Co-funded by the European Union

civis

Europe's Civic University Alliance

From Structure to Impact: Governance and Management for a Sustainable European University Alliance

CIVIS2 Deliverable 1.3:
Final Report on Management and Governance

Approved by the Steering Committee of CIVIS
on 17 September 2026

civis
Europe's Civic University Alliance

The CIVIS Alliance member universities

Here are the names of the universities and their acronyms as we use them in CIVIS.

Full member universities

AMU	Aix-Marseille Université
NKUA	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
UB	University of Bucharest
ULB	Université libre de Bruxelles
UofG	University of Glasgow
UNIL	University of Lausanne
UAM	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
SUR	Sapienza Università di Roma
PLUS	University of Salzburg
SU	Stockholm University
UT	University of Tübingen

Associate member universities

UH2C	Université Hassan II de Casablanca
UCAD	Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
MAK	Makerere University
UEM	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane
USF	Université de Sfax

CIVIS is co-funded by the European Union (project N°: ERASMUS-EDU-2022-EUR-UNIV-1-101089983). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the *European Union* (EU) or the *European Education and Culture Executive Agency* (EACEA). Neither the EU nor the EACA can be held responsible for them.

CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance

CIVIS is formed by the alliance of 11 leading research-intensive higher education institutions across Europe: Aix-Marseille Université, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Université libre de Bruxelles, University of Bucharest, University of Glasgow, University of Lausanne, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Sapienza Università di Roma, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Stockholm University and Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. Six prestigious African universities join CIVIS as Associate Members: Université Hassan II de Casablanca, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Makerere University, Eduardo Mondlane University, Université de Sfax.

CIVIS brings together a community of more than 470,000 students and 58,000 staff members, including 35,000 academics and researchers in Europe alone. Including Associate Members, the Alliance counts 720,000 students and 75,000 staff members.

The Authors

Fabienne MICHELINI, AMU
Francesco ROMANO, AMU
Moritz POHLNER, AMU
Lise BARBOTTE, AMU
and the entire **CIVIS Community**

Cite as: Michelini, F., Romano, F., Pohlner, M., Barbotte, L., & CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. (2026). From Structure to Impact: Governance and Management for a Sustainable European University Alliance. CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance.
https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22249388

1 Alliance
11 Universities
Countless Possibilities

Table of contents

CIVIS 2 Work Packages and Streams 5

Acronyms and Abbreviations 5

Executive Summary 6

1- Introduction 7

How to seize the impact of CIVIS governance and management 7
Context of CIVIS and Work Package 1 8
Methodology of the report 9

2- CIVIS governance & management 10

Transforming HEIs and creating an Alliance through strategies, procedures and bodies 10
CIVIS governance and management structures 11
Monitoring and management processes 21
CIVIS2 Timeline 24

3- From procedures to outcomes 26

Main results, impact and challenges of the CIVIS2 project 26
Stream 1: *Challenge-based education and civic engagement* 27
Stream 2 – *CIVIS Inter-University Campus* 29
Stream 3 – *Embedded Joint and Flexible Educational Offer* 32
Sustainability (WP12), Communication, Dissemination and Impact (WP13) 36
Units and Officers: The Backbone of CIVIS 37
Hubs 39

4- Shaping the european higher education and research area 40

From advocacy to sharing good practices 40
Policy papers and Expert Group Advocacy 41
Engaging in European, national and regional policy communities 41
Challenges and deviations 43

5- Conclusion & outlook 44

Governing and Managing CIVIS: Implications for the EUI and European Higher Education 44
Key conclusions 45
Recommendations 46

References 47

49

Annexes 49

Supporting Documents 49
Annexe I: CIVIS organisational chart and Streams/WPs 50
Annexe II: List of Expert Groups 51
Annexe III: Success stories of the 2026 Unit Summit 51

CIVIS 2 WORK PACKAGES AND STREAMS

The CIVIS2 project is organised around three broad Streams, the Alliance's key areas of activity. Each Stream brings together different operational Work Packages that turn our Alliance's priorities into action.

