academic:** richer and more flexible courses of study of students, greater offer; richer teaching for academic staff. Learners should be enabled to contribute to addressing the various challenges of our times. To prepare students to be responsible and effective agents in professional and civic life, learning must take place beyond one’s discipline and beyond the classroom. Moving to new places and learning with different students – the two key rationales of mobility – are thus not alongside education, but a crucial part of it.
- **Political-cultural:** Firstly, intercultural experiences, through which students and other learners enlarge their experiences and their horizon. Secondly, as CIVIS is a European University Alliance, we aim to cultivate a reflective self-understanding of each person as a European, a reflective engagement and identification with Europe and its values to become European citizens.
- **Professional preparation and development:** Graduates should have better chances in the job market, so that a stronger, more creative, and more resilient European economy and society can be promoted. Life-long learning as well as the development of transversal skills, such as coping with unknown situations and resilience, networking, adaptability are important qualifications, benefitting also the local stakeholders in the CIVIS universities.

Key Objective Two: Intensive and sustainable transnational cooperation – The overarching aim of each European University Alliance is to establish systemic, institutional and sustainable cooperation among the universities that constitute an alliance. This cooperation will take place between different players from the universities, who must be provided the means and infrastructure to ensure easy and effective collaboration, towards an institutional culture of internationalisation:

- to Europeanise educational offers through collaboration in the realm of teaching and learning;
 - to facilitate and enable joint research among academics of our universities, in particular in view of societal challenges (Hubs) and by cooperating with non-academic players (Open Labs);
- to enable cooperation in other fields of activity of universities, in particular non-academic;
- to enable students to collaborate in student-led initiatives;
 - to empower and internationalise relevant departments and non-academic staff through joint initiatives and offers in staff training, resulting in capacity building;
 - to train academic personnel for intercultural teaching;
 - to facilitate joint applications for funding of various kinds.

Key Objective Three: Institutional learning, modernisation, and innovation – Universities as complex organisations are undergoing processes of change. Key areas of change are more competitive funding schemes, research in view of societal challenges, innovation in teaching and learning, digitalisation, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, more challenging public finances, updating of work culture and processes as well as demographic change, also in terms of increasingly diverse student populations. We aspire that some of these – demanding – processes of change can be improved through our close collaboration. The Inter-University Campus is a space that should enable:

- peer-to-peer learning on the basis of established channels for communication;
- communities of practice where educators, researchers and non-academic staff can share and impart knowledge through their own experiences;
- driving modernization and innovation in each CIVIS university, initiating new or boosting ongoing or planned process of change towards digitized and internationalized local campuses;

- working together with societal players;
- increasing the resources of each university through success in common applications for funding.

Key Objectives for the CIVIS Inter-University Campus

These three overall objectives shape the CIVIS Inter-University Campus:

1. Broadened, diversified and enriched experiences of students, academic staff, and non-academic staff in the academic, political-cultural and professional preparation and development areas.
2. Intensive and sustainable transnational cooperation among members of our universities as well as other players.
3. Institutional learning, modernisation, and innovation in and of each university

CIVIS Commitments for the Inter-University Campus

The following commitments will be guiding principles on how we do achieve our objective in the framework of this strategy. Each of the commitments stems from the wider political and social context we find ourselves in. Each commitment is also taken up in key policy initiatives on the national and European level and informs the European Strategy for Universities. Each commitment has also been stated and embraced in the vision and mission statement, endorsed by the heads of our institutions, that provides our overall guidance and is particularly important when building the CIVIS Inter-University Campus.

Inclusiveness, equality, and diversity – Understood as a comprehensive description of equality, which aims at equal rights and combats discrimination in higher education on grounds of social background, gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation and age, the CIVIS universities can contribute a rich set of experiences and individual institutional policies in this respect. Based on this we define target groups of specific relevance, such as:

- Students with specific needs;
- Students with less income;
- Students with less mobility opportunities in their faculties / study programmes;
- Students with low "GPA" who fail to access the usual Erasmus programmes;
- Students with little or no foreign language skills.

We would aim to reach students who do not take part in semester long mobilities for short-term and blended formats or can benefit from internationalization of the curricula at their home institution. Experience seems to point to the fact that short mobilities tend to be used by experienced students who have already had a mobility (semester) abroad; one concrete trend we intend to counter.

Sustainability and the green dimension – The commitment of CIVIS Alliance to sustainability is a commitment to being responsible public agents and to act on the basis of the best of scientific evidence. A CIVIS Inter-University Campus doing justice to unlimited movement across Europe (by airplane), based on fossil fuels as we know them, would undermine the credibility of our endeavour, not the least in the eyes of political actors, and, most crucially, of the students of each member university.

This is already reflected in "Green Erasmus", which will be fully taken up by all efforts in CIVIS Alliance. Crucially, also academics and students from our communities have launched initiatives for a more

responsible way to use travel and to very carefully look for and engage ways to meet and collaborate that are not producing CO₂ emissions. We will develop suitable instruments to screen the environmental impacts of all CIVIS-activities. We owe this to us and our students.

Global exchanges and collaborations, in particular with partner universities in Africa – With CIVIS members located in the South of Europe, our Alliance is geographically rooted in the nexus between Africa, the Near East and Europe, so this is a commitment of our alliance. CIVIS builds on the unique African and Mediterranean connections of its members in a strategic collaboration with partner universities in Africa:

- a socially embedded, relevant, and engaged academic community - locally and globally;
- commitment to high-quality research and education and the sharing of best practices;
- academic excellence in disciplines and fields especially relevant for addressing the thematic challenges, as addressed in the five CIVIS Hubs: climate, environment and energy; society, culture, heritage; health; cities, spaces and mobilities; digital and technological transformation.

Our strategic partnerships act as a catalyst for challenge-based education, as seen in the CIVIS Hubs. Humanity now faces global problems, so our search for solutions must reach out to partners beyond Europe's borders. They also provide mobility opportunities between all CIVIS partners, both European and African and support equitable research partnerships, as foreseen in the agreement between the European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) on an EU-AU Innovation Agenda.

In their strategic partnership agreements, CIVIS Alliance and its six strategic partner universities in Africa agreed on priorities in their collaboration pertinent for building the global, respectively African-European dimension of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. In this, the main focus is on facilitating the **exchange of faculty, students, and staff** and the **development of joint educational offers**, especially in the framework of CIVIS Hubs, which also entails exchange mobility. Other important goals are the **joint or coordinated acquisition of third-party funding**, the first success of which is a Jean Monnet Network, PolyCIVIS. To aid these shared goals, the **exchange of best practices** and **technical assistance**; as well as **expanding and deepening bilateral cooperation** between the European and African CIVIS universities are pursued. Furthermore, a special emphasis was jointly put on related objectives: increasing mobility of students and staff, with a focus on using **virtual mobility**; promoting joint research/research-oriented training with a focus on **early-stage researcher** support; sharing/strengthening **capacities and know-how** and contributing to the internationalisation and international visibility of our institutions. Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, African partnerships come into collaborations for societal impact, for example collaborations in **Open Labs**, and shared **policy engagement** on various levels. These objectives translate into concrete goals in the action fields of CIVIS mobilities and the CIVIS Digital Campus, as well as the multilingualism and diversity dimension, which are described in the relevant chapters below.

In order to collaborate efficiently and effectively, there should be no double structures / processes, as far as possible –we intend to work on inclusive and/or co-created activities in co-created spaces. At the same time, we need to be flexible and allow also for selective inclusion in and co-creation of activities. This will sometimes become necessary as not every partner will participate in everything fully or at all. Thus, any strategy developed for the inclusion of the African partners will need to look at the needs and capabilities of the partners and will, first and foremost, need to be co-created with the partners.

Collaborations with local and regional partners – Just as universities are and need to be embedded in their societal environment – and not being secluded campuses set apart in the proverbial “ivory tower” – they need to actively engage with other actors. Terms such as “Third Mission”, public and civic engagement, service and community learning, or challenge-based learning give evidence of this. CIVIS

as the self-declared 'civic' European University Alliance has from the very beginning taken engagement and collaboration with local and regional partners to be a defining commitment of our collaboration. The CIVIS Open Labs give evidence to this as well as the array of societal associate partner institutions just as our commitment to challenge based learning. These specific strategies for these dimensions are developed in different documents. For the CIVIS Inter-University Campus, the implications, both as opportunities and challenges, are:

- to link with the activities of the Open Labs;
- to incorporate the local associated partners;
- to collaborate with regional foundations / actors of civic engagement.

While the majority of the work to be done in involving local and regional partners or, to take a different perspective, the civic societies around our university campuses in the CIVIS alliance is performed elsewhere (see *Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach*, for example), connecting the shared CIVIS Inter-University Campus to local and regional partners is an important field of action. The flagship tool of choice for CIVIS Alliance to interact with the civic societies surrounding it are the **CIVIS Open Labs**. Now established by all CIVIS partners, the Open Labs are intended to build bridges between the academic world and local societal stakeholders, to share and build knowledge, to establish local teams for co-creating knowledge and to facilitate the involvement of local partners in CIVIS's challenge-based agenda. Potentially also connected to the Open Labs, but a long-established concept of its own is **Service Learning**, which has an obvious civic engagement dimension to it and can be harnessed to involve local stakeholders easily and meaningfully. Connected to both, there might be **student-led projects** which, one way or another, will engage civic society also. The same of course also applies to what has been a very, very long tradition at universities, including the CIVIS universities: **public lectures** and their more recent digital offspring, **open online courses** (OOCs) or even **massive open online courses** (MOOCs). While aimed at a global audience, they can also engage local stakeholders with the wider (CIVIS) universe that surrounds them and their local university. Lastly, but by no means least, on an entirely different level also **student internships and practice stages** are an educational activity to engage local stakeholders, in this case in the corporate or institutional worlds. Each of these activities can help develop the connections between the CIVIS Inter-University Campus and its local and regional partners and stakeholders. In subsequent chapters, we will revisit these activities for engaging civic society – not so much in a general strategic dimension, which is done elsewhere in CIVIS, but from very practical strategic considerations involving the dimensions of the CIVIS Digital Campus (e.g. the general public's access to it), of CIVIS mobility (e.g. bringing mobile students in touch with local stakeholders) and of multilingualism, inclusion and diversity.

Commitments for the CIVIS Inter-University Campus

Four areas of commitment shape the CIVIS Inter-University Campus:

1. Inclusiveness, equality, and diversity.
2. Sustainability and the green dimension.
3. Global exchanges and collaborations, in particular with partner universities in Africa.
4. Collaborations with local and regional partners.

Fields of Action and Goals for the Inter-University Campus

The following goals, aims and instruments are based on a thorough analysis of the work and the lessons learnt from the first funding phase as well as a thorough needs analysis. As CIVIS Alliance, we are collaborating to achieve these aims. Each of the following sections outlines several specific goals. Each of the goals relates to one, or several, of the overall objectives outlined further above. Each of the goals addresses a core component of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus.

	Field of Action 1: Students
Goal 1: Short-term and blended international experiences	Enable meaningful short-term and blended international experiences for students that are part of their normal course of study, either as electives or obligatory. Develop and use blended programmes (such as Blended Intensive Programmes) in an efficient way to provide new options for students for whom mobility would be impossible otherwise. Use green mobility, consider other short mobilities, foster inclusiveness, use CIVIS Passport or EUROPASS for digital educational credentials. Implement in a sustainable way – both environmentally and for institutional resources. <i>Status: high priority, implemented already and ongoing</i> <i>Long-term perspective: ongoing at sustainable levels, green mobility</i>
Goal 2: Virtual Exchange	Developing a range of online formats for virtual exchange as a financially and environmentally sustainable alternative to physical short-term mobilities, building on the first phase of CIVIS and the <i>CIVIS Virtual Mobility Handbook</i>. Build on the expertise gained in the first phase of CIVIS and develop and support diverse formats of meaningful and engaging virtual mobilities such as Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and various forms of online courses, embedded in larger offers like micro-programmes, but also local traditional programmes. Use CIVIS Passport or EUROPASS for digital educational credentials. <i>Status: high priority, to be implemented by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: key expansion area, incl. global partners</i>
Goal 3: High-quality deep experiences	Deep experiences of high quality at a partner university over a longer period of time, made easier in terms of administration and richer in terms of how the time abroad is experienced. Improve Erasmus Without Papers (EWP) at each university and to designate a Task Force to accompany the connection of EWP systems of each university and digital Inter-Institutional agreements (see also Goals 4, 8, 17 and Chapters 2 and 3 below). Address the question of credit and grade recognition, promote embedded and structured mobility (see also Goal 4). Improve and update pre-arrival packages, work on solutions to the housing situation, enable students to access campus services, enrich the stay by targeted formats of discussion and reflection on the host country, Europe, and the experiences made abroad. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: fully implemented on alliance level</i>
Goal 4: Innovative joint programmes	Offering innovative joint programmes of study across different campuses, using streamlined administrative and mobility processes (stay on two or more campuses) and plan for funding two or more mobility periods (usually

	full semester). Use primarily Erasmus+ funds, explore alternative funds. Support academics in planning, applying for and delivering the mobility of students and staff for Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes. Offer templates & models of how physical, blended and virtual mobility can be integrated into joint programmes, meeting requirements deriving from CIVIS commitments to forward inclusiveness, green mobility and collaboration with our African partners. Facilitate transfer of educational data and integration and recognition of micro-credentials, using CIVIS Passport etc. <i>Status: high priority, to be piloted by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: key area of expansion, focus on sustainability</i>
Goal 5: Work placements and internships	Opportunities for work placements and internships to enhance students' and recent graduates' employability: join forces of our Career Services and open up services towards all CIVIS students, activate and connect with local and regional actors and institutions, advertise and use Erasmus+ funding instruments regarding academic and non-academic stays, advertise different forms of internships, such as regular work placements, data collection/research stays and teaching assistantships and possibly facilitate an exchange platform (pinboard); specific offers for civic engagement. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: future development area, toolkit in place</i>
Goal 6: Student-led initiatives and projects	Opportunities for students to initiate and implement initiatives and projects: develop and co-create, with the CIVIS Global Student Council in the lead, a framework for student-led initiatives, ensuring a sound process for selecting projects and a consistent student voice (student council and ambassadors) within CIVIS Alliance. Support students during implementation in cooperation with Open Labs and consider how student extra-curricular activities can be used to enhance the CIVIS experience. <i>Status: high priority, to be implemented by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: core part of student experience</i>
	Field of Action 2: Academics
Goal 7: Cooperation among academics for joint activities and projects	Easier cooperation among academics for joint activities and projects by providing formats for easy meetings between academics (including finances), benefiting from existing funding schemes and providing academics with up-to-date information on opportunities for staff mobility. Provide online tools for collaboration that fit the diverse needs of the academics (including for match-making) and at the same time can be well combined with the digital environments of the partner universities. <i>Status: high priority, partly implemented already, to be enhanced by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: wide-ranging cooperation among large groups</i>
Goal 8: Short-term teaching mobility	Enhance short-term teaching mobility, a well-established instrument of exchange and cooperation, ensuring internationalisation at home and of curricula. Challenges persist due to varying academic calendars and local regulations resulting in teaching mobility only being possible "in addition to" regular teaching responsibilities. To address these challenges, provide formats based on existing funding schemes, promote integration into existing curricula, explore new ways and formats, in line with CIVIS joint educational offer, engage in local political / regulatory change processes.

	<i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: fully integrated in educational offers, sustainably</i>
Goal 9: Long-term visiting lectureships and research stays	Easy visiting lectureships and research stays, long-term (5 months plus): Not foreseen by most university administrations and legal frameworks for academics to fulfil teaching obligations abroad. Find solutions for extended stays at CIVIS universities, e.g. by reciprocal exchange of teaching staff, funding of replacements, innovative housing solutions. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: part of standard teaching/research responsibilities</i>
Goal 10: Europeanised early career researchers	Europeanised early career researchers, also PhD candidates, face some challenges including national legal frameworks and local regulations, as well as significant time and workload pressure. Using experience gained from RIS4CIVIS, maximize the use of Erasmus+ programme offers for PhD mobilities, offer early career researcher trainings for CIVIS universities, offer training for transferable skills and offer seed funding for EU applications. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: standard experience of early-career researchers</i>
Goal 11: Training for Academic Staff	Provide Training for Academic Staff for developing and organising various innovative educational offers in different formats and targeting all study cycles, using formats such as staff weeks, innovative pedagogies workshops, and including the use of BIPs for staff training. <i>Status: high priority, to be implemented by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: core element of academic staff development</i>
	Field of Action 3: Non-Academic Staff
Goal 12: Enable staff to work in European and international contexts	Professional staff is enabled to work in a European and international context to assist academics to develop and organise CIVIS educational offers (e.g., international offices, student admission & management, quality management, human resources, personnel development, finances, IT, etc.). Enhance the expertise and global engagement staff across departments, strengthening their proficiency and effectiveness. Apply a multifaceted approach to fortify skill sets and promote international collaboration, alongside capacity building efforts to empower staff with necessary tools and training, such as CIVIS Internationalisation Academy (major event once a year), CIVIS Staff Weeks (up to five times a year) and coordinated language and staff development offers. <i>Status: high priority, ongoing and to be expanded by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: institutionalised, comprehensive offer</i>
Goal 13: Exchange of best practices and institutional learning	Professional staff development through the exchange of best practices and allowing institutional learning, e.g. through job shadowing. In addition to the formats outlined in Goal 12 we will allow for exchange of best practices and common challenges, including through expert groups and task forces, based on the needs identified in particular programmes and activities of CIVIS Alliance. <i>Status: high priority, implemented already and ongoing</i> <i>Long-term perspective: standard mode of institutional development</i>

	Field of Action 4: Multilingualism
Goal 14: Enable language learning	Promoting language acquisition in a sustainable manner is necessary for improving target language and multilingual competence, and for promoting the mobility of all university members, students, academics, and non-academic staff alike. Raise awareness for the fundamental role of multilingualism for social cohesion and equity within CIVIS Alliance, within Europe and beyond. Develop the language dimension of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus, multilingual and intercultural competences, pooling language learning resources, collaborative efforts to offer resources to all members, including a repository of online open educational resources for language learning. Develop virtual language learning, e.g. by extending PENSA virtual tandems, BIPs and COILs as pre-arrival courses, etc. <i>Status: high priority, to be piloted by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: alliance-wide comprehensive offer</i>
Goal 15: Overcome language barriers	Overcoming language barriers and multilingualism are crucial values for CIVIS Alliance. Fostering effective multilingual cooperation within CIVIS Alliance needs to be supported with the appropriate tools, developing intercomprehension skills, relying on multilingual documents within CIVIS and making critical use of AI for instant translation support. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: open – might be “solved” by technology development (alternative: linguae francae and translation tools)</i>
	Field of Action 5: Digital Infrastructure of CIVIS Alliance
Goal 16: Mobility Processes	Improved general mobility processes through digitalisation and streamlining of student mobility administration, using the tools and infrastructure of the European Student Card Initiative (ESC, EWP, ...), however need to address different groups as ESCI will not cover all stakeholders involved in CIVIS: • European CIVIS Partners within the EU; • European CIVIS Partner outside the EU; • Non-European Partners. Implement EWP (incl. OLA/DLA, IIA, BM and fully digital data transfer), explore tools for non-EU mobilities within CIVIS (see Chapter 3 below) <i>Status: high priority, to be implemented / initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: fully digital processes, including non-EU</i>
Goal 17: Sharing and exchange of information	Effective sharing and exchange of information towards and between students, academics and non-academic staff both within and outside CIVIS Alliance (and different levels of involvement within the alliance). CIVIS Website as the central entry point into the Alliance’s mobility and exchange offers, relaunched and updated to serve as the CIVIS Portal (see Chapter 3 below), evolve from repository-style CIVIS Box to a much more structured and curated exchange of information (idea of a “CIVIS Knowledge Base”). <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: consolidated and up-to-date store of information</i>
Goal 18: Exchange of personal data	Easy and efficient exchange of personal data between the Campus Management Systems and Identity Management Systems of each university

	are crucial to CIVIS Alliance to be able to smoothly integrated joint educational offers. Implement EMREX and similar European standards for full integration of CIVIS joint programmes and seamless authentication and authorization attribute provisioning for students, academics and non-academic staff (single entry point, once-only policies & processes). <i>Status: high priority, to be piloted by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: European standards, alliance & inter-alliance</i>
Goal 19: Exchange of educational data	Easy and efficient exchange of educational data, as with Goal 18, but also interconnect institutional Learning Management Systems among each other and with the CIVIS Moodle, using Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) for a space where academics can collaborate to co-create and manage online educational offers. In addition to connecting Campus Management Systems to exchange credits and grades, develop CIVIS Passport / EUROPASS digital educational credentials for students while ensuring GDPR compliance and freedom of choice where credentials are stored (see Chapter 3 below) <i>Status: high priority, to be piloted by 2026</i> <i>Long-term perspective: European/global standards, alliance & inter-alliance</i>
Goal 20: Intersectoral Open Labs and Hubs collaboration	Create a space in the Digital Campus for high-quality inter-sectoral Open Lab and Hubs scientific collaborations, including options to facilitate access to research infrastructure across CIVIS Alliance, building on two case studies of RIS4CIVIS. Implement research infrastructures that are open and accessible to all researchers building on the work of RIS4CIVIS, implement ways of sharing competencies, expertise and updates at CIVIS Alliance level with the possibility to get information on latest updates of activities in the alliance (e.g. events), identify needs for potential collaboration tools for the academic community. <i>Status: medium priority, to be initiated by 2026</i> <i>Long-term persp.: open science communication / collaboration as standard</i>
Goal 21: Clear legal basis of the IT dimension	A clear legal basis of the IT dimension is a key issue in general terms, and specifically in some countries of CIVIS universities, which has not been sufficiently addressed on any level – EU, national and local – with a need to address key legal themes such as privacy, security, data protection, open vs. restricted data, digital accessibility and licensing issues, e.g. for digital resources licensed to one university, but used by (digitally) visiting students of all CIVIS universities. <i>Status: high priority, constantly monitor and apply legal frameworks</i> <i>Long-term perspective: implement European/global legal frameworks</i>
Goal 22: Possible risks and challenges	Clearly and honestly investigate possible risks and challenges, e.g. the legal dimension (Goal 21) or the fact that not every CIVIS university operates with the same technical conditions and within the same technical and regulatory framework. CIVIS, all alliance and the EC need to clearly and openly investigate such risks and communicate them honestly and purposefully, so the necessary advocacy can be applied in the relevant quarters and informed decisions can be made on the way forward and the timescales achievable. <i>Status: high priority, constant awareness and monitoring</i>

Outlook: Making the Strategy Viable: Resources, Capacities and Capabilities

To make the strategy we have outlined so far viable, it is essential to consider the resources, capacities, and capabilities required for its implementation, in particular regarding adequate human resources and capacities must be ensured to effectively carry out the various measures outlined above. This includes establishing appropriate structures and processes, which hold long-term value for CIVIS Alliance.

It is crucial to integrate these processes into the existing university structures, avoiding the creation of parallel structures whenever possible. When considering which instruments to utilize, a thorough assessment of the required resources is crucial. In addition, establishing priorities and developing a well-defined timeline are equally important aspects to consider. Otherwise, there is a risk of overburdening the system, leading to dysfunctions and frustrations, as has already been observed in the past.

As earlier with the Bologna reform process, the onus to facilitate change is on the local, sub-national and national agents. Unlike the Bologna process, however, the European University Alliances give Europe and give the involved partner universities the unique chance to work these changes in the same direction, with aligned goals and to, finally, common standards. It is on the EU to establish viable standards, and both incentivise and support, but also to enforce their implementation.

In the subsequent chapters, we will look at the strategies adopted by CIVIS Alliance in the areas of mobility (Chapter 2), digital campus infrastructure (Chapter 3) and inclusiveness (Chapter 4), as well as the CIVIS alliance's outreach to local and global partners (Chapter 5), which are the main underpinnings of the Inter-University Campus Strategy outlined above.

3

The CIVIS Mobility Strategy

A Strategic Management Plan for Sustainable Mobilities

This chapter provides the framework for the realisation of CIVIS key objectives and commitments described in the previous chapter with regard to the mobility dimension. It translates key objectives into concrete mobility formats taking into account the CIVIS commitments, and prioritises activities to reach objectives in mobility numbers both in student and staff mobilities under a short- and long-term perspective.

Mobility – A Concept in Motion

Along the emergence of the paradigm shift of how European Universities have been structured in the past and how they enter strategic partnerships today with the ambitious goal to create a common inter-university campus, the concept of mobility has widely changed and developed, too. Starting from singular physical mobilities of about 3.000 students in 1987, an Erasmus exchange semester has become a formative experience for many European student generations since the 90s, recently surpassing a total of 15.000.000 (fifteen million) mobilities. With the evolving digital infrastructure, distance learning and digital study programs became more and more common since the early 2000s. The Covid-19 Crisis finally gave a massive push towards the organization of virtual learning settings and opened up new perspectives towards virtual and blended mobility. Even though there is currently a swing back to physical mobilities, CIVIS Alliance firmly believes virtual exchange is here to stay and about to stage a comeback. If nothing else, the sheer logistics and environmental impact of physical mobility make them a sine-qua-non element of teaching, learning and mobility.

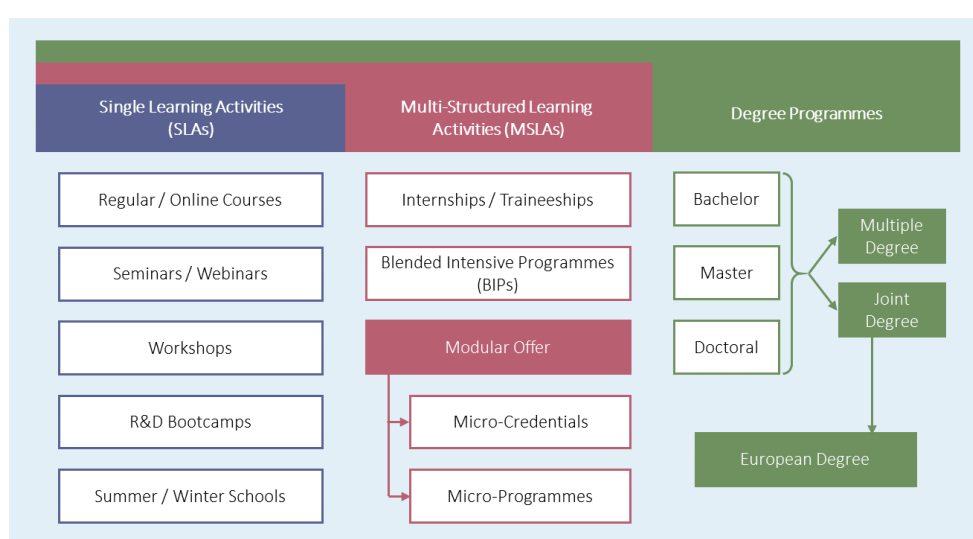


Figure 2: The CIVIS Educational Framework – source: Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education

The CIVIS Educational Framework (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*) provides formats ranging from standalone courses and modules to entire degree programmes. Almost every educational format can be linked to mobility, be it physical, virtual or blended. Similar to the cooking recipe metaphor used at the beginning of the document, the question then is, what does the CIVIS menu look like, how balanced is it, how healthy, digestible and how delicious? This CIVIS Mobility Strategy can be read as such a menu, but it is the kitchen version of the day's menu: It contains all the dishes (mobilities) on offer and combines them with an indication of quantity for each dish – for how many servings of each mobility format do we have the ingredients (financial and administrative resources – based on the resources currently available inside CIVIS Alliance) before we need to say: “Sorry, we have run out of this dish, please choose something else from our delicious menu”? It is a basic menu that can be further developed and seasoned. And it is a proof, that too many cooks not always spoil the broth!

Following on from the conclusions of Chapter 2 above, this mobility strategy aims to propose a realistic and feasible way to enhance mobility in CIVIS Alliance. The experience from the first 18 months of the CIVIS 2 project shows that a good balance between the different formats is needed and a high utilisation of one format can lead to missing capacity for other formats. Thus, this document aims to bring back a balance of mobility formats for the short- and long-term perspective of CIVIS Alliance.

When designing each mobility format, the **four CIVIS Key Commitments** (see Chapter 2) are taken into account: Inclusiveness, equity and diversity; sustainability and the green dimension; global exchanges and collaborations, in particular with partner universities in Africa; as well as collaborations with local and regional partners. Similarly, the development of CIVIS educational / mobility offer is based on the **three Key Objectives for the CIVIS University Campus** (see Chapter 2): Broadened, diversified and enriched experiences of students, academic staff and non-academic staff in the academic, political-cultural and professional preparation and development areas; intensive and sustainable transnational cooperation among members of our universities as well as other players; and institutional learning, modernisation and innovation in and of each university.

Talking about the mobility concept in motion, the European Commission now offers an even wider comprehension of “mobility” when introducing the notion of “sharing services in any of the partner institutions.” This is important when it comes to the numbers of people benefiting from CIVIS Alliance’s offers. This chapter concentrates **only** on student mobility formats that lead to the attendance of an educational offer and on staff mobility formats. It consequently does not offer a pathway towards 50% student mobility in this wider comprehension of sharing services.

As yet, there is no clear path as to how this sharing of services could materialise – what kinds of services could be shared and how these forms of “mobility” could be documented and counted.

Obviously, shared services could include items like access to (digital) collections or the sharing of large research infrastructures. For the digital services in particular, however, there are immediate questions of licensing of such services for non-local students and the unsolved challenge of counting such mobilities, especially in the face of data protection regulations. These issues need to be considered and resolved before shared services can be an area of (significant) growth of widely-defined mobility.

Mobility Goal for the European University Alliances

People can study, train, teach, do research, work, or share services in any of the partner institutions, either physically, online, or both (as blended learning). Alliances aim for such mobility at all levels (bachelor, master and doctoral), with at least 50% of the students within the alliance benefitting.

Source: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative/about>

Mobility – Where CIVIS Alliance Stands and What It Aims For

Before looking ahead, it is important to understand where CIVIS Alliance started and currently stands. Like many European University Alliances, CIVIS started in the challenging environment of the COVID-19 pandemic and some developments are thus clearly path-dependent from the pandemic, even at the time of writing. 2021/22 saw the long-awaited restart of the physical semester exchange and a major drop in virtual exchange offers. The start of the new Erasmus programme generation in 2021 brought a new programme type into play, that offered a bridge for the manifold short-term programmes developed mainly as CIVIS summer schools in 2021/22: the Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs).

For its second phase, in the CIVIS 2 Project, CIVIS Alliance has adopted the goal to “work towards a doubling of the number of students involved in mobility” (CIVIS2 Proposal. CIVIS – A European CIVIC University. Project Proposal for ERASMUS-EDU-2022-EUR-UNIV – Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities., 2022). After an initial project phase for strategic self-reassurance, the first two project years have mainly seen a continued development in two mobility formats for students: the standard **Erasmus physical semester exchange** and the new format of **Blended Intensive Programmes** (BIPs). CIVIS agreed upon an umbrella agreement that today offers almost 8.000 semester exchange

places throughout the Alliance. For a variety of reasons, the Alliance will not be able to fill these spots in the near future or get even near to it. With some universities sending already more than 20% of its Erasmus outgoing students to CIVIS destinations, a further increase in semester mobility would only be possible with a general increase in local Erasmus budgets or at the expense of other Erasmus partnerships. The same goes for the Blended Intensive Programmes, as this instrument was extensively developed and used since 2022/23. In terms of offered BIP programmes per academic year, CIVIS Alliance will seek to cap the number of BIPs and for consolidation in future and strive for higher and stable numbers of participants per BIP.

Quick Facts: The CIVIS BIPs

CIVIS is the university alliance that used BIPs as its major instrument to develop cooperation between academics and to generate innovative study programmes. More than 140 BIPs have been created since 2022/23, offering a rich experience and a great source of collaboration, enabling the emergence of larger programmes, like micro-programmes or even joint degree programmes. Also, BIPs are fast becoming a great means for involving the strategic partners. The BIPs are CIVIS' great success story, even to the detriment of other mobility forms.

Taking it from this point of departure, CIVIS Alliance mobility strategy offers a short-term perspective until the end of the CIVIS 2 project. The table below shows the planned increase of numbers related to the individual student and staff mobility goals aiming for an overall doubling of mobilities between 2022 and 2026. As some mobility formats are already far developed and have only limited potential for further growth, e.g. goal 1 and 3, other formats need to be developed and taken into the core offer of CIVIS mobilities during the remaining two project years until 2026. As the table clearly shows, virtual exchange will play a major role in the intended increase.

CIVIS Alliance will strive for rather slight growth with BIP and other short-term mobilities (Goal 1) and semester mobilities (Goal 3), reaching about

1.500 BIP participants in 55 BIPs per year (averaging about 25-30 participants per BIP) and 1.500 semester exchanges per year. As procedures for both mobility formats are well developed or established, this goal can be reached with further fine-tuning measures.

Establishing and running full-blown **joint degree programmes** (Goal 4) and their embedded mobility formats is a major and massive undertaking and will result in mobilities in rather smaller amounts at the beginning. Currently, we estimate that CIVIS joint degree programmes will only fully start in 2026/27 with the first significant intake of students, resulting in the first mobilities only in the spring/summer term of 2027. The frameworks for Goal 5 and 6 – internships and student-led projects – are both currently being developed and coming up with internal calls and procedures soon. **Student-led projects** (Goal 6) are well funded at least for the CIVIS 2 project years and will see a major increase of projects and project participants until 2026. Since local Erasmus budgets are not involved here, the main effort besides the support of student-led projects must deal with the question of sustainable funding. A procedure for **internships and traineeships** (Goal 5) has not yet been developed as a CIVIS wide activity. Together with Open Labs activities, the Alliance will elaborate on opportunities for students aiming for a work experience.

Virtual Exchange (Goal 2) will play a major role to reach CIVIS's objectives in numbers and to fulfil most of the commitments. It is fully in line with the alliance's commitments to sustainable and green mobility, as well as inclusiveness, equality and diversity and integrating African partners. No other mobility format will reach those objectives so easily, although virtual exchange experiences do not keep up with physical mobilities in terms of impact – at least with today's approaches and experiences.