WP1	Management and Governance	
WP2	Civic Engagement and Challenge-Based Education Strategy	Stream 1: Challenge-Based Education and Civic Engagement
WP3	Challenge-Based Local to Global Educational Activities	
WP4	Local to Global Civic Engagement Projects	
WP5	Enabling the Shared Inter-University Campus	Stream 2: Inter-University Campus
WP6	Connecting Student Communities through the Inter-University Campus	
WP7	Connecting Staff Communities through the Inter-University Campus	
WP8	Embedding Shared Educational Offer	Stream 3: Embedded Joint Educational offer
WP9	Accredited Shared Undergraduate (Bachelor) and Graduate (Master) Educational Offer	
WP10	Doctoral Educational Offer	
WP11	Accredited Modular Educational Offer	
WP12	Consolidation	
WP13	Impact and Dissemination	

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

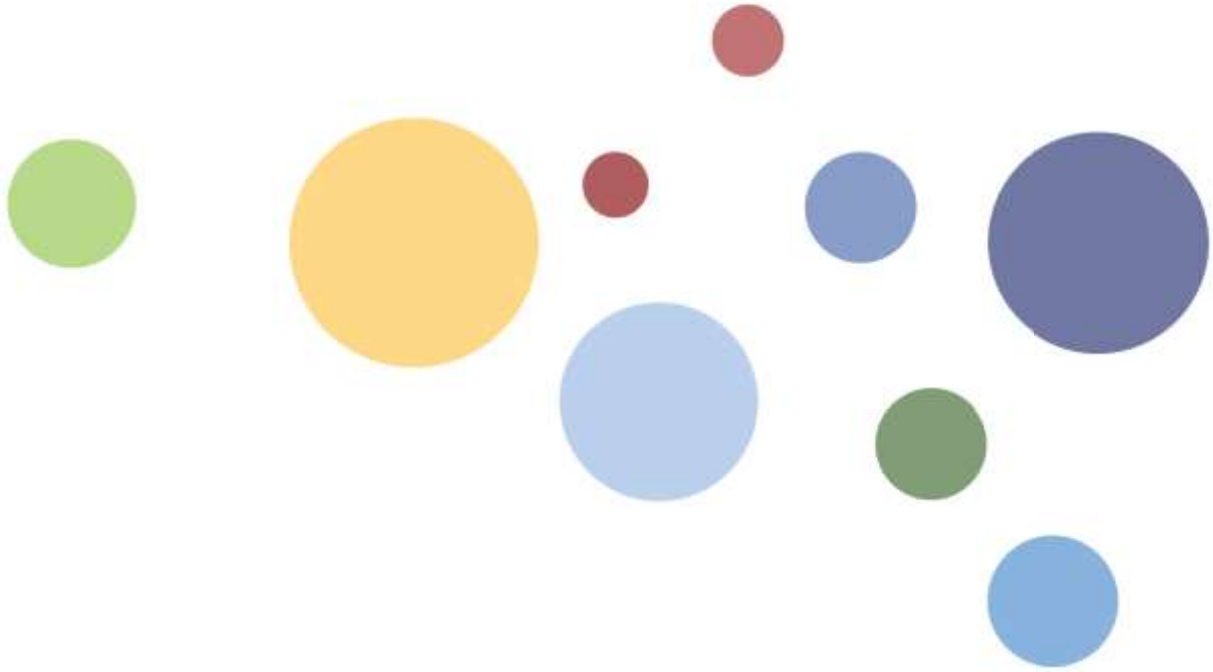
BIP	Blended Intensive Programme
BoR	Board of Rectors
CIVIS	CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance
CIVIS 1	Erasmus+ project "CIVIS" from 2019 to 2022
CIVIS 2	Erasmus+ project "CIVIS2 " from 2022 to 2026
CIVIS 2.1	Erasmus+ project "CIVIS2.1" in grant agreement preparation, planned for 2026-2028
CO	Coordination Office
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
DED	Deputy Executive Director
DoA	Description of Action annexed to the Grant Agreement
ED	Executive Director
EG	Expert Group
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ERA	European Research Area
GSC	Global Student Council
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IC	Institutional Coordinator
MC	Management Committee
MSCA	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
OL	Open Lab
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
SC	Steering Committee
SG	Secretary general
SLP	Student-led project
TF	Task Force
ToR	Terms of Reference
WP	Work Package (of the CIVIS2 project, if not specified differently)
WPL	Work Package Leader