Table: CIVIS Mobility Goals, 2022-2026

Student Mobilities	End of CIVIS 1 (2021-2022)	Year 1 / CIVIS 2 (2022-2023)	Year 2 / CIVIS 2 (2023-2024)	Year 3 / CIVIS 2 (2024-2025)	End of CIVIS 2 (2025-2026) Objective: doubling
Goal 1 Short-Term Mobility	1291 (physical/ blended)	932 (BIPs)	1.150 (+220)	1.400 (+250)	1.650 (+250)
Goal 2 Virtual Exchange	283	159	200 (+50)	600 (+400)	1.200 (+600)
Goal 3 Semester Mobility	852	986	1.100 (+110)	1.250 (+150)	1.500 (+250)
Goal 4 Joint Degree Programmes	-	-	-	-	50 (+50)
Goal 5 Work/ Internship	-	-	-	100 (+100)	200 (+100)
Goal 6 Student-led projects	-	-	50 (+50)	150 (+100)	250 (+100)
Σ students	2426	2077	+430 ≈ 2500	+1000 ≈ 3500	+1350 ≈ 4850

STA Staff – Teaching	230	192	+ 70	+100	+100 ≈460
STT Staff – Training	83	67	+ 30	+ 40	+30 ≈170
Σ staff	313	259	+ 100 ≈360	+140 ≈500	+130 ≈630

Student Mobility – Reaching the Goals for CIVIS Students

Enabling students to immerse themselves into international, intercultural exchange of customs, thoughts, ideas and ways of living – and of looking at the world – is at the heart of the CIVIS Alliance mission. Enriching intercultural experiences for students, meeting and interacting with their peers from different countries, languages, education systems and backgrounds, and experiencing the cultural and societal riches of Europe (and beyond) firsthand is the core prerequisite for them to become engaged European and global citizens, enabling them to tackle the global societal and environmental challenges facing the world as we know it today. This section focuses on student mobility between all CIVIS campuses in all its various facets: short, mid- and long-term, virtual, blended and physical. All student

mobility formats are thought through regarding the four CIVIS commitments, regarding needed efforts and capacities and their role in reaching the overall key objectives of CIVIS Alliance.

Goal 1 – Short-Term and Blended International Experiences

Short-term mobilities have been attractive study offers for a long time, be it a summer, a winter or any other seasonal school. However, as an Erasmus funded mobility offer for students, short-term mobility is rather new. And as such, Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) were the kick-off for a broader use than ever before. After the Erasmus Programme Guide was announced in 2021, CIVIS Alliance strategically decided to use this mobility format comprehensively, as it allowed not only for local funding schemes, but also for innovative and inclusive programmes, that offered low-threshold opportunities for academics to start cooperation. For CIVIS, BIPs were key to bring academics together and think about teaching cooperation and beyond, also serving as appetizers for deeper collaborations.

Looking back, CIVIS Alliance has seen an enthusiastic use of this teaching and mobility format, at the same time challenging the management capacities of the Alliance and the local administrations to offer smooth and efficient processes to assure Erasmus-compatible procedures & guidelines, to make sense of different academic calendars, differing interpretations of National Agencies, and many more.

Until 2026, CIVIS Alliance will focus on BIPs when it comes to short-term and blended international experiences. After more than 140 BIPs rolled out since 2022, CIVIS Alliance has decided to cap the number of BIPs per academic year to 55 in total and 5 per partner per academic year, aiming for a balance between the partners and addressing the challenges that still exist with this mobility format, in particular the significant input in administrative resources for newly created, but also for recurring BIPs. This will ensure a **sustainable growth perspective** for this mobility goal, with a **stable increase of 250 additional mobilities per year** until 2026.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 1: Short-term and blended international experiences	- streamline and finetune BIP management process through the CIVIS mobility platform, like a common calendar, quality assurance - introduce a fast-track application for repeated BIPs - come up with solutions to reach sustainable mobility commitments for BIP mobility. - review if we reach our target group for BIPs or if we need to do more to be inclusive. - further develop the process to integrate staff & students from African partners into BIPs. - think about how to connect to local/regional networks with BIPs (e.g. Open Labs)	- Review the limit of 55 BIPs and respond to demand - Review success towards reaching the goals of the CIVIS four Commitments with BIPs - Discuss and decide for alternative formats of short-term mobilities, like Seasonal School Programmes. - Check, if Erasmus without Papers can offer new tools to manage CIVIS-wide BIPs on a local level.

	• establish a similar process for doctoral short-term mobility as CIVIS has established for BIPs • consider blended / short-term mobilities for internships, civic engagement (e.g. service learning) and student-led projects	
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Goal 2 - Virtual Exchange– The Booster for Exchange Numbers

Virtual Exchange didn't play a major role for CIVIS member universities before the COVID-19 crisis. As pointed out above, the Alliance started almost parallel to this crisis and virtual formats became an important tool to keep on working, as for all other universities. This need has resulted, generally spoken, in the realization that all educational formats today could be taught virtually. However, 2022/23 has seen a major push back on virtual teaching formats and the return to physical formats. At the same time, the transversal objectives of the Erasmus Programme since 2021 almost cry out for virtual offers, as only virtual formats enable universities to meet these objectives and, for CIVIS Alliance, pave the way to meet its commitments: being inclusive, sustainable and integrate African and local partners.

Building upon the *CIVIS Handbook on Virtual Mobility* (Iucu, Romiță et al., 2022) from the first phase of CIVIS and the CIVIS Educational Framework (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*) developed since 2022, the Alliance sets a clear timetable and prioritisation with a short- and a long-term perspective. CIVIS Alliance will concentrate on three virtual formats until 2026: COILs, Online Courses and Webinars. All three formats play an important role in reaching the objectives until 2026 and beyond and to develop innovative academic offers: Development of 20 COIL courses per academic year until 2026 with 40 participants per course is intended. Flanking this, we will identify existing online courses available at CIVIS member universities and develop new offers, such as develop series of webinars in the framework of Hubs and Open Labs. A long-term perspective allows for further concepts, once a digital infrastructure is developed and available: like (M)OOC: This does not mean, that existing programmes of OOC and MOOC are no longer welcome or supported in CIVIS – rather, existing offers will be maintained and may even be complemented by new offers from the CIVIS universities. However, the focus on the creation of new virtual offers will not incentivize new OOCs or MOOCs, but will focus on COIL, online courses and webinars.

Action Plan:

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 2: Virtual Exchange	• introduce COIL to CIVIS academics and offer support structure • identify existing Online Courses and create opportunities for new Online Courses	• review experience with the formats and decide upon continuation • review additional formats like OOCs and MOOCs or other formats • embed virtual offers in CIVIS joint programmes and local programmes

	• create the framework for Webinars and the needed digital framework • explore all formats also for life-long learning, engagement of local partners (e.g. Open Labs), accessibility for global partners, and student-led projects	
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Goal 3 - Semester Exchange - A Continued Development

The CIVIS universities signed an alliance-wide Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA) in 2022 (integrating the latest member UNIL in 2023) that regulates the semester exchange for students (and exchange of teaching and administrative staff) between all members. IIAs on Faculty or School level are no longer needed, however, the coordination of available spots and requirements for nomination is still required. The agreement defines study areas and number of spots available for students coming from CIVIS member universities for the following academic year. It is published in October each year, before local calls for application start. It gives also orientation and clarification regarding prerequisites and procedures for nomination and application. Through this agreement, CIVIS Alliance offers almost 8.000 semester exchange places per year throughout the Alliance.

The current IIA is valid until 2027 and includes the two non-Erasmus partners UNIL and UoG. There is currently no multilateral agreement between CIVIS members and its strategic partners in Africa. The Erasmus programme logic (KA 171) does not allow for such things between European University Alliances and strategic global partners; instead, this has to be managed by each single member university through bilateral IIAs. As long as this is the case, the CIVIS coordination office (through the CIVIS Global Partnerships Officer) offers to coordinate the yearly application for KA 171 (and corresponding Swiss and Scottish) funding with its strategic partners.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 3: High-quality deep experiences	• tackle existing challenges related to the introduction of EWP • develop a better distribution of mobilities between the universities aiming for a balance • build up a swift increase of semester mobilities between European and African partners • offer events to raise community building effects • promotion for CIVIS destinations together with CIVIS Ambassadors • secure a proper welcome of incoming students, through	• implement green travel policy according to the strategy • perpetuate the achievements from CIVIS 2 • develop sustainable solutions to chronic shortages in available student services, e.g. the shortage of housing

	CIVIS Ambassadors and pre-arrival packages • identify shortages in available student services and come up with innovative solutions, e.g. shortage of housing • upgrade a CIVIS semester abroad stay and add value through offering activities to experience and reflect European commonalities and diversities • prepare a more fundamental strategy for a green travel policy	
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Goal 4 – Joint Degree Programmes – Quality Comes Before Mobility

The creation of CIVIS joint degree programmes at Bachelor, Master and PhD level is one of the core objectives of the CIVIS academic activities. Regardless of whether they will be multiple, joint or European degrees: The groundwork for common programmes is currently being done in CIVIS and first concrete programmes are being developed in different CIVIS Hubs. However, at the time of writing this, no final programme structures are agreed upon and mobility schemes are still subject of discussion. Thus, on the short-term perspective, CIVIS will not see much mobility in joint degree programmes in numbers, but at least the start of some of these highly innovative study programmes. For those reasons, the focus must be on laying the groundwork for administering and funding these embedded mobilities.

Depending on the number of Joint Programmes with two or even more embedded mobilities, numbers of mobilities will rise significantly once the programmes have started. By that time, clarification must be reached regarding the funding scheme of mobilities in such programmes: will they compete with or even replace single semester exchanges more and more? KA 131 currently does not offer a well-fitting funding scheme for such programmes, as the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters funding scheme remains high-threshold and does not offer sustainable solutions.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 4: Innovative joint programmes	• develop procedures for an overall programme management until the start of the programmes in 2026, taking into account existing other obligations • invite African partners in programme development • offer funding opportunities through existing local Erasmus budgets	• advocate for a new funding scheme fitting to the need of Joint Degree Programmes

Goal 5 – Traineeships and Internships

At the current stage no coordinated initiative has been developed to bring this mobility format forward in CIVIS Alliance. However, the topic of internships and work placements gains momentum through the civic engagement and challenged based education strategy, as outlined in the *Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach*. While civic engagement will see a boost through Open Lab projects, CIVIS will be the bridge for students to get engaged in projects linked to other CIVIS campuses than their own. The Erasmus standard programme offers again an instrument to fund students on such missions through local budgets.

CIVIS Alliance will also open up new opportunities for students in that field while initiating and further developing intersectoral associated partnerships linked to CIVIS, like the CIVIS Museum Network and others. For the short-term perspective, it will be crucial to develop procedures and networks for the allocation and placement of relevant internships. Once established, the long-term perspective will see an increase of placements through established and new associated partnerships.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 5: Traineeships & Internships	• develop an overall process for allocation and placement of relevant internships • promote Erasmus internships to partners and students; investigate digital solution • develop strategies for this kind of mobility with regards to the CIVIS commitments, also taking into account LLL-students	• develop a strategy to increase the number of placements and open-up for new associated partnerships

Goal 6: Student-Led Projects

Another core contribution to reach CIVIS key objectives comes from community building measures. Among a wide variety of such measures, student-led projects play a central role for CIVIS, to foster and facilitate student community building and strengthen a sense of belonging to Europe, the European University Alliances in general and CIVIS Alliance in particular.

Together with its Global Student Council, CIVIS Alliance has developed a framework for student-led projects during the winter semester 2023/24 and will start with pilot projects in summer 2024. Each academic year in 2024/25 and 2025/26 will have one project call, aiming for a number of projects each year. The framework allows for a broad range of student activities, small and large scale, that focus on topics related to civic engagement, student academic events, as well as student cultural events to promote the European identity and values. While funding is available in the short-term perspective through the CIVIS 2 project budget, the question of sustainability is a major one for the long-term perspective of student-led projects.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term-perspective
Goal 6: Student-led projects	• finalize and implement call process and procedure • elaborate the funding scheme for student-led projects • create supporting infrastructure for student-led projects according to the needs of students • make sure to reach a broad audience of students and include African students from the first call	• elaborate on sustainable funding opportunities for student-led projects

Staff Mobility – Reaching the Goals for CIVIS Academics and Professionals

Besides enhancing student exchanges, facilitating a fluid transfer of knowledge and skills between the CIVIS staff, is particularly important on Alliance level. Therefore, the following section is focusing on the mobility of personnel from one Partner University to another. By designing various exchange opportunities within the staff community, CIVIS provides teaching mobility and trainings for academic and non-academic staff for developing and organising various innovative research projects and educational offers in different formats and for diverse groups based on the precisely described CIVIS Educational Framework agreed upon, while the key objectives, commitments and goals – according to Chapter 2 in this document – apply.

While describing and discussing the various exchange formats available for CIVIS staff, also current obstacles might show up that could have a negative impact on the implementation of the activities. Consequently, it is essential firstly to identify and secondly to find solutions to reduce barriers for academic and professional staff in order to provide user friendly, facilitated mobility experiences. Under the heading “Connecting Staff Communities through the Inter-University Campus”, training offers for academic and professional staff will be mapped by creating a **CIVIS Staff Training Calendar**. This tool will serve as a pool of ideas, initiatives and activities on the alliance level and as a planning source for the CIVIS Project. It will sharpen and define the formats and processes for staff training for academics and professionals in detail, taking into account various mobility aspects.

For staff mobility options **two types of personnel** will be addressed as target groups, **academic staff** and **non-academic staff** (professional staff). Both academic and non-academic staff can have two **different roles**, which as a consequence require different necessities when creating mobility formats, the role as **designer / evaluator** of educational offers (requiring certain types of mobility formats to support the design process) and the role of **recipient / participant** in educational offers (also requiring certain types of mobility formats to enable participation). The **duration** of the mobility period can be defined as either short-term (up to two months) or long-term (three months and more). Teaching, learning, training, and research mobility can be categorised into **modes of the activity**: Physical (onsite) mobility, virtual (online) mobility and blended mobility, which is a combination of the two.

CIVIS Alliance aims to develop ways and corresponding instruments for facilitating exchanges in order to enhance joint educational and/or research activities mainly – but not only – based on ideas, initiatives

and projects organised through the five CIVIS Hubs. The aim of the following chapter is to map mobility formats according to **Goals 7 to 13** of the CIVIS Inter University Campus Strategy (see Chapter 2 above). By giving a short description of each activity type, the efforts required in sense of steps, tools and time perspective, CIVIS academic and non-academic staff can easily gain an overview on the exchange opportunities proposed in CIVIS.

Exchange Formats for Academic Staff

Goal 7 – Easy Cooperation among Academics for Joint Activities and Projects (Educational and Research)

Currently, the CIVIS alliance's focus is on **preparatory project / activity design meetings for Hubs and Open Labs**, since initiating joint research collaborations and educational offers are the core objectives of CIVIS Alliance. In order for academics to develop research concepts and educational offers such meetings are essential to enhance fruitful and sustainable cooperations. CIVIS Alliance welcomes and offers incentives to proposals related, but not limited, to at least one of the five CIVIS Hub themes, respecting two of the Alliance' cornerstones: Developing **challenge-based research and education**, while **fostering civic engagement** to address important societal challenges and to raise the potential involvement of external (local, regional, global) stakeholders within the CIVIS Open Labs.

Incentives and Funding Schemes

Incentives as a financial instrument are allocated upon request and successful application through CIVIS Hubs and CIVIS Incentives Commission for the development of different formats of educational activity e.g. covering the travel costs, and the implementation of the respective project.

Seed Funding – Fostering Collaborative Activities with African Partners

CIVIS seed funding calls are launched within CIVIS Alliance for specific transversal topics e.g. for research activities and African-European collaboration. The goal is to enable exploratory, collaborative thematic activities and research project design meetings. Researchers of CIVIS universities are invited to submit proposals for new collaborative projects and/or the preparation of larger grant applications, with potential for sustainable, longer-term collaboration of project participants. Activities can be organized on CIVIS campuses in Europe and/or Africa. Meeting formats focus on small-scale workshops, R&D bootcamps, summer/winter schools, citizen science projects, seminars that broadly relate but not only to one of CIVIS' core, interdisciplinary Hubs, each requiring different forms of mobility. For the preliminary development and conceptualisation of a CIVIS Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), such **Preparatory project / activity design meetings** will also apply.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 7: Cooperation among academics for joint activities and projects (educational and research)	Provide formats for “easy” onsite and/or online meetings to enhance cooperation: - among academics for designing joint activities and projects according to topics identified by the CIVIS Hub - with local stakeholders in CIVIS Open Labs	- establish wide-ranging cooperation formats among large groups of people (Open Labs) - establish “Seed Funding” meetings to enhance sustainable collaborative research / educational activities easy accessed by all CIVIS universities (especially including African Partners)

Goal 8 – Enhance Short-term Teaching Mobilities

Erasmus+ Short-Term Teaching Mobility

In order to address and enhance Short-Term Teaching Mobility, CIVIS Alliance aims to provide formats based on already existing funding schemes. The tool of choice in this case is the already well established and implemented Short-Term Teaching Mobility within Erasmus+ in general, and especially as part of Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs), a mobility format as already described above. Upon successful development, submission and approval of a BIP, the involved teaching academics of the small consortium (minimum three CIVIS Universities) will undertake a short-term physical mobility abroad combined with a compulsory virtual component. In the long-term perspective and in the sense of stackability of the modular educational offer the integration of (Erasmus+) short-term educational offers into existing and new – jointly developed – curricula has to be promoted and highly fostered.

The funding scheme for short-term teaching mobility primarily is Staff Mobility for Teaching (=STA) within Erasmus+ (KA131/171). Experience shows that the currently used Erasmus+ funds are not very easily accessible to African partner universities. Elaborating alternative funding schemes to facilitate the integration of global partners has to be a main long-term objective on Alliance level.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 8: Short-term teaching mobility	• establish a “CIVIS BIP course catalogue” listing repeating BIP offers • smooth BIP processes on local and Alliance Level • enable inclusion of teaching staff from African partners • include short-term teaching (general and as BIPs) into CIVIS joint degree programmes • Include Erasmus+ short-term teaching mobility (as used within BIPs) in other learning experiences, e.g. Open Lab, LLL, (public) lectures	• promote integration of new educational/teaching formats into existing local curricula to ensure short-teaching exchange on a regular basis within the Alliance and to enable internationalisation@home of curricula • create CIVIS joint educational offers by integrating short-term teaching mobility: e.g. joint degrees, micro-programmes. • elaborate alternative funding schemes for short-term teaching mobility, especially to better integrate global partners

Goal 9 – Enable Easy Visiting Lectureships and Research Stays, Long-term

At present, the administrative and legal framework of most CIVIS Partner Universities does not include provisions for convenient long-term visiting lectureships and extended research stays abroad apart of a research sabbatical. Nevertheless, an exchange of academic staff on a regular basis would be a very valuable and enriching improvement for the development of a sustainable joint educational and research cooperation in the Alliance. CIVIS lecturers and researchers could fulfil their teaching/research obligations abroad at a CIVIS Partner University while still remaining in a contractual commitment to their home institution. Thus, the long-term aim is to work on solutions to allow academic staff to stay for extended periods at CIVIS partner universities without administrative burdens, for example by enabling reciprocal exchange of teaching/researching staff. As this goal can be solved neither on the national and/or CIVIS Alliance level alone, this topic must also be raised on the European level.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 9: Long-term visiting lectureships and research stays	As not foreseen by most university administrations and national legal frameworks for academics to fulfil / undertake “regular” teaching / research obligations abroad: • elaborate status quo for each CIVIS university • create awareness on local, national and European level • create common guidelines • design solutions for extended stays at CIVIS universities, e.g. reciprocal exchange of teaching/research staff	Long-term stays at CIVIS universities should be part of standard teaching / research responsibilities.

Goal 10 – Generate Europeanised Early Career Researchers, Including PhD Candidates

Taking into consideration that PhD candidates, as scholars / students and possibly at the same time university staff members, face different conditions when it comes to access student or staff mobility and the relocation of funds – which highly depend on national legal frameworks and local regulations of their home institutions – CIVIS has to provide specific, tailored, jointly designed educational and research offers for early career researchers. While considering these CIVIS formats for PhD candidates, mobility opportunities will be made accessible. CIVIS Alliance will maximize the use of Erasmus+ programme funded mobilities on PhD level.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 10: Europeanised early career researchers	• promote the use of Erasmus+ programme offers for PhD mobilities to offer early career researchers from CIVIS universities trainings on transferable skills. • offer seed funding for EU applications.	• onsite/online mobility becomes a standard experience of early-career researchers within CIVIS Alliance as part of joint CIVIS PhD degrees or as SLA or MSLA standardized format according CIVIS educational framework

Goal 11 – Provide Training for Academic Staff

CIVIS Alliance is developing and offering various educational formats targeting different topics reaching out to students of all study cycles. To be able to participate in and create these offers, academic staff has needs to be trained itself in the design and implementation of new educational formats, which may include mobility. Processes are still to be defined, but similar mobility formats as for students may apply, such as BIPs and of course virtual mobility, which is widely practised already in informal ways.

CIVIS Alliance intends to offer staff trainings of various kinds, for example staff weeks for academics or (online) innovative pedagogies workshops and webinars. While Erasmus+ can cover some mobilities, we

will investigate possible other financial instruments and formats to support such trainings, as for example to include BIPs as a training format as well for academics.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 11: Training for Academic Staff	• open local trainings/workshops online to CIVIS academic community (where possible) • design CIVIS BIPs for academics • establish CIVIS workshops on innovative pedagogies and • Staff Weeks for academics on a wider scale (onsite and online)	• create a regular calendar on various formats addressing different topics • make academic staff trainings a core element of academic staff professional / educational development.

Exchange Formats for Non-Academic (Professional) Staff

Goal 12 – Enable staff to work in European and international contexts

As the participation in CIVIS Alliance boosts internationalisation and intensifies collaboration, also the administrative departments' supportive role in our universities is increasingly international: International relations, student admission, quality management, human resources, personnel development, finances, IT and many other units have to work and cooperate internationally, taking into account different local/national legal conditions and using various languages. Mobilising non-academic, professional staff is a very important task that CIVIS Alliance has agreed on to foster on a short- and long-term perspective. CIVIS Alliance plans to train professional staff to support and assist academics to develop and organize various CIVIS educational offers, enhancing the expertise and global engagement of scientific and non-scientific personnel across universities, strengthening their proficiency and upskilling professional and personal competencies. To successfully reach this goal, a multifaceted approach to fortify skill sets and promote international collaboration is required, alongside capacity building to empower staff with necessary tools and skills. CIVIS Alliance will develop and provide formats for shared staff trainings which foster an institutional culture of internationalization, a sense of belonging as well as an inclusive, multilingual and multi-cultural work environment.

One core tool is the **CIVIS Internationalisation Academy**, taking place once a year and addressing the overarching goal of bringing internationalisation of our universities to a new level. With an “Unconference” in November 2023 as kick-off, the participatory set up process of the Internationalisation Academy was started and bolstered by a series of expert interviews to broaden the scope of the needs analysis. A first SUCTI training took place in January 2024. The **Systemic University Change Towards Internationalisation (SUCTI)** is tailored to the need of different CIVIS Alliance bodies, 20 participants joint this first “train the trainers” event on Alliance level. By elaborating new skills, it is the goal to elevate the working standards on a European and international context, enabling certified participants to conduct trainings at their own universities in their local language, contributing to increased internationalisation @ home among professional staff and various administrative bodies.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 12: Enable staff to work in European and international contexts	- establish the Internationalisation Academy within CIVIS - open local trainings for professional staff to CIVIS non-academic community - design CIVIS BIPs for non-academic staff - set-up CIVIS Staff Weeks focusing on tailored topics	CIVIS Staff Trainings to be an institutionalised and comprehensive offer on local and alliance level

CIVIS Staff Weeks, taking place up to five times a year, which concentrate on specific topics according to the requirements of particular activities within CIVIS Alliance, are the second main tool for non-academic staff training. As part of a proposed **CIVIS Learning / Training Lab**, staff development offices may open-up learning and training courses (incl. language courses) to professional staff of the other CIVIS universities. Offering online access or combined formats will enhance low-scale networking and cooperation opportunities with different colleagues within the alliance.

Goal 13 – Exchange of best practices and institutional learning

Similarly, and also useful for specific CIVIS-related topics, **CIVIS Communities of Practice (CoP)** and other peer-to-peer exchange activities in different areas are foreseen. These activities should be implemented with online meetings first, and then continue with physical staff exchanges. **Tailored site visits** can be made among a limited number of universities, several people from different departments of one HEI and visit their peers at another HEI for learning on specific issues (e.g. fostering knowledge exchange with African partners). Overall, CIVIS Alliance must empower administrative departments throughout the CIVIS universities for internationalisation and capacity building of academic and non-academic / professional staff and develop diverse shared staff training formats that – on long-term-perspective – promote institutional internationalisation and foster an inclusive, multilingual, and multi-cultural work environment, if it wants to attain its goals of creating a true university alliance.

	Action Plan until 2026	Long-term Perspective
Goal 13: Exchange of best practices and institutional learning	- design various formats of learning and training out of which staff can choose: short / long-term, onsite / online / blended staff training activities (incl. job shadowing, reciprocal exchange) - site visits for CIVIS university groups to share best practice with peers	CIVIS Staff Training peer-to-peer activities to be a standard mode of personnel development.

CIVIS Alliance's multilateral African partnerships build on long-standing, numerous and intensive bilateral partnerships. We recognise specific **challenges** in implementing African-European mobility, if compared to intra-European or intra-African mobility. The most significant one is **funding constraints**: A permanent, relatively reliable, and seamless funding source like Erasmus+ KA131, underpinning much of CIVIS' intra-European mobility, does not exist for mobility between Europe and Africa. CIVIS Alliance's own Erasmus budget is restricted to mobility from Europe to Africa and quantitatively constrained. Secondly, there are **institutional obstacles**: Despite persistent differences, academic systems and related regulations tend to converge in Europe (e.g. through the Bologna Process, EU programmes), reducing both formal and informal institutional hurdles to mobility. Mobility between Africa and Europe needs to deal with relatively less integrated academic systems and regulations. Linked with both these challenges, there is also the question of high **mobility costs**: Travel distances and necessary travel efforts (often including lengthy visa application processes) are much higher in African-European mobility, thus adding to the financial, ecological, personal, and managerial cost of physical mobility. Not to be underestimated are the **different needs and priorities** of African and European stakeholders: Promoting mobility between African and European CIVIS universities needs to take existing, partly structural differences between partner institutions into account, such as the relative imbalance in the student demand for exchange with a partner university on the other continent, different capacities in managing international mobility, or different needs of staff participating in staff trainings. The situation gains complexity by the differential circumstances within the group of strategic partners as well as among the European CIVIS universities.

In turn, however, our strategic partnership also implies huge **potentials** for developing mobility formats, rooting in advantages of our alliance-based approach as well as specificities of CIVIS and its partner institutions. Our collaboration is **long-term oriented and based on the principles of equity, trust, co-creation, and co-decision**. While thus favouring the development of lasting, effective mobility formats, it gives room for creativity, mutual learning, and experimentation in at the same time – important features of an approach to addressing challenges to mobility as those mentioned. Developing mobility through a network-based approach implies the potential for **academic, managerial, and financial synergies** (e.g., the visit of different partners in one round-trip). The CIVIS Mobility Unit embodies and implements this approach at the working level. Our partnership in the CIVIS Inter-University Campus can build on **existing cooperations, contacts, and capabilities**. All strategic partners have long-standing experience with Erasmus mobility as well as other EU programmes and entertain numerous international collaborations with a mobility dimension. They all are bilateral partners of several CIVIS member universities at the same time, some of them engaged in bilateral mobility with CIVIS member institutions already before the CIVIS partnership. Also, CIVIS' strategic partner universities belong to the most prestigious and excellent in their home countries. Given their relatively even regional distribution, they constitute an **attractive set of partners** for academic mobility projects in Africa both from an institutional as well as individual student and faculty perspective. The same applies reversely to CIVIS Alliance's European universities. Due to their collaboration across all academic missions involving all university groups, the CIVIS alliance pursues a **comprehensive approach to developing inter-institutional mobility**. It seeks to create as well as use links between the realms of student and staff mobility or between training and research purposes – often institutionally separated in older partnerships – for creating synergies and mutual stimulation. For instance, relatively low-key educational offers as Blended Intensive Programmes combine staff and student mobility, while providing a possible testbed for academic consortia and topics on which research collaboration can be built. As a European University alliance, CIVIS is at the forefront of **mobility related EU policy discussions** and a priority target of related EU programmes. Our African-European mobility framework can benefit from this positioning, while

experiences and insights developed therein can reversely inform EU policy debates and programme development, especially through CIVIS Alliance’s Advocacy Strategy.

Unlocking these potentials and addressing the challenges to mobility suggests applying a set of **general principles** for the implementation the African-European (global) dimension of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. Firstly, the **pursuit of balanced mobility**, stimulating exchange between African and European CIVIS universities in both directions. Secondly, the **avoidance of double structures** in mobility formats and management; African-European mobility in CIVIS should dovetail as much as possible with intra-European mobility. Thirdly, de-central, direct management and communication among those institutions and units implementing mobilities in the framework of CIVIS Alliance. Lastly, **flexibility in the design** of mobility formats for taking varying needs, interests, and capacities into account – not every university must participate in all activities and formats.

CIVIS Mobility Actions for the African Partners

Adhering to the second general principle just described (no double structures), most of the CIVIS mobilities the strategic partners will be engaged in are the “standard” CIVIS mobilities for students, academics and non-academic staff already described in Chapter 4 above – there, the specific needs of the African CIVIS universities have been considered and noted where applicable. However, there are some mobility aspects that are particular to European-African mobility and will be described here.

CIVIS African Mobility	Description	short-term goal (2026)	long-term goal (2026+)
Mobility Call	Development of the permanent ‘Coordinated Call for Mobility’, launched in 2024 into a more effective instrument for promoting partnerships and CIVIS objectives	- increase visibility - focus call towards PhD candidates / early career researchers	- keep as long-term default option - balance with mobility generated by joint educational offers
Sharing Best Practice	European and African CIVIS universities actively support each other, share information and resources facilitating their bilateral exchange	- staff training week for International Offices on European-African mobility - EG Heads of Mobility meet with African counterparts	- provide visa application support - establish Communities of Practice (CoP) - advocate for shared European academic visa strategy
Establish Direct Admin Links	There are huge efficiencies in direct communication between institutions on mobility administration	- regular meetings of CIVIS Mobility Unit with African counterparts - include associate members in CIVIS Mobility Unit	fully integrate African partners in CIVIS mobility processes, including EWP and similar
Coordinate Use of Erasmus+ KA171	Continue and streamline the coordinated application for and use of E+KA171 funding, given that joint programmes and diversifying demands on KA171 will further increase	- establish a KA171 working group in the CIVIS Mobility Unit - continue coordinated KA171 application (as in 2022 and 2023) and	fully integrate all CIVIS universities (EU, European and African) in a reliable mobility funding line

	its significance for our partnerships	include all CIVIS universities	
Policy Engagement	• CIVIS has successfully launched a campaign for a fast-track visa application process for African-European academic exchange • CIVIS has successfully contributed to a campaign for a more flexible and eventually pooled use of KA171	• prepare a roadmap for a visa campaign (CIVIS Advocacy) • follow up the input made during the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation	• develop and implement a campaign on a fast-track visa application / European academic visa policy • develop a policy on sustainable long-term coordinated use of E+ KA171

Outlook: CIVIS Mobility Objectives and Alliance Commitments

Having developed clear objectives for the increase of student and staff mobility and having proposed a prioritised list of measures with a rough timeframe, it is very crucial also to offer a vision on how this can become real while complying with the four key commitments that are presented in Chapter 2. The CIVIS University Alliance has consciously opted for ambitious objectives for these challenging subjects. However, only first steps have been made and further strategies must be developed to achieve these objectives in the long term.

This chapter will present measures in a short- and long-term perspective. It also needs to weigh the sometimes contradicting impacts of mobility formats on the four key commitments. For example, BIPs can play a major role in reaching students who would never go abroad for an entire semester. At the same time, however, they create massive challenges for sustainable mobility, as short-term mobility is even more prone to be done by airplane than longer-term mobility. Also, discussing inclusiveness on a broader level becomes challenging: should the cooperation with African partners exclude the BIPs due to the carbon footprint and go only for long-term or virtual mobility formats?

Short-term measures

One of the key short-term measures is about **creating awareness**. Despite the plethora of information on **sustainable mobility** available today, the CIVIS experience shows that still most people will fly even when just moving from the middle of Europe to its edge. The CIVIS University Alliance will put a major emphasis to contribute to the mind-shift that needs to happen in this regard, not only for students, but also for academics as highly mobile people. The same is the case regarding **inclusiveness, equity and diversity**. Each member university is engaged with this theme, but much remains to be done. Like the aspect of sustainable mobility, awareness needs to be created and encouraged. Do we really reach our target group when offering BIPs? How can we assure that academics integrate virtual mobility formats mainly towards those students, who would not be able or willing to do a physical mobility?

Another short-term measure is about paving the way for global and local networks and cooperation between European and African universities, including staff, students and societal actors. Integrating African partners **step by step** into existing mobility formats through **pilot phases and** testing their fitness for European-African cooperation is crucial. The same goes for connecting local actors and networks through CIVIS Alliance, which in the short-term perspective first must be stimulated.

Long-term measures

Parallel to injecting motion into the short-term measures, strategies for solutions in a more fundamental sense have to be elaborated for long-term measures. Identified barriers and shortfalls for the long-time realisation of the key objectives need to be addressed and tackled, such as funding schemes, structural and institutional hurdles or the mere lack of available capacity. The long-term vision of CIVIS Alliance is to contribute with solutions towards such hurdles and shortfalls.