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance is far more than the CIVIS2 Erasmus+ project, it is an ever-closer integrated alliance reuniting 11 European Universities from Europe and 6 Associate Member Universities from Africa that build the future of Higher Education. This structure is essentially supported by the Erasmus+ project, CIVIS2, with 9 beneficiaries. Thus, efficient management techniques and governance structures are essential to ensure a close alignment between the Alliance's objectives, Erasmus+ project grant, operational realities and long-term strategies. This report looks back on the last four years of the CIVIS2 project (October 2022 to September 2026). Since governance and management structures of the Alliance and the Erasmus+ project can neither be separated from one another, nor from their results, this report first spells out how the **administrative architecture of CIVIS** allows an efficient and impactful operational and transformational governance and management. Secondly**, key achievements and management success** by Work Packages and CIVIS bodies will be summarised. Finally, this report shows how CIVIS **advocates for** and brings forward the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and ERA (European Research Area (ERA). Key findings are:

1) **Governance and Management:** CIVIS2 has consolidated the Alliance as a functioning transnational structure connecting the strategic priorities of 11 Full Member and 6 Associate Member Universities in Africa with joint implementation. The Alliance architecture of the Board of Rectors, Steering Committee and Management Committee has enabled decisions to effectively navigate between institutional, Alliance and operational levels and needs. The Alliance Agreement and the CIVIS Association are key achievements that have further anchored cooperation beyond the CIVIS2 project.
2) **Key achievements:** This governance and management architecture has produced concrete results across the Alliance and all Streams: Challenge-based education and civic engagement, CIVIS Inter-University Campus and Embedded Joint and Flexible Educational Offer. A common Digital Campus (especially the CIVIS Agora) was developed to better collaborate across the Alliance, three joint or redesigned Master programmes were launched and transnational teams worked on a total of 42 educational provisions. BIPs, educational calls, Student-Led Projects, Staff Weeks and Open Lab projects provided established mechanisms to turn the Alliance's priorities, always with links to societal impact, transdisciplinarity and the African-European dimension, into concrete activities.
3) **Institutional change:** The impact goes beyond CIVIS activities themselves. CIVIS has triggered changes in institutional procedures, structures and practices, including frameworks for BIPs, new approaches to Service-Learning, institutional policies for international degrees, new mobility schemes, digitalized recognition procedures and new procedures for developing joint programmes. In some cases, institutional solutions developed through CIVIS have subsequently been taken up as Alliance-wide approaches.
4) **Going beyond the Erasmus+ project:** CIVIS also demonstrated its capacity to mobilise resources and cooperation beyond Erasmus+. All member universities contributed to the CIVIS Research Unit, while two Seed Funding Calls supported more than 50 research projects. Erasmus+ funding covered only eligible activities, such as networking, academic collaboration and PhD training, while research was funded through universities' own funds. Similarly, the first *African-European Forum for Research and Education* in Casablanca was made possible via the structures build within CIVIS2, while its organisation was funded with other funds, assembling over 200 participants from all 17 CIVIS universities and 10 other institutions.
5) **Advocacy:** CIVIS has also contributed to changes beyond the Alliance, notably through advocacy and policy engagement and its function as testbed. The experience shows that CIVIS is most effective when governance and management provide the conditions for concrete transnational activities, which can then generate institutional and policy-level change.
6) **Limits and challenges:** At the same time, CIVIS2 exposed limitations. The initial project structure was too complex, with 13 Work Packages and 78 milestones, creating overlaps, fragmented information and a high coordination burden. These experiences informed the simplification of the working methodology for the future. Remaining challenges include staff capacity, recognition of CIVIS engagement, stakeholder inclusion and the systematic involvement of Associate Members.