	Short-term Measures (2025/26)	Long-term Measures (2026+)
Inclusiveness, Equity, and Diversity	Create awareness among academics and programme coordinators: • address this topic in call documents and add it as a compulsory field for reflection in application documents • offer advice how the objective can be reached • review results during evaluation procedure Develop promotion & communication strategies to reach target groups: • create dedicated space on the website presenting the low threshold offers + testimonials • create new formats of communication suitable to the target group Think it from the start: • while planning and creating new educational offers, academics should answer how to address that issue • a consulting structure shall be developed	Create incentives and set regulations: • refine a CIVIS strategy regarding inclusiveness, equity and diversity including incentives and/or regulations for the long run (see Chapter 5) • raise the financial offer for certain target groups, if unsatisfactory by the Erasmus + programme • enforce eligibility checks, that exclude “non-target” groups for certain mobility formats.
Sustainability and the green dimension	Create awareness among academics and programme coordinators through Call documents: • inform programme coordinators about the CIVIS commitment to sustainability and the green dimension, and advise how to address it • programme coordinators must reflect in their proposals, how they address this topic • make addressing and achieving sustainability and green	Create incentives and set regulations refine and possibly streamline the travel policies for students in CIVIS universities and develop measures including incentives and/or regulations, taking into account: • the different locations and distances between CIVIS universities • the basic approach of the Erasmus + travel policy

	mobility part of the assessment of project proposals and part of evaluation procedures Develop promotion & communication strategies to reach target groups: • Create awareness among students through the CIVIS Website and offer travel routes without planes, compare CO2 footprints of different means of transport and offer storytelling through CIVIS students Think it from the start: • While planning and creating new common educational offers in CIVIS Alliance, academics should address the issue • develop a consulting structure	• review on that basis, if an additional or special approach from CIVIS Alliance is feasible. Become a strong voice together with other University Alliances towards the European Union and advocate for an Erasmus Interrail Ticket (so-called TEE – Trans Erasmus Express). Start the development of a comprehensive strategy and incentive model for green travel of academic staff in CIVIS Universities.
Global exchanges and cooperation	Test and pilot the opening of as many mobility formats as possible towards African partners and evaluate their feasibility and practicability under the current framework: • BIP participation and semester exchanges already started • joint programmes, internships, student-led projects and virtual mobility still to be started • staff mobility formats apart from network activities still to be started	Strive for a role model of European – African academic cooperation: • Identify the main barriers and hurdles for cooperation and advocate for feasible solutions on a European level.
Collaborations with Local and Regional Partners	Identify needs and demands of local Open Labs for mobility. Interconnect them between each other and connect mobile staff and students to local Open Labs	Develop comprehensive virtual and possibly physical mobility scheme

4

The CIVIS Digital Campus Strategy

A Strategic Plan for Digital Inter-University Connectivity

In this chapter, the strategic plan for the digital infrastructure is presented in detail, based on three main pillars of strategic decision making, (1) interfaces and possibilities of data exchange between existing IT Systems, (2) the development of new systems within CIVIS and (3) the relation between tools implemented within the Alliance and tools implemented at European Level. It builds on and updates the Digital Campus Strategy from the first implementation phase of CIVIS Alliance.

Guiding Principles for the CIVIS Digital Campus

The development of a European University Alliance is strongly based on the idea of “building bridges” including technical bridges as well as social ones between its member universities’ multiple identities through facilitated access to our CIVIS Inter-University Campus. Digital tools and solutions play a fundamental role in the integration of the technical, administrative and educational processes of CIVIS to create a common ground for a European University. The overarching aim of the Digital Campus is the facilitation of cooperation between students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff, virtually overcoming the geographical distance to enable the CIVIS community to create innovative joint activities or educational offers. In this sense, technical infrastructure serves as a powerful tool to bridge the gaps and bring together the CIVIS universities. This also unfolds the potential in the sense of active community building and sense of belonging. For this purpose, the tools of the CIVIS Digital Campus need to be selected in a way that ensures complementarity and interoperability to provide a comprehensive digital experience.

Parallel to the many activities of CIVIS Alliance a massive effort was invested to provide digital support generating a range of tools and platforms, that shall be harmonized by our digital campus strategy, carefully evaluating all existing tools and proposing future directions either in the sense of transition to a different tool format or by extending the current pilot level of implementation to a broader user group, notably the entire CIVIS Alliance, including its local and global partners and stakeholders.

Guiding Principle 1: As de-centralised as possible, as centralised as necessary.

The primary and long-term solution for joint/shared functionalities in CIVIS Alliance is to primarily rely on each CIVIS university’s local tools which – at the same time – must interface to the local tools of all other CIVIS universities to allow partners to directly communicate with each other. Still, centralised solutions remain an essential part as successful interim solutions to provide the necessary operative functionalities until the de-centralised infrastructures are fully interoperable and connected in a long-term perspective.

Consequently, the aim is to avoid a parallel “central CIVIS” infrastructure as potential duplication to existing infrastructures, but also to make sure that the CIVIS alliance’s needs are sufficiently addressed and covered on an operative basis by the respective solutions. That means we aspire to build a Digital Campus whose organisational sustainability does not rely on external funding. Centralised CIVIS tools will need to have funding for software, hardware and support staff, whereas decentralised tools or solutions would require dedicated investments in building interfaces. The baseline systems needed are financed and maintained by CIVIS partners, as indirect contribution to CIVIS Alliance. Nevertheless, for some areas of collaborative work and procedures, dedicated centralised CIVIS tools may remain necessary.

Guiding Principle 2: Use and promote European standards and solutions; use Open Source.

Using common European standards and European intermediary tools and solutions facilitates building decentralized and interoperable solutions. For most of the CIVIS universities (9 of 11), EU standards are a mandatory framework for operating and for this reason CIVIS Alliance strives to implement European solutions whenever possible and feasible for our purposes. As the European tools are already developed and available for alliances and the universities in them, long-term funding strategies can focus on other aspects than mainly technical infrastructure.

In procuring the tools and solutions it needs, CIVIS Alliance is committed to using and promoting Open Source solutions to achieve its goals. It aims to cover its centrally-sourced needs using Open Source and

promotes the use of Open Source among its member universities. Using Open Source solutions will enhance flexibility, security, innovation, interoperability, transparency and longevity of the implemented solutions, as well as vendor independence and access to talent, both from within and from without the CIVIS universities.

Guiding Principle 3: CIVIS Digital Campus opens CIVIS Alliance activities to all CIVIS Alliance partners.

CIVIS Alliance Partners have different starting conditions reflecting local and national legacies and priorities, as well as different current technical set-ups and legal dimensions to which the technical solutions adhere to. This may affect and crucially determine the speed of implementation of the CIVIS Digital Campus. CIVIS Alliance implements the concept of the digital infrastructure and architecture and integrates the CIVIS universities in adequate modes. This entails connecting those that are technically ready to join the transition and use the linkages, while ensuring others get supported in order to join in at a pace that is sustainable for them and gain full access to explore the complete range of opportunities and services offered by the CIVIS Digital Campus, based on EU standards.

For this interim period of step-by-step integration, transitional / interim (non-digital or central platform) solutions will be either created or maintained, to make sure that CIVIS Alliance activities are inclusive for all CIVIS Alliance partners.

	As de-centralised as possible, as centralised as necessary.	The primary and <i>long-term</i> solution for joined/shared functionalities is to rely on local tools which are interconnected and interoperable to allow partners to directly interface with each other, building on industry standards/tools, and avoid the parallel structure of 'central CIVIS' and 'decentral partner'. For some functionalities, a centralised CIVIS tool will remain necessary (long-term, subject to sustainable funding).
	Use and promote European standards and solutions where they exist; use Open Source.	Using common, European standards and solutions facilitates building de-centralized and interoperable solutions, both in CIVIS and beyond. Some EU standards are mandatory for most partners. We will and can rely on projects funded by the EU to provide long-term viable and sustainable standards and solutions. Using Open Source solutions and promoting their use among partners ensures innovation, interoperability and longevity.
	We don't expect that all (eleven plus six) partners will implement all agreed solutions locally at the same time and speed.	We will work on connecting those that are ready and make sure that others can join later, supporting them in implementing the EU standards and making sure that there are interim solutions (non-digital or central platform) available for those who need them. The legal dimensions of the technical solutions will also affect the speed of implementation and must be reflected on.

Figure 3: The Guiding Principles for Building the CIVIS Digital Campus

The CIVIS Inter-University Campus Strategy (see above, Chapter 2) defines a number of goals guiding the implementation and management of a digital campus infrastructure. Improved general mobility processes can be enabled through digitalisation and streamlining of student mobility administration. Among partner universities involved in educational (or research) mobility, a digital campus should make possible an effective sharing and exchange of information for a wide variety of education and mobility formats, especially the easy and efficient exchange of personal data and educational data. In the CIVIS context, another desirable goal is an efficient way to create a space in the Digital Campus for inter-sectoral Open Lab and Hubs collaborations. To facilitate these, there needs to be a clear legal basis of the IT dimension and a transparent investigation into possible risks and challenges.

The following sections will base their evaluation of the current situation, needs analysis, and discussion of future pathways to be taken on the common understanding of the CIVIS Inter-University-Campus laid out in the respective strategy. The Inter-University-Campus strategy contains the following key elements:

- Infrastructure shall include instruments and formats that create a sustainable, strong, and intensive network out of the CIVIS universities' infrastructures. Members of our universities can move, learn and collaborate as freely as possible within this network.
- Building infrastructures and processes shall provide gains in efficiency. The digital infrastructure – the CIVIS Digital Campus – is a key prerequisite at the core of the digitalisation efforts in the realm of IT architecture design at each university and in CIVIS Alliance.
- The Inter-University Campus will not entail the unification of the involved universities and their individual campuses. The vision clearly affirms, enhances and broadens the identity of each partner university with CIVIS Alliance, celebrating our diversity as a key asset.
- The Inter-University Campus is conceived as a space serving the provision of opportunities for our universities to interact and cooperate on a new, more intensive and immediate level.
- The concrete educational formats – the content of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus – will be produced by academics in collaboration with other actors in CIVIS, who support in building the framework and strategies. This also applies to the civic engagement dimensions.

The primary time frame for realising this strategy lasts until autumn 2026. This is the period of the second funding phase of the CIVIS2 funded project. However, many of the processes and structures that we aim to construct will not just exist beyond that period, but will also need continuous development, scaling up, enlargement, improvement, and adaptation after autumn 2026. This is particularly true for some of the shared IT infrastructure in the CIVIS Digital Campus that will be a fundamental dimension of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus.

Guiding Principles for Managing the CIVIS Digital Campus

Management Structure for the CIVIS Digital Campus

The complexity of tasks and tools facilitating the CIVIS Digital Campus raises the need to coordinate the cooperation of a great number of institutional bodies and individuals. This entails the necessity of a clear structure of management and decision making. The following chart provides an overview of partners and respective roles within the management structure of the CIVIS Digital Campus:

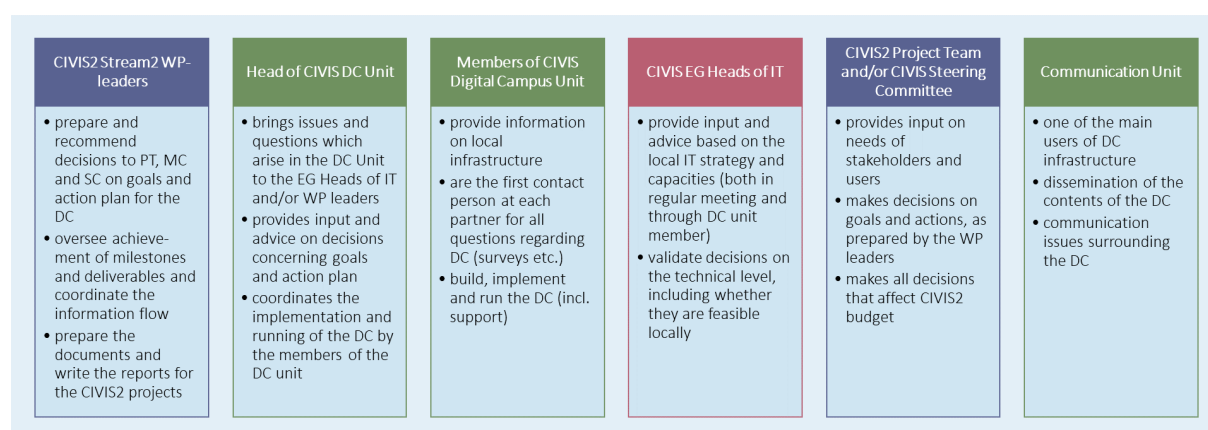


Figure 4: The Guiding Principles for Managing the CIVIS Digital Campus

Decision Hierarchy for the CIVIS Digital Campus

The following scheme sketches the cooperation of CIVIS bodies and stakeholders in the decision-making process for the CIVIS Digital Campus. This entails decisions on coordinating and developing the digital infrastructure and building the alliance structures within the duration of CIVIS2 project funding phase,

until 2026. The project's Work Packages (WPs) support to develop the alliance strategy. WPs and WP roles may cease to exist once CIVIS2 ends and the alliance becomes self-sustained or under the umbrella of a legal entity, or may be replaced by other positions in a follow-on project.

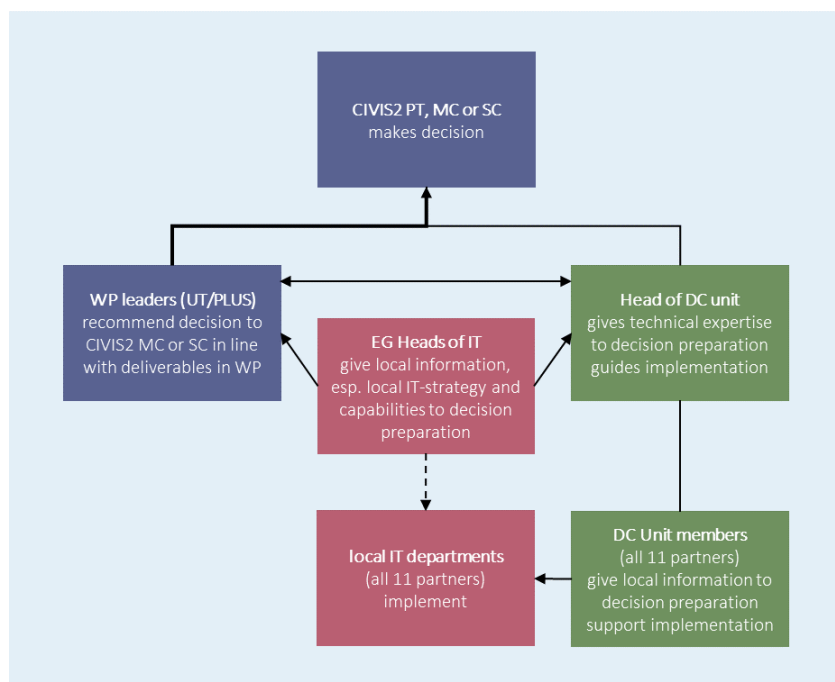


Figure 5: The Decision Hierarchy of the CIVIS Digital Campus

Needs Analysis

As a core component of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus Strategy, the CIVIS Digital Campus needs to evolve constantly to continue to support the needs of CIVIS Alliance. Evolution of this kind – from pilot project to established European University – is the goal of both the CIVIS2 project and of all its work packages. To achieve the needs of the project, the alliance, and most importantly **the people who work, teach, learn and do research** on the inter-university campus, the CIVIS Digital Campus Strategy will be updated regularly. In this, both the Digital Campus Unit and the Expert Group Heads of IT are crucial long-term actors for implementing CIVIS-wide solutions and aligning them to national and local strategies and policies at each university. Enabling the shared inter-university campus is only possible in close exchange of information with the CIVIS Community about CIVIS Alliance's needs and expectations from the CIVIS Digital Campus.

A needs analysis regarding “The CIVIS Digital Campus – Needs and Expectations” within the CIVIS Community (including students, academic staff and non-academic staff) revealed the level of familiarity of CIVIS tools in the wider CIVIS community. The public tools like the CIVIS Website are known to all users, whereas less common tools have a decreased visibility (not all are to be accessed by the general public, but tailored for specific purposes and functions).

Expectations and defined needs on the service portfolio of the CIVIS Digital Campus center on a need for better information. This interest in information infrastructure entails the provision of a CIVIS Directory (CIVIS Who is Who, including function and contact information) as part of a CIVIS Portal (the website, with a login-based intranet area as a designated single entry point) and a CIVIS Knowledge Base for general and in-depth information on the CIVIS projects and activities. Especially for newcomers to CIVIS, the needs analysis has shown, getting to know the relevant inner workings of the CIVIS alliance can be a challenge. Needs also including a helpdesk support service for problems or questions of users,

facilitated by a resource management tool to assign requests to the competent units. In general, a clear demand is also for networking possibilities (in terms of forums dedicated to knowledge sharing / transfer and sharing of best practices for academic and professional staff), as well as the possibility to use familiar tools (already know from the respective home institutions) instead of new ones. This last need is addressed by our first guiding principle of relying on interoperating local tools.

Tools, Solutions, Processes and Functionalities of the CIVIS Digital Campus

In the following, the tools and solutions creating the CIVIS Digital Campus infrastructure are divided in **five categories** (see also overview below):

1. **Core IT Management,**
2. **Educational Offer Management,**
3. **Communication,**
4. **Alliance Coordination & Management and**
5. **Research Management.**

When addressing the topic of digital tools and technical solutions within CIVIS Alliance, it is required to differentiate between the following three user groups and their respective technical pre-conditions and potential restrictions regarding implementation options:

- European CIVIS Partners within EU (9)
- European CIVIS Partners outside EU (2)
- Non-European CIVIS Partners (6)

European CIVIS Partners that are members of the European Union (EU) operate under the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) framework in order to strengthen close collaboration between the institutions.

Central tools and solutions at European Commission level already piloted or up and running and enabling close international cooperation within the EU (e.g. for digital educational credentials and educational credential verification) will be considered an important basis for CIVIS Alliance operational purposes, as the application and use of EU tools for alliance needs comes with low technical and legal implementation hurdles for at least the European CIVIS Partners within the EU and the European CIVIS Partners outside the EU. Dedicated intermediate solutions in order to enable the digital integration of the third user group, non-European CIVIS Partners, will have to be developed together within CIVIS Alliance to accommodate the needs of all CIVIS Alliance user groups. Especially for the third user group, the legal framework for data exchange and related issues requires a broader reflection. In this case intermediate solutions will provide interfaces as far as legally possible, taking seriously the ideas of “local to global” collaboration within CIVIS. Moreover, the specific nature of a globally operating CIVIS Alliance overcoming geographical distances leads to a necessary reflection on national legislation frameworks determining the possible range of action for the development of a comprehensive alliance-wide Digital Campus infrastructure. The focus on the European level of a Dataspace for CIVIS Alliance is important. We use the Dataspace Supportcenter (DSCC) which was initiated by the European Commission to bring data ecosystems up and running.

The CIVIS Digital Campus is defined as a virtual environment relying on a technical architecture of different tools in order to support, first and foremost, digitally enhanced educational offer at all levels,

and facilitating mobility and promoting CIVIS opportunities (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*).

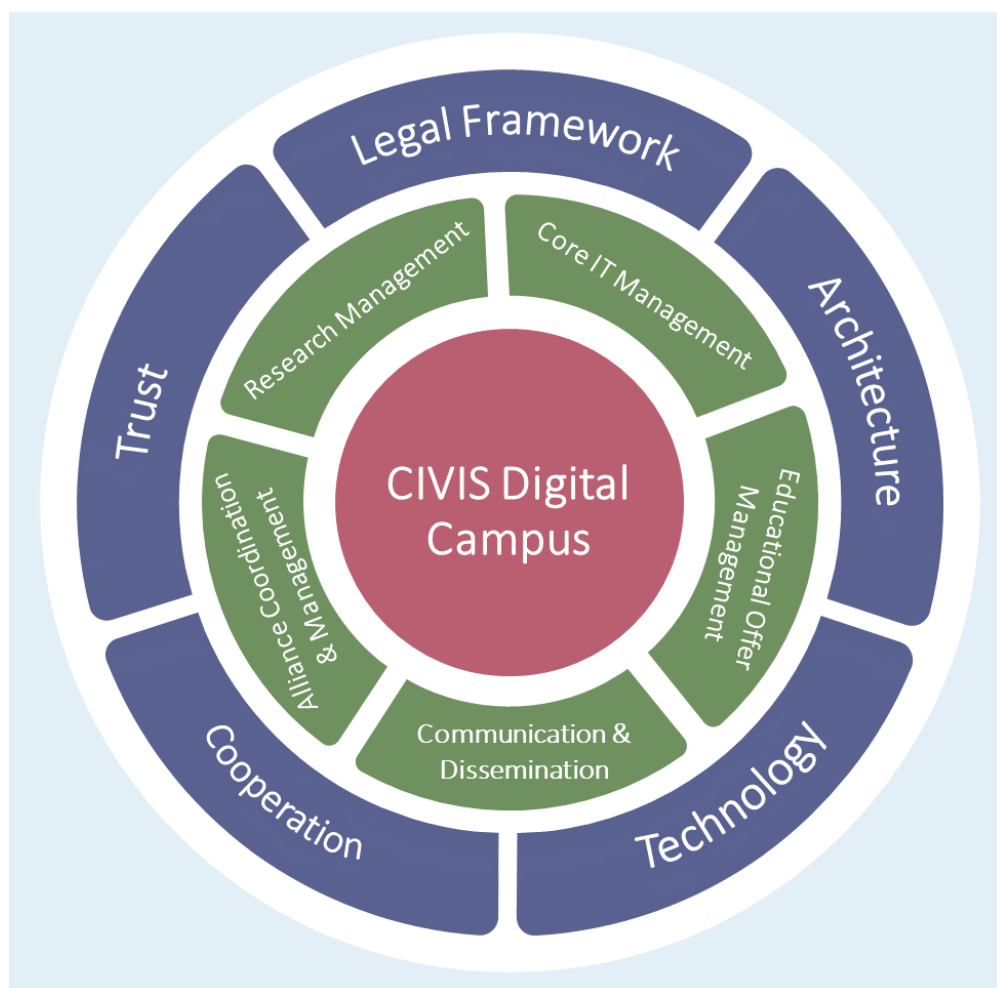


Figure 6: The CIVIS Digital Campus – Service Architecture and Interoperability of the CIVIS Digital Campus

CIVIS Alliance is already using tools and processes which were implemented in the first CIVIS project and are still used and important for the project. In some cases, we should align it with the new technologies and standards, working towards the guiding principles stated above.

Current Digital Campus Tools

Functionality	Description	Suggestions
CIVIS Authentication	works currently as a central tool and grants access to the digital campus	maintain for the foreseeable future as needed, replace progressively as more powerful identity management comes online (see below)

CIVIS Mobility Management	works currently as a central tool and supports mobility processes	currently, the implementation is doing its job, but should be aligned to connected local platforms using EWP
CIVIS Passport	works currently to provide digital educational credentials for CIVIS	- consider intermediate solutions for Open Labs, student-led projects etc. as needed - should be transferred to the European project EUROPASS and aligned to this European standard
CIVIS Box	is implemented as Nextcloud with Onlyoffice and works in the project as a sharing and exchange platform	Structure and information should be more managed, and some information should be easily accessible via a knowledge database, see below
CIVIS Project Management	is implemented with Asana and used for tracking the project and manage the risks; works as designed	maintain for project management needs as required
CIVIS Course Catalogue	Online database as part of the CIVIS Website, implemented using the blueprint from the DSCC to create a catalog services	Implement a PoC using the catalog services from DSCC
CIVIS Call for Projects	works currently, questionnaire-based and implemented in Survey Monkey	maintain for continued alliance use
CIVIS Moodle	implemented as a central solution to manage the courses and the content, for joint educational offers, works as designed (relaunch in 2024)	- maintain for shared educational offers that are best placed centrally - expand connections to local LMSs via local LTI capability
CIVIS Open Data	Open Data Soft RIS4CIVIS	present results in open data for courses we offer and results of the BIP will be published
RIS4CIVIS	Collaborate and communicate to embrace the future. Access to shared research Infrastructure and matchmaking	Create with the project Agora a proof of concept to enable a dynamic community for students, faculty, and researchers from diverse universities at the Unite! Agora. This virtual space fuels innovation and entrepreneurship, offering funding, mentorship, and state-of-the-art facilities.

Future Strategic Digital Campus Tools and Functionalities

Functionality	Description	short-term goal (2026)	long-term goal (2026+)
Identity Management	RegApp is an open-source identity management system for including all identity providers from partner universities registered in EduGAIN into a federated authentication system.	- investigate project with strategic partners for capacity building regarding SSO - consider guest accounts for Open Labs and similar uses, as required	Interoperability between all the CIVIS universities aligned with eIDAS 2.0 and including our African partners
Connected Campus Management Systems	Exchange of student educational data (credits and grades achieved, enrollment data) within CIVIS via connected Campus Management Systems, using a de-facto EU standard	- survey existing implementation - pilot: 2 CIVIS universities exchange data, e.g. UT and SU, in a pilot program - certified transcripts (short to medium term), requires the ability to certify PDFs (consider E-Seal)	Aim to implement EMREX as a student data exchange protocol in all CIVIS universities.
Digital Educational Credentials	Provide digital educational credentials courses and programmes within CIVIS and beyond, EU standard	- survey Certidigital and DC4EU - use one CIVIS university's seal to issue EUROPASS credentials on behalf of CIVIS (as interim) (other option: legal entity for the CIVIS activities) - pilot: 1 non-Spanish CIVIS university pilot Certidigital - pilot: consider implementing for new uses, e.g. Open Labs if available	Aim to implement EUROPASS for digital educational credentials in all CIVIS universities, and implement verifiable credentials based on eIDAS2.0
(Digital) European Student Card	Enable full access to on-campus services for students, within CIVIS and beyond, EU standard	- survey work done by EUGLOH - proof of concept: wallet-based cards for one service - survey campus card landscape in CIVIS	Implement digital European Student Card (ESC) in all CIVIS universities, aim to use digital cards and aligned with eIDAS 2.0

		Focus for all alliance members should be that they are able to send the ESC identifier to the ESC router	
Learning Management	Implement a technology aiming to connect the CIVIS Moodle with the LMS of the member universities, via Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) protocol	between CIVIS Moodle and local Learning Management Systems (short to medium term, existing links with ULB, SUR, NKUA, UT, UAM)	Exploring a long-term solution for LTI connections among LMS of CIVIS universities based on the trusted exchange points
EWP	A digital solution for higher education institutions to connect their Erasmus+ mobility management systems so they can manage their mobility students online.	- link with local Campus Management Systems (short to medium term, specific to each university) - roll out data input and agreements	Mobilities in and beyond CIVIS managed via EWP
CIVIS Information, Communication and Collaboration	Create a central solution where the target audience can access solutions based on their questions	- select and roll out a CIVIS Helpdesk tool - implement FAQs on the CIVIS Homepage to create a CIVIS Knowledge Base to find information in a structured way - create a CIVIS Intranet for better collaboration and communication	- create a chat bot - implement a group to design and manage the further development of digital infrastructure on the alliance level - should be aligned with the Unite Agora PoC

Tasks and Tools of Core IT Management – an Overview

Identity Management: CIVIS Identity Federation Service (CIVIS Authentication)

CIVIS Authentication via Regapp is used locally at the European CIVIS partners within and outside EU, as well as alliance-wide for authentication to specific CIVIS Digital Campus tools (e.g. the CIVIS Box). This enables all users of the CIVIS community access to shared information with their regular university credentials. This way Regapp already serves as an example of an existing decentralised tool that was successfully made available for CIVIS purposes in the alliance context, serving as standardized authentication, one alliance platform using interoperable local authentication solutions.

It enables interoperability and allows convenient access to CIVIS Alliance digital infrastructures with local or national credentials. In the next step, we will align with the European initiative eIDAS 2.0 (electronic identification, authentication, and trust services), because it plays a fundamental role in achieving the

goals by empowering our alliance with a secure and user-friendly digital identity and fostering a thriving EU digital single market, using once-only technical systems.

Tasks and Tools of Education Offer Management – an Overview

European Student Card Initiative (ESCI)

The European Student Card Initiative (ESCI), which includes Erasmus Without Paper (EWP), Erasmus+ App and the European Student Card, is an initiative to help students and higher education institutions by simplifying administrative processes and enhancing digitalisation. ESCI has to be implemented by all European Institutions for Higher Education in close collaboration and information exchange with the European Commission (EC) as the provider and launcher of this central initiative of high relevance at the European level.

In this context CIVIS contributes as an incubator for the planned implementation of the ESCI. This way CIVIS Alliance and the existing close network could be a leverage for the implementation of ESCI in the wider European higher education landscape. Once implemented at European CIVIS universities, ESCI will simplify the management of student mobility through streamlined electronic exchange and verification of student data. In the long-term goal, the European CIVIS Partners will support non-European Partner Institutions within CIVIS Alliance to build technical infrastructure allowing integration according to European standards.

European Student Card

The European Student Card establishes a common European identity for higher education students. Students can get their student status verified easily across Europe with their European Student Card.

During 2022-2025, the European Student Card should

- become more widely available in all Erasmus+ programme countries
- bring more possibilities for validation of student status by higher education institutions and student service providers
- become more widely used by higher education institutions and student service providers
- increase the offer of digital student cards by higher education institutions in all Erasmus+ programme countries

The implementation gains a lot of effort on some universities within our alliance, so we have to find ways to share and support us to reduce the implementation effort. Challenges are as well that the processes in all universities are different so we have to discuss and accept compromises.

Erasmus Without Paper

Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) is a digital solution for higher education institutions to connect their local or national mobility management systems (MMS) so they can easily manage exchange activities. MMSs such as MoveOne, Mobility Online, and similar, as well as the Erasmus+ Dashboard are connected via EWP, which allows HEIs to exchange student data in a secure and efficient way.

For the CIVIS universities in the EU operating in the ECHE framework, an implementation of a MMS and an interconnection to EWP (as data transmitter) is mandatory. This is implemented at these universities, but the (massive) challenge is now to move all the existing Erasmus+ agreements to EWP, which, due to the need to manually match the mobility contingents, is a huge undertaking involving several thousand individual agreements within CIVIS Alliance alone. This is not an IT, but an administrative and operational

issue. The existing Expert Groups within CIVIS Alliance, composed of representatives of the International Offices and the IT Departments, must enable this digitalization process. At the same time, they have to find solutions to include non-EU CIVIS partners. BIPS with OLAs should be the first integration of these partners.

CIVIS Mobility Platform

The CIVIS Mobility Platform (Fullfabric) was centrally implemented during the first phase of CIVIS in order to address the urgent need of effectively managing student mobilities within CIVIS Alliance. The implementation of the CIVIS Mobility Platform was important as a central solution for the student registration in CIVIS and remains valid as interim solution until connecting the local Mobility Management Systems to EWP and merging all necessary agreements there.

The long-term goal is linking the CIVIS Mobility Platform to each local MMS and building the bridge to different institutional Campus Management Systems in order to enable the required data exchange within CIVIS community.

Campus Management Systems

Campus Management System (CampMS) are standard tools for universities, designed to record, analyse and manage student and staff information, including information on study programme enrolment, courses taken as well as credits and grades obtained. Unfortunately, not only do CampMS differ widely between universities, but are also nearly always either hand-coded unique solutions or at least heavily customized versions of off-the-shelf software packages, a fact which has to be considered when creating an interoperable solution between the existing de-central CampMS in CIVIS Alliance.

For such an interoperable solution, the next step is the definition of a CIVIS Alliance standard for an electronic data exchange via EMREX, which is the de-facto European standard in this application. Long-term mobility formats will serve as an appropriate use case for a pilot, but ultimately the CIVIS joint degree programmes create the genuine need to implement interoperability among the CampMS.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) and the CIVIS Moodle

Learning Management Systems (LMS) have become standard tools for universities, which are designed to create, deliver and report on teaching, courses and programs to support and digitally enable the learning process in educational institutions. To immediately facilitate collaborative and co-creative learning and teaching, CIVIS Alliance chose Moodle as the central platform for the CIVIS community to access the various CIVIS courses in the first phase (see *CIVIS Digital Campus*, p. 18). CIVIS Alliance has decided to retain the CIVIS Moodle for a certain period to continue to facilitate collaborative online learning and has elaborated a CIVIS approach to designing content on it (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education* for details). Where necessary and possible, European CIVIS Partner Universities extend their support to provide solutions in order to include non-European CIVIS partners to the CIVIS Moodle.

However, each university also has its own LMS and some users have expressed preference for using the tools they already use locally. Thus, in future all the local LMS within CIVIS universities should be interoperable, which will also make it much easier to open existing local (online) courses for a wider CIVIS audience. Therefore, the alliance will define common exchange criteria via Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) and implement the LTI standard in all its local LMS. The concept of a CIVIS dataspace will support the exchange of data in a trusted and validated environment.

Digital Educational Credentials (and the CIVIS Passport)

According to the EU, digital (educational) credentials (What Are Digital Credentials.)are digital documents that describe learning achievements using a defined set of information: activities, assessments, skills, achievements, professional entitlements, and qualifications. The use of digital credentials supports the process of ECTS recognition by the home university (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*, p. 88) and takes university credentials to the 21st century. Within CIVIS Alliance, there is a clear demand for digital, portable, and smart certificates and digital educational credentials, and the concept of the implementation, therefore, is a major perspective. Digital educational credentials ensure the transparency and portability of all information for learning recognition and mobility (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*, p. 88).

To enable the issuing of innovative, i.e. digital educational credentials right from the start of its innovative educational offers, CIVIS Alliance launched CIVIS Passport, a blockchain-based certification and recognition tool (see *CIVIS Digital Campus*, p. 15). In the current consolidation phase, CIVIS Alliance continues to deploy CIVIS Passport and will continue to address digital educational credentialing, automatic recognition, and learning portability. Since the first implementation, technology is progressing rapidly and new standards emerge and start to consolidate. Different options can now be explored and tested (e.g. digital wallet for credential storage and verification) in order to further develop the concept. Given our guiding principles and the fact that no less than three CIVIS universities are actively involved in two projects of implementing EUROPASS, the emerging European standard, EUROPASS is an attractive proposition for the CIVIS Digital Campus.

EUROPASS – CIVIS Implementation

As an emerging main tool for CIVIS Alliance, EUROPASS for Digital Educational Credentials and Educational Credential Verification as an existing European blockchain-based tool will be tested and, if successful, implemented for this purpose. We will use the European learning model V3 to describe all course information we offer within CIVIS Alliance. The functionalities should range from digital educational credential generation to record storage and verification. For this to become viable, several short- and long-term options exist:

- one CIVIS university that already has a EUROPASS seal uses this seal to also certify CIVIS digital educational credentials (the “new” CIVIS Passport) for the entire alliance;
- the proposed legal entity of CIVIS Alliance, the CIVIS Association, performs the same function after obtaining a seal on behalf of the alliance;⁴
- in the long run, as CIVIS universities adopt digital educational credentials as their credentialing mode of choice, each can start to seal its own CIVIS credentials, under the CIVIS Passport brand and umbrella, for the CIVIS educational offers it certifies – from singular online courses to full-blown joint degree programmes.

CIVIS Digital Credentials are digital documents/records of successful completion describing the participant's learning achievement. They ensure transparency and portability of all information for learning recognition and mobility (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*, p. 140). CIVIS recognizes learning results through CIVIS Digital Credentials, the information provided by the EUROPASS platform, and a Transcript of Records linked with the digital credentials of the students and the information provided by the academics offering the courses, modules and programmes.

⁴ This path is currently being taken by the ECIU alliance, through its „ECIU University“ legal entity.