Finally, **eight recommendations** address four levels of action: **within CIVIS**, they focus on improving planning and project management, and on strengthening the link between governance, quality assurance and evidence-based decision-making; **for European University Alliances in general**, they address how to keep governance as light as possible while managing necessary complexity, and how to translate strategic priorities into concrete activities through competitive calls; **for European Higher Education Institutions**, they focus on setting clear priorities, using the Alliance as a strategic institutional tool, and ensuring the continuity of Alliance's positions beyond individual project structures; and **for decision-makers**, they address the need to allow sufficient time for institutional transformation and to create the regulatory, financial and policy conditions in which European University Alliances can develop and sustain their cooperation.



1

INTRODUCTION

How to seize the impact of CIVIS governance and management

Since 2019, **CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance, is actively shaping the future of European Higher Education**. First, by establishing the Alliance and testing new modes of cooperation (CIVIS1, 2019–2022), then by consolidating successful activities and introducing new ones (CIVIS2, 2022–2026), resulting for example in:

- (at least) **562 staff members** formally appointed to various CIVIS bodies, i. e. 45 on average.
- **3 joint MA programmes** launched, 42 educational provisions under development, of which **12 micro-credentials** are either in the first year of implementation or in the final preparation phase
- **236 Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs)**, of which more than **82% involve more than one discipline**, reached **5086 mobile students** (and additional local students), and 19 219 student applications supported by a harmonised procedure.
- **1109 participants at the global CIVIS days** in Tübingen, Salzburg, Rome and Bucharest
- **51 selected Seed-Funding projects,** of which 92% include Associate Member Universities in Africa.
- Rectors met twice a year (BoR), Vice-Rectors'(SC) monthly, and Management Committee (MC) weekly
- Re-launch of the website and launch of the **CIVIS Agora**, the collaborative online environment.
- **29 Open Lab (OL) projects including over 200 local stakeholder** groups (Museums, Civil Society/Social Partners, Public Authority, Education/Science, and the Business Sector)

This success, which CIVIS and all 17 member universities (11 Full Members, of which 9 Erasmus+ project beneficiaries, and 6 Associate Members) are committed to further deepen and upscale, would not have been possible without aligning institutional priorities, commitments of the project grant and European Higher Education policy goals through efficient and effective governance and management structures.

These structures, comprising various decision-making, management and consultative bodies, outlined in the Consortium and Alliance Agreements, as well as the procedures, guidelines and risk mitigation mechanisms, are two-fold: on the one hand, they form the **administrative backbone of a transnational university alliance** by linking local realities to the alliance activities. On the other hand, they ensure the **efficient management of the Erasmus+ CIVIS2 project** with 13 Work Packages (WPs) as defined in the Grant Agreement. Most importantly, these structures have made it possible to overcome the artificial distinction between "Alliance" and "Project" by articulating both efficiently.

Context of CIVIS and Work Package 1

CIVIS was selected in June 2019 **as one of the first pilot Alliances** under the European Commission's *European Universities Initiative*. With CIVIS2, the Alliance entered a consolidation phase (2022–2026), pursuing a shared mission: building a deeply interconnected Alliance of civic, research-intensive universities rooted in their cities and dedicated to innovative teaching, research, and cultural exchange across Europe and beyond, with a **particular focus on partnerships with Mediterranean and African universities and civic engagement**. Grounded in values such as academic freedom, democratic engagement, sustainability and inclusion, CIVIS delivers its mission through joint education, joint research, and joint civic action that reinforce both European identity and local communities. Within the framework of the European Universities Initiative, CIVIS is also committed to contributing to the EHEA and ERA.

Against this background, the lead of WP 1 and all the CIVIS community contributing to it play a crucial role: embedded in the CIVIS2 project, WP1 covers both **project management**, i.e. achieving CIVIS2 project objectives by running the tasks defined in the Grant Agreement, and the animation of the **Alliance's governance and management structures**. A key challenge is ultimately about holding together a new type of institution, the Alliance, which is dependent on each of its Members while simultaneously serving as a mandated driver of change across and beyond all of them.

An overview of the objectives, tasks and milestones is provided in **Table 1**. In short, WP1 covers four interdependent branches:

1. **Governance**, i.e. the political and strategic steering of the Alliance;
2. **Management**, i.e. the operational running and day-to-day business of the Alliance, translating governance decisions into reality and ensuring the completion of the Erasmus+ project;
3. policy and **Advocacy** activities;
4. and **Quality Assurance**.

Figure 1. WP1 Core Missions

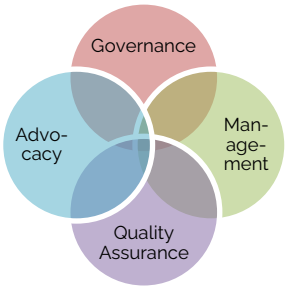


Table 1. WP1 Objectives and Tasks

O1. Shepherd our joint action geared towards gradually achieving the long-term vision for the EUA **O2.** Deepen institutional cooperation through CIVIS governance; **O3.** Ensure […] long-term sustainability by consolidating the CIVIS governance & management structures; **O4.** Foster the inclusive & participative dimension of CIVIS governance structures; **O5.** Facilitate the transversal involvement of local and global associated partners; **O6.** Integrate further CIVIS European University initiative at local/institutional level; **O7.** Ensure smooth financial and administrative management and coordination of CIVIS activities; **O8.** Define & implement QA & risk assessment strategy of CIVIS initiative; **O9.** Reinforce EHEA by advocating for matters pertaining to its continued evolution.	
Tasks	**Milestones related to this task**
Task 1.1: Ensure/Implement an inclusive & participatory governance of the European University	No milestone
Task 1.2: Support a smooth implementation of the new CIVIS 2 organisation through the provision of effective and efficient technical, legal, administrative and financial project management	**MS 1.1:** Project Management Tool **MS1.5:** yearly Internal management & Financial progress reports (1-3)
Task 1.3: Develop & implement a Policy/Advocacy strategy	**MS 1.4:** Advocacy strategy **MS 1.6:** Policy position papers on EHEA (1+2)
Task 1.4: Set up Quality assurance mechanisms	**MS 1.2:** Quality Assurance Plan **MS 1.4:** Yearly Internal Quality and Progress Reports (1-3)

Concretely, in addition to the **main governance and management bodies** of the Alliance and the Project, in particular the Board of Rectors (BoR), the Steering Committee (SC), various Councils and the MC, WP1 was animated through **monthly WP1 meetings.** Although AMU, as coordinating university, supported the WP, each member university was represented in these meetings to ensure that institutional perspectives and priorities were taken into account across all areas of WP1, particularly those relating to governance and advocacy. This was also to truly realise collaborative and integrated governance and management structures. In that sense, **WP1 served as interface between Alliance and project**. At the same time, the Coordination Office, Institutional Coordinators (ICs) and a project management team ensured smooth project management, with the Quality Assurance Officer ensuring quality assurance across CIVIS.

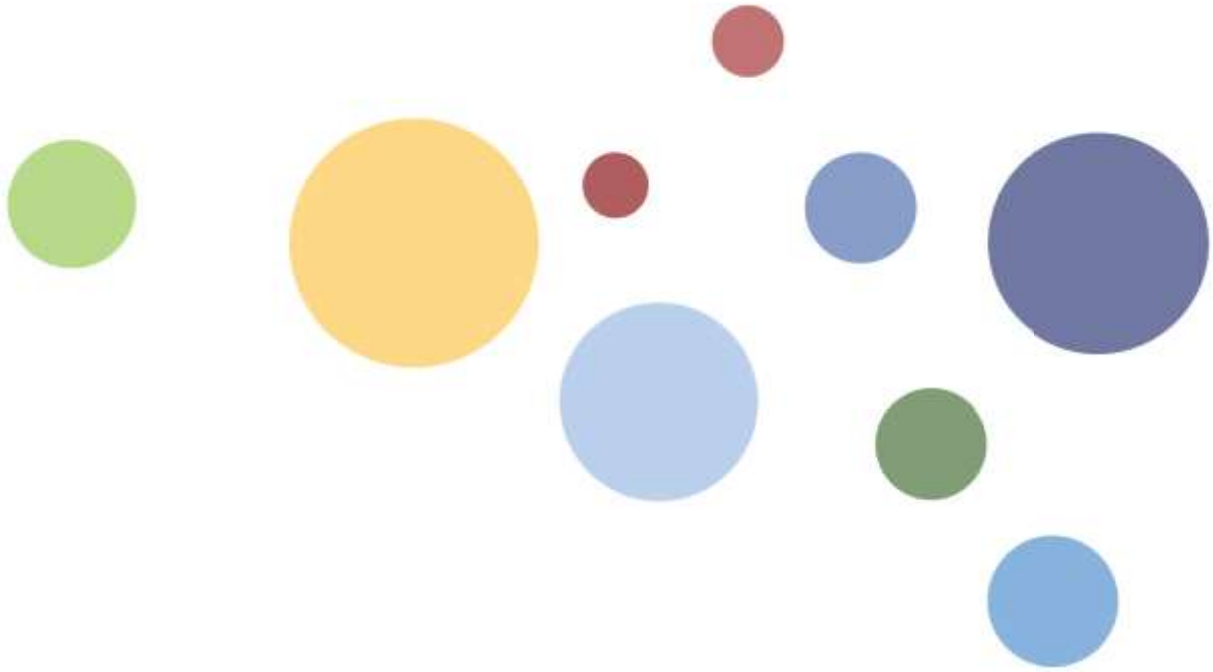
Methodology of the report

In light of these four key tasks (see **Figure 1**), this report focuses on the **governance** and **management** of the Alliance and the project, as well as on **advocacy**. Complementarily, Deliverable 1.4 covers questions of quality assurance. **Chapter 2** explains how **governance and management structures** function within CIVIS and how they have been adapted to fulfil WP1's objectives. It also shows that the Alliance is not a layer floating above its Member Universities, but is constituted by and embedded within them. **Chapter 3** then demonstrates how effective governance and management decisions have resulted in **the key outcomes of each WP and other CIVIS bodies**. Showcasing our key results, also shows the success and impact of management and governance decisions that produced these, allowing good practices and limitations to be identified. **Chapter 4** shows how governance and WP1 translated strategic priorities **into advocacy and contributions to the European Higher Education Landscape**. Finally, the **conclusions** serve as **summary and recommendations**: to the Alliance, to its Members, to other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and to policymakers.

This report draws on:

a.) **Internal documents**, especially: Grant Agreement, Consortium Agreement, Alliance Agreement, Procedures and Guidelines, Terms of References (ToRs) and Deliverables and Milestones validated by the MC
b.) Insights from the **external evaluators** (see Deliverable 1.4)
c.) Outcomes as described in the **publicly available deliverables** of other WPs
d.) Exchanges and feedback from the **ICs** of each Full Member University

This report traces the **structures and processes** that make CIVIS function impactfully**. Yet, behind every framework is a person**: a student on exchange, a lecturer pioneering new formats in collaboration with administration, a team turning a digital campus into a place of encounter and collaboration, and many more…



2

CIVIS GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Transforming HEIs and creating an Alliance through strategies, procedures and bodies

CIVIS governance