The next step will be a transition phase from the central CIVIS Passport tool to the European EUROPASS tool. It will also be relevant to elaborate on the use of synergies from Certidigital (Spain) and a possible expansion to CIVIS, as well as to follow the DC4EU Projekt (Greece) more closely. Moreover, European Digital Educational Credentials are used (in a pilot project in 18 European countries) to support recognition of learning achievements and understand the credentials both by institutions and employers (see *Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple & Joint Education*, p. 88). Establishing EUROPASS within CIVIS in the short term can be relatively straightforward, if all partners can agree for one partner or the legal entity to seal the credentials for all of them – of course clearly indicating the fact that a CIVIS offer is being sealed. Moving to their own seals, however, is only really an option for those universities who want to adopt digital credentials for their own educational offers as well, or at least for some of them. In this case, the move to EUROPASS entails de-centralised infrastructure to be first decided on and built, before a devolution from the centralised instance can meaningfully take place. Here, too, Certidigital and DC4EU can offer valuable insights and blueprints of how this can best be done.

Tasks and Tools of Communications – an Overview

CIVIS Information, Communication and Collaboration

The following chapter will address the architecture and linkage of different tools on the CIVIS Digital Campus and the user journey and user experience they enable. First and foremost, a clearly defined entry point for the main public and the CIVIS community to the CIVIS Digital Campus will be necessary to enable access to information and support the many activities and projects associated with CIVIS Alliance. The CIVIS Website is the central entry point into the alliance's mobility and exchange offers for external and internal audiences already. Based on the (internal) CIVIS Communication and Dissemination Strategy, the CIVIS website will be interconnected and interoperable with the CIVIS Digital Campus in the sense that it will become both its front door and its key information repository, as well as the single authentication and access point to all other tools and services.

The main public can access all relevant information via the website, while authenticated users can access the applications and resources relevant to their role and profile. As mentioned above, the required user authentication is operational across the Alliance in the form of the CIVIS Identity Federation Service (Regapp). This internal inner section of the website, the intranet, will give the CIVIS community orientation and information on all things CIVIS and serve either as a knowledge base for CIVIS directly or at least give searchable access to a knowledge base, possible in the long term on a chat bot to access the information and knowledge which is created through the alliance's projects.

To put it all in a nutshell, the CIVIS Website will be more integrated into a CIVIS Digital Campus Portal with layered access to the interlinked digital campus tools and systems for external and alliance community.

Tasks and Tools of Alliance Coordination Management – an Overview

A file sharing solution is of the utmost importance for the effective functioning of CIVIS Alliance project management and a host of other activities. The **CIVIS Box** is based on Nextcloud and serves as a storage, sharing, and collaboration tool, e.g., for the joint editing and internal dissemination of documents. Federated authentication enables users to access file sharing using their local university credentials. For the coordination of the numerous alliance activities, as well as monitoring and the collection of

information for project reporting, the implementation of a sophisticated project management tool is essential. **CIVIS Project Management** is based on ASANA as central CIVIS Alliance tool.

Due to the numerous activities launched in the CIVIS alliance's academic community, the channelling of those activities via a central tool for the collection and administration of calls for proposals and projects (e.g. the regular calls for proposals for Blended Intensive Programmes, see Chapter 3 above) is organized via an application called Survey Monkey Apply to create a questionnaire-based **CIVIS Call for Projects** tool. To create a PoC with the Unite! Agora project to have a virtual space for the alliance to support innovation and entrepreneurship with funding, mentorship, and cutting-edge facilities and labs, and also addresses the challenges in collaboration and communication.

Five years into the existence of CIVIS Alliance, the management and sharing of our accumulated knowledge has become a major issue. The wealth of handbooks, templates, guidelines and other resources, also including discussions already finished and decisions made, need to be not only stored somewhere in the CIVIS Box, but need to be made accessible in an up-to-date, current and thus curated form, especially for new entrants to the CIVIS community. Otherwise, this information and knowledge is in acute danger of becoming lost, not least due to staff fluctuations. For this reason, we aim to create a **CIVIS Knowledge Base** and a **CIVIS Who-Is-Who** with layered information targeted at various user groups, making it much easier for everyone to find the information that is most relevant to them and also to find the proper contact person to approach for the matter they would like to discuss.

Research Management

A relatively new area of expansion for the CIVIS Digital Campus is research. Here, the RIS4CIVIS Horizon capacity building project has created a set of specialized tools that can now migrate into the mainstream CIVIS Digital Campus. The **RIS4CIVIS Database** in its current form is used as matching tool for researchers looking to find collaborators. The database containing qualitative descriptions of research groups at each CIVIS university has currently approximately 1.100 research groups listed. It is realized via **CIVIS Open Data**, an open data platform that is also repurposed for other functions on the digital campus, providing an alliance platform for open data. Similarly, there is provision for a database of the core research infrastructures available at each CIVIS university, enabling the potential of sharing some of this infrastructure and also enabling communities of practise regarding their use and potentials. For this purpose, CIVIS Alliance will continue to work on implementing research infrastructures that are open and accessible to all researchers, building on the previous work of RIS4CIVIS.

Legal basis of the IT-dimension

CIVIS Alliance faces numerous challenges regarding the legal basis of the IT-dimension. Not only is there existing regulation with significant impact on the IT-dimension – most prominently the GDPR – but there is also new regulation on the way regarding IT-law. The following EU legislation is either in development or already in force:

- EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act);
- EU Data Act;
- EU Data Governance Act;
- EU Digital Services Act;
- EU Digital Markets Act;

- forthcoming EU Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS 2 Directive);
- EU Electronic Communication Code Directive;
- EU Directive on the re-use of public sector information (Open Data Directive).

Despite the diverse and dynamic nature of the legal landscape, it must be highlighted that there is a legal basis for our IT solutions and that the Alliance cannot operate without jointly making use of IT solutions. Some degree of legal uncertainty will have to be accepted and it will be the alliance's task to monitor legal developments and remain as legally compliant as possible.

Firstly, it is important to distinguish between international and national law and find solutions that are in line with the national law of each member state. This must be thought through for every aspect of IT law and every single national legislation of the respective alliance member. Our technical solution "As de-centralised as possible, as centralised as necessary" is perfectly suited for avoiding conflicting legal requirements in different legislative systems. The less centralized IT solutions are, and the less centralized data processing takes place, the less problems can emerge from conflicts between the national laws governing the members of CIVIS Alliance.

In terms of data protection, there will necessarily be data processing in joint controllership according to Articles 4 and 26 GDPR. This means that joint controllership agreements will be necessary because the members of CIVIS Alliance will be jointly processing personal data, especially via data sharing platforms. Drafts for such agreements already exist. The real challenge will be finding solutions for the African partner universities, which are not member states of the European Union and may find it difficult to be part of such agreements.

Due to the complex and dynamic nature of the legal basis of the IT dimension, it is necessary for CIVIS Alliance to regularly evaluate the legal framework of centralised IT solutions and to agree on a common ground when conflicts of national laws emerge. A legal expert group within CIVIS Alliance, made up of both legal and IT experts, could be implemented to find the solutions needed.

CIVIS Digital Campus for Global Partners

We have already identified a number of fields of action to integrate the CIVIS partners in the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus. With regard to the African partners, the to-do-list is an even longer one, since many of the steps already undertaken to integrate access for the European partners are not yet possible for the African ones, for a variety of considerations. It is entirely possible that mid- to long-term workaround solutions might remain necessary to include African students, teachers and researchers in the CIVIS Digital Campus.

For example, access to certain European tools (and standards) may remain closed for the very simple reason that the global partners are outside the EU or at least the EHEA. Technical inclusion in the digital infrastructure of the CIVIS Digital Campus will thus require creative solutions, and above all the building of capacity at both ends, as well as the building of trust. Technical aspects for participation have been explored by CIVIS' Digital Campus Unit. As a first step in the right direction, access to the CIVIS Box has been established and its functions extended to meet the need of existing collaborations. Many further steps will need to be taken and, in the coming years, we will develop a **Roadmap for Inclusion** of the African Partners in the CIVIS Digital Campus. A core strategy could involve one European CIVIS partner acting as a facilitator for the Alliance, bilaterally enabling access to their systems to one (or all) African partners, thereby also opening up the CIVIS Digital Campus with standard interfaces.

CIVIS African Digital Campus	Description	short-term goal (2026)	long-term goal (2026+)
Roadmap to integration	CIVIS Alliance needs a clear, co-created roadmap to integrate its African universities in the Digital Campus	• survey current state of play at the African partners (IT capacity) • develop a strategy for integration (which function by what means?) • draft a roadmap for Digital Campus integration (which function when?)	• support and mentor partners in building capacity where it is needed • fully implement Digital Campus integration
Establish direct Admin Links	To facilitate Digital Campus integration of the African partners, communication needs to be strengthened and regularized	• EG Heads of IT meet with African counterparts • regular meetings of CIVIS Mobility Unit with African counterparts • include associate members in CIVIS Mobility Unit	• fully integrate African partners in CIVIS Digital Campus planning, decision-making and operation
CIVIS Identity Management (for Africa)	Single-Sign-On and related identity management is not common in Africa. A work-around is needed to give partners access to basic CIVIS tools, such as CIVIS Box, CIVIS Moodle, etc.	• establish an identity management and authentication facility, either CIVIS-wide or bilaterally	• work toward enabling SSO and Edugain (or similar) capability at the African partners, phase out the workaround solution

The CIVIS Inclusion and Diversity Strategy

A Strategic Action Plan for Multilingualism, Inclusion and Diversity within CIVIS Alliance

This chapter sets the foundation for the development of inclusive student and employee programmes, a process addressed in subsequent CIVIS activities. In essence, this builds on high commitment to inclusion and diversity as essential pillars of academic and societal progress, already ranking high on the strategic agenda of CIVIS universities. Nevertheless, collaboration in this domain is demanding, mainly due to language barriers and legislative differences. While all Alliance partners are motivated, it remains a challenge to leverage individual achievements for the benefit of the Alliance as a whole.

Inclusion, Diversity and Multilingualism – Where Is CIVIS?

In recent years, the discourse surrounding higher education has undergone a transformative shift, recognizing the imperative for inclusivity and diversity within academic settings (Stachowiak, 2015). Higher education institutions, traditionally regarded as bastions of knowledge and learning, are increasingly acknowledging the significance of fostering environments that embrace diversity in all dimensions. Inclusion and diversity represent fundamental principles that contribute to the richness of the educational experience and the holistic development of students and staff alike.

CIVIS Alliance addresses inclusion and diversity in many dimensions. In essence, CIVIS partners show a high degree of commitment to inclusion and diversity as essential pillars of academic and societal progress. In many cases this is a top priority on our universities' strategic agenda. Despite all partners seem to be highly motivated, collaboration in this realm remains demanding, mainly due to language barriers and legislative differences. It will be challenging to leverage individual achievements for the benefit of the entire Alliance, but this is an essential prerequisite to sustain the partnership.

Getting to Know the CIVIS Universities' Approaches

The foundation of any inclusive and diverse strategy rests upon a thorough understanding of the current landscape and the needs of the stakeholders involved. To craft a comprehensive approach towards fostering inclusion and diversity within the scope of our project, we initiated an evaluation process. This evaluation was conducted through a questionnaire, segmented into six distinct areas, aimed at gauging the multifaceted dimensions of inclusion and diversity within our project framework. The questionnaire was sent to all CIVIS partners in November 2023. The results were analysed during December 2023 and January 2024.

The evaluation results highlighted the diverse perspectives and challenges within our project ecosystem. From these insights, we crafted a strategic approach described in this document that roots in inclusivity, equity, and empowerment and aims to create an environment where everyone feels valued and can contribute meaningfully. Through targeted initiatives, we shall foster a culture of inclusion that drives innovation and success. The goal is a forward-looking roadmap to enhance inclusion and diversity practices across our higher education institutions. This guidebook contributes to the ongoing dialogue about the vital role of inclusion and diversity in higher education.

In the following sections, we examine inclusion and diversity from staff and student perspectives as well as from a crosscutting multilingualism perspective. Subsequently, we suggest progressing beyond project-based measures while additionally aiming for a community-oriented long-term collaboration.

Staff Inclusion and Diversity Perspectives

CIVIS Alliance is actively addressing inclusion and diversity issues, focusing on initiatives promoting well-being, supporting caregivers, addressing harassment, and enhancing diversity and disability efforts. The goal is to standardize practices across all universities to ensure equal excellence post-project. In this chapter, we aim to develop common initiatives throughout the alliance, bringing all universities to the same level during the project duration. In the long run, universities should implement these ideas, advancing their inclusion and diversity efforts. The long-term objective is mutual learning among universities to elevate inclusivity and diversity.

Each university within CIVIS Alliance already commits to its gender equality plan (GEP), eliminating gender bias and promoting equal opportunities. Institutions also have policies for recruiting and employing individuals with impairments, aligning with EU laws, and fostering inclusive workplaces.

Harmonizing inclusion and diversity efforts is essential for a shared understanding. By integrating these aspects throughout the employee life cycle, universities can create equitable environments, fostering belonging and maximizing diverse talent. The goal of our strategy is a consistent level of implementation across all alliance universities.

There is a variety of existing offers at individual partner institutions. These are broken down below based on the employee life cycle to identify best practice examples for the individual sub-areas:

- **Recruitment and Onboarding:** We propose implementing inclusive language in job postings adopted by hiring managers through diversity training. Additionally, we recommend pairing new employees with mentors from diverse backgrounds to facilitate integration and provide support during the onboarding process. These initiatives aim to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organisations, fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for all employees.
- **Training and Development:** We aim to offer regular diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for all employees through **staff weeks** held annually. This training will ensure all staff members are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace culture. Additionally, we plan to establish **Communities of Practice (CoP)** to facilitate the exchange of ideas and future collaboration. The inaugural CoP shall commence in late spring 2024. While some institutions already offer training programmes on inclusion & diversity, our next step is to open these programmes to partner universities, fostering mutual learning and cross-border participation within the alliance. Our objective is not to duplicate efforts but to encourage collaborative learning and engagement in diverse training opportunities offered by the alliance. Furthermore, we aim to enhance the **linguistic capabilities** of administrative staff to support internationalization activities effectively. Through these initiatives, we seek to cultivate a more inclusive and globally minded organizational culture, driving progress and excellence across our institutions.
- **Workplace Culture and Engagement:** Utilizing innovative digital platforms like the **tools offered by the CIVIS Digital Campus** shall help to foster a culture of inclusivity and belonging. Members can use the platform for open communication for diverse perspectives. To ensure continuous improvement, **feedback channels** shall be established, encouraging active participation. Furthermore, the alliance shall encourage collaboration among diverse teams, leveraging a variety of viewpoints and approaches to enrich the learning and working experience for all involved.
- **Career Progression and Performance Management:** We propose **mentorship** and **sponsorship** programmes to be implemented fostering the career growth of underrepresented groups. Moreover, leadership development opportunities are tailored to diverse talent, ensuring a supportive environment for advancement. Heads and managers shall undergo specialized training to deliver unbiased feedback and evaluations, while clear performance criteria are established to uphold fairness in assessments. Regular monitoring of performance ratings and recognition ensures an equitable distribution among employees from diverse backgrounds.
- **Workplace Flexibility and Accommodations:** It is important to prioritize tailored accommodations and flexible arrangements to cultivate an inclusive and supportive workplace atmosphere. This involves implementing flexible work options, enabling employees to effectively manage caregiving duties or religious obligations alongside their professional responsibilities. Additionally, providing reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities to ensure equitable access to opportunities and facilities should be explored whenever feasible.

- **Offboarding and Alumni Relations:** At the end of the work life cycle **exit interviews** should be conducted to gather comprehensive feedback on the employee experience, specifically addressing any diversity and inclusion concerns. Additionally, maintaining connections with **alumni** is integral, achieved through networking events and professional development opportunities, fostering a sense of community beyond employment. Moreover, departing employees are actively encouraged to provide input on enhancing diversity and inclusion efforts for future staff, ensuring continuous evolution and effectiveness in creating an inclusive workplace culture.

Student Inclusion and Diversity Perspectives

As mentioned before, the survey also illustrated for the category “students” that there are already a lot of ongoing initiatives within the universities, such as childcare services, support for students at various career stages, and targeted assistance for those with chronic diseases and disabilities, all aimed at reducing dropout rates. However, these initiatives vary significantly in terms of their scope, level, and specificity. There is a pressing need to harmonize these efforts for future alignment and coherence. Like the employee-focused initiatives, concerted efforts are required for students until project completion and beyond. The objective is to develop activities that facilitate mutual learning among universities, ultimately leading to the implementation of uniform programmes post-project. This endeavour aims to ensure consistency and effectiveness in addressing inclusion and diversity across all member institutions of CIVIS Alliance.

We propose that the following measures span the **entire student life cycle**, from admission to graduation, to fortify inclusion and diversity strategies through diverse avenues.

- **Implementing Inclusive Admissions Policies:** A key initiative involves implementing inclusive admissions policies. This entails adopting holistic admissions approaches that take into account a diverse array of factors such as background, experiences, and perspectives. By considering more than just academic achievements, universities can ensure that their student body reflects a wide spectrum of identities and backgrounds, fostering a richer learning environment and promoting equity in access to education.
- **Establishing Support Services:** Various support services such as **counselling, mentorship** programmes, and academic advising specifically tailored to address the needs of underrepresented student groups shall be established at each partner institution.
- **Providing Diversity Training and inclusive Curriculum:** Bachelor’s, Master’s, and PhD programs offer diverse courses in inclusion and diversity, but there's a recognized need to standardize and broaden these opportunities for all alliance members. Initiatives like Open Labs, service learning, and internships facilitate local community interaction, though language barriers remain a challenge, emphasizing the need for multicultural awareness. Leveraging virtual mobility enables students to access diverse courses, enriching academic experiences and promoting collaboration within the alliance.
- **Fostering Inclusive Campus Culture:** To cultivate an inclusive campus culture within a European alliance, several key strategies can be adopted. These include implementing, organizing cultural celebrations and intercultural exchange programmes. Additionally, ensuring accessible facilities and services, establishing support networks for underrepresented communities, fostering transparent communication channels by referring to the inter-university campus, and fostering partnerships with external organizations are essential.
- **Creating Safe Spaces and promoting student organisations:** Establishing areas on campus where students from diverse backgrounds can engage in open and respectful dialogue and

encouraging and supporting the formation of student organizations that focus on various aspects of diversity, providing platforms for networking and advocacy.

- **Addressing Accessibility:** Ensuring that campus facilities, resources, and information are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.
- **Providing Financial Support:** Offering **scholarships**, grants, or **financial aid programmes** specifically aimed at supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Multilingualism Perspectives – Students and Staff

Diverse initiatives catering to multilingualism are currently underway for both students and staff, including language centres and language cafes. While buddy and tandem systems are in place for students, it is advisable to extend such support systems to staff, facilitating a seamless onboarding process. Future development should focus on all alliance members offering multilingual studies, aligning with the vision of creating a European university and to harmonize existing training programmes for staff to enhance linguistic capabilities. Enhancements are needed for the CIVIS Website, given that the alliance involves 11 European and 6 African universities utilizing a multitude of different languages of instruction, including eight languages in Europe alone. Acknowledging this linguistic diversity is crucial for CIVIS Alliance, presenting a valuable opportunity for improvement.

- Multilingualism and multiculturalism must be visible and presented proactively on the **CIVIS Website**. The website is currently almost exclusively monolingual in English. The Expert Group (EG) Multilingualism can develop a concept that makes multilingualism and multiculturalism, which characterize the cooperation in CIVIS Alliance, transparent. For the implementation, which can be accompanied by the EG, resources are necessary. Close cooperation with the CIVIS Website creators will allow for efficient implementation.
- Moreover, a joint language policy needs to be developed in which multilingualism and multiculturalism **shall be consistently taken into account**. The EG Multilingualism recommends the development of a common language policy, based on the preparatory work done during the first project phase of CIVIS. The respective definitions should reveal the added value of multilingualism and multiculturalism in the context of diversity in general and in collaboration within CIVIS Alliance. This added value should be tangible for students, lecturers, and administrative staff alike. This elaboration should be based on existing documents in the alliance and on documents from the partner universities, which need to be gathered and compared.
- A common language policy can contribute to the promotion of multilingualism and multiculturalism within CIVIS. The EG Multilingualism can, depending on its resources, define appropriate measures and submit proposals for efficient implementation. This implementation, which can be accompanied by the EG, requires resources as well as cooperation with the relevant WPs, to guarantee consistency in rationale and terminology. Integration into CIVIS study programmes seems particularly desirable. A sustainable promotion of research activities and a continuous exchange of best practice examples from the partner universities are also recommended.

The results of the current questionnaire survey shows that around three quarters of the partner universities promote multilingualism through their activities. At the same time, these activities are strongly focused on English. In addition, there are some bilingual Masters programmes. In this respect, the focus should be placed on multilingual comprehension and communication strategies for all user groups. This can build on individual activities or projects that have been cited, including *Multigram* (a multilingual communicative grammar), *Using Linguistic Diversity in Teaching*, *Cultural Dimensions of Online Learning* or *Promotion de l'éducation plurilingue - Partage de pratiques, formation et information*

(PEP). At an organizational level, an exchange of strategies and objectives of existing language centres, tandem- and buddy-projects as well as language-café appears appropriate to further develop the offers jointly and to involve staff and students to a greater extent and more efficiently.

Addressing multilingualism is crucial, especially in areas like service learning, where it poses particular challenges. Careful consideration is needed to facilitate interaction among speakers of different languages. Experience within CIVIS Alliance highlights the Open Labs as conducive to short-term mobility, such as BIPs. Student perspectives underscore the significance of such experiences, such as for this CIVIS student whose BIP

experience continued at the meeting in Brussels, where the focus was on working on case studies on urban development. [...] A long walk through the city took the students to the locations of the individual cases [...], followed by interviews with those involved in the projects [...]. As part of the BIP, only a few interviews conducted in French were a challenge, which was easily overcome with the help of Brussels students and a cell phone app for translations.

While ingenuity and modern technology helped overcome the language barrier in this case, the same outcome cannot be expected in all cases and care must be taken to plan and prepare accordingly.

Beyond Intra-Alliance Projects: Building a Community

Ongoing and Future Joint Projects

As previously highlighted, the development of collaborative projects is essential to promote cooperation in the realm of "inclusion & diversity". These projects should encompass diverse perspectives and involve faculties from different disciplines, fostering a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach. Successful projects in this context are **PolyCIVIS** and **RIS4CIVIS**.

As a continuation to the collaborative efforts observed in the CIVIS projects eBelong1 and eBelong2, wherein certain CIVIS partners participated, a subsequent initiative named **eBelong3: Sense of Belonging of Professional Staff in the University Communities of CIVIS Alliance** is underway. This upcoming project will involve research partners from CIVIS Alliance who were not engaged in the previous eBelong projects, broadening the scope of collaboration to include additional members of the alliance in the pursuit of shared objectives.

The aim of this project is to underpin the significance of understanding the role of belonging in a partnership. This includes recognizing the influence of a shared culture grounded in cooperation and support on behaviours related to inclusion, equity, and diversity, including the multilingual dimension. The overarching goal is to foster the sustained development of learning communities within the alliance, addressing both social and emotional aspects in the long-term.

Establishing (CIVIS) Network on Inclusion & Diversity

The broad aim is to initiate networks focused on "inclusion & diversity" within each university and extend them to encompass the entire alliance. These networks should comprise representatives from local gender and diversity offices, vice-rector on diversity and academic staff, fostering collaborative efforts across diverse roles and institutions. We propose to establish either an **expert group** or a **Community of Practice (CoP)** (see Section Staff above). The group should serve to coordinate and facilitate knowledge-exchange among professional and academic staff. A CoP requires a continuous coordination, in difference to one-off thematic workshops or seminars. A regular exchange will be ensured through online and personal meetings. One or more leader/s will be responsible for directing

the CoP. The group will launch a short series of online workshops and one time per year an on-site meeting with representatives from partner universities, organised as a staff week.

Activities with Strategic Partners

The nature of CIVIS's engagement with African partners is inclusive and collaborative, emphasizing mutual benefits, capacity exchange, trust building, and ongoing evaluation for sustainable impact. The African partnerships ensure that culturally very diverse groups have the possibility to come together, facilitating intercultural exchanges and fostering intercultural competence. Formats should be chosen so that the exchange with African partners is also inclusive – BIPs and virtual mobility offer affordable and sustainable (financially and environmentally) solutions, also for students who could not otherwise mobilize. Especially purely virtual formats need to be actively encouraged at all CIVIS universities. Another area to be aware of is the multilingual dimension among the partners, where one European language is always already a second national language, but this is not necessarily English, but French or even Portuguese. Strategies need to be developed for enabling this linguistic diversity, which is even greater than among the students and staff of the European CIVIS universities.

Outlook: The Path to a CIVIS Celebration of Diversity

In conclusion, the development of the inclusion and diversity strategy within the higher education alliance has been informed by a comprehensive survey conducted among partner universities. This survey served as a crucial foundation for identifying existing initiatives and areas requiring improvement. The findings highlighted the diverse range of activities already underway across member institutions, although with varying levels of granularity and scope. Moving forward, it is imperative to harmonize these efforts to ensure consistent and effective approaches to inclusion and diversity, as CIVIS Alliance takes inclusion and diversity very seriously. Universities show varying progress, some extensively engaged, while others are in the early stages. Institutions in the early stages can learn from advanced counterparts, fostering collaboration through shared projects. Proposed strategies emphasize collaboration within and beyond alliance boundaries. This extends, of course to mutual learning with the African partners, as well.

Moreover, the support for multilingualism among students and staff is a cornerstone of the alliance's commitment to diversity. All universities offer language centres, which provide training programmes for both students and staff. For students, existing buddy programmes foster relationships between local and international students, thereby enhancing the integration of both students and staff into local communities. The survey revealed a strong wish to extend tandem and buddy systems for staff members, recognizing their potential to facilitate connections and integration within the university community. Future efforts should focus on all alliance members offering multilingual studies to align with the vision of creating a European university that is open to the African partners. Harmonizing training programs for staff to enhance linguistic capabilities is essential. Given the alliance's linguistic diversity involving eight European languages and an additional one in Africa, the most central aspect in terms of multilingualism is to raise awareness for the fundamental role of multilingualism for social cohesion and equity within the CIVIS alliance and its campuses.

In the coming years, the alliance is poised to continue its efforts in promoting inclusion and diversity, with a focus on implementing the strategies outlined in this deliverable. By leveraging the insights gained from the survey and building upon existing initiatives, the alliance is well-positioned to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all members of its academic community. Through ongoing collaboration and mutual learning among partner universities, the alliance aims to achieve its vision of creating equitable and welcoming spaces where diversity is celebrated and valued.

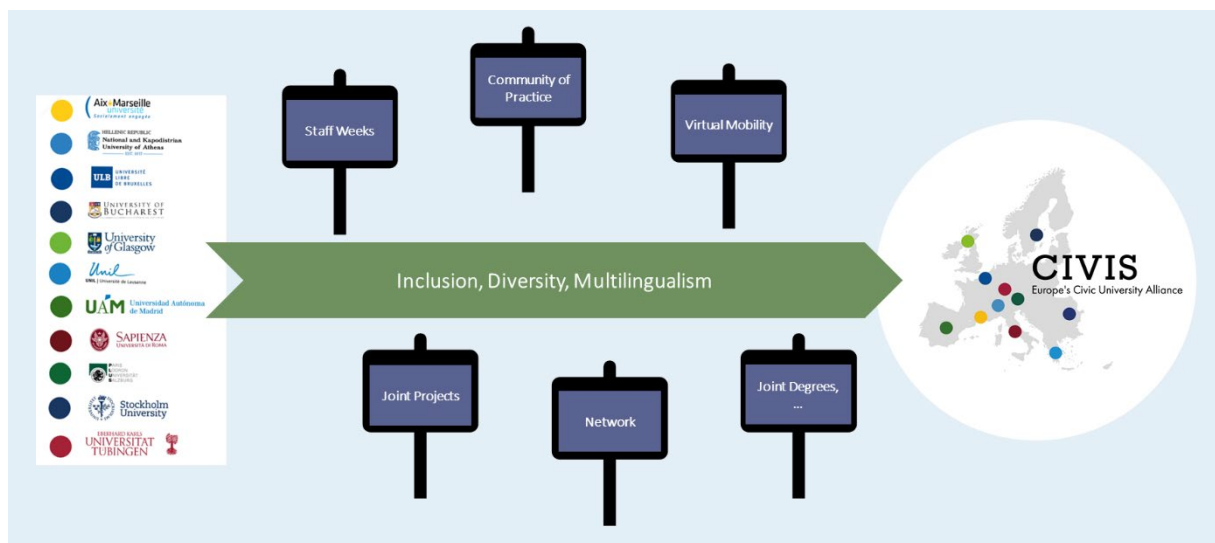


Figure 7: CIVIS Pathway to Collaboration in Inclusion and Diversity, and Multilingualism

Conclusion and Outlook: From Local to Global

A Strategic CIVIS Activities Plan for connecting Local, African and Mediterranean, and Global Communities

In this final chapter, we provide options, along with some challenges, of connecting local and regional actors and, on a different scale, African, Mediterranean and global partners to the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. We show how this stimulates civic outreach and engagement, and fosters academic and institutional collaboration, despite potential issues of funding, mobility and technical administration.

Conclusions and Outlook: The Future Role of the CIVIS Inter-University Campus

As demonstrated by this guidebook, building a European University (Alliance) is exactly and nothing short of that – building a university. Establishing the CIVIS-Inter-University Campus entails a great complexity to be designed and implemented: employing mobility instruments and processes enabling widespread, environmentally and financially sustainable exchange of students and staff as well as an IT-infrastructure. All of these are sparked by a wide variety of different needs in educational offers, efficient mobility administration, and meaningful communication, and a vision of how to establish lasting sustainability while facilitating inclusion and diversity.

A wide variety of different mobility formats (physical or virtual, staff or students, short intensive or extended, ...) are foreseen as an integral part of the planned educational offer of CIVIS Alliance, also encompassing different forms of mobility in one educational offer, e.g. a micro-programme or a course including both virtual and short-term physical mobilities, or a degree programme comprising both full-semester mobilities and a summer school or sharing courses via virtual attendance. Whether it is students being mobile, or the academic staff teaching them, or in fact both, depends on the different educational formats and results in different mobility processes and needs.

The **four CIVIS commitments**, (1) inclusiveness, equity and diversity, (2) sustainability and green mobility, (3) global exchanges and partnerships, especially with our African Partners, (4) collaborations with local and regional partners will be addressed as **focal points in the implementation** and evaluation process of all mobility formats. The Digital Campus development and implementation follows the **three main guiding principles**, based on (1) as much de-centralization as possible, but also as much centralization as necessary. Further (2) it is based on European standards and solutions where available and will proceed (3) with an inclusive implementation process, ensuring that at all times full service is provided to all CIVIS Partner Institutions (e.g. by means of interim solutions).

The Digital Campus as a set of tools for CIVIS Alliance aims for smooth interoperability and, therefore, needs a clear prioritization and implementation order. The primary objectives of CIVIS Alliance's digital infrastructure are to **enhance collaboration, support teaching and learning, research and innovation, facilitate academic and professional mobility and promote accessibility and inclusivity**. Importantly, our focus is on solutions that are not exclusively for CIVIS Alliance, but are open to other collaborations and connections as well, by adhering to European or global interoperability standards and by using Open Source solutions. As a crucial benefit, this will enable CIVIS Alliance, but also each individual CIVIS university to interact and potentially connect with other partners outside the Alliance, whether in individual partnerships or with entire other alliances. While following this strategic trajectory, we need to function as a networked alliance immediately, also necessitating specific IT solutions for the CIVIS alliance, above and beyond connected local systems, for the present and the near future.

CIVIS Alliance explores inclusion and diversity among its members. Universities show varying progress, some fairly advanced, others in an early stage. Institutions at the start of the process can learn from advanced counterparts, fostering collaboration through shared projects. Proposed strategies emphasize collaboration within and beyond alliance boundaries. Future strategies for students and staff highlight engagement across departments or bilateral agreements, addressing the need for harmonization in ongoing activities. Efforts aim to **strengthen inclusion and diversity throughout the student and staff life cycle**, addressing well-being, caregiving, harassment, victimization, and diversity issues. A key dimension of diversity for CIVIS Alliance is multilingualism. With eight European languages spoken on the alliance's campuses and another one among the strategic African partners, beside the local languages there, being aware of each other's languages is as crucial as gaining proficiency in some of them, while maintaining

a sustainable working (language) environment for students, teachers, researchers and administrators to meet and exchange experiences and ideas.

To make the CIVIS agenda on civic engagement materialize, strenuous efforts will enable and encourage academics and students interact with society to engage in meaningful dialogue and knowledge co-creation, and likewise encourage the wider society to enter the academic sphere without any constraints, by providing appealing and openly accessible information on academic activities and attracting the general public to the CIVIS Inter-University Campus. Where required, we include flexible approaches to mobility to facilitate high-impact physical interactions promoting outreach initiatives.

Considering global disparities in economic markets and price levels, we shall establish the proper funding mechanism enabling all CIVIS partners, both in Africa and in Europe to shape and access joint activities alike. Co-created, collaborative participation at the CIVIS Inter-University Campus, with meaningful exchanges between Africa and Europe as part of learning, teaching and research, overcoming language issues and other intercultural differences will require considerable funding, but also sustained political support on all governmental levels. Much depends on sustainable and reliable co-creation with our African partners, to arrive at a shared strategy and roadmap for integrating the two most important inter-university campus dimensions, mobility and digital infrastructure, to enable the projects and activities planned and already initiated in the CIVIS alliance – from taking part in a BIP to establishing a joint degree programme, including challenge-based innovative pedagogies and civic engagement activities through the CIVIS Open Labs.

Building a European University is a long journey. Every journey has a destination, but starts with a first step. In this strategic guidebook, we have offered both: The crucial first steps CIVIS Alliance needs to take, but also the destination we ultimately want to arrive at. The structural changes entailed by the paradigm shift – from local to global – in designing European Universities, can only be achieved with a long-term strategic perspective in mind. This guidebook presents the current state of CIVIS Alliance's strategy to build a shared inter-university and digital campus. We shall revisit this document regularly and update, expand and concretize both the strategic vision and the implementation strategies and operational procedures and guiding principles. In this sense, this guidebook will remain **a living document**.

The transnational learning experiences offered by our inter-university campus will anchor CIVIS Alliance over the long-term in its shared commitment to educate knowledgeable, responsible citizens, a new generation of dedicated Europeans. By enabling the students of today to experience meaningful and diverse mobility options, to increasingly meet and work together on the digital campus, by removing all sorts of barriers – technical, regulatory, linguistic – and by ensuring an inclusive and diverse access to education as a fundamental right, we will help shape a strong and united Europe of tomorrow. This vision is shaped by strong collaborations and strategic partnerships with the African continent, fostering an enhanced understanding of the civic societies around our physical campuses, as well as our digital one. Steadily building our shared capacities will collectively allow us to pursue our long-term goals while respecting each of our universities' specificities and maintaining the diversity of our national traditions of higher education in the shared European space of **CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance**.

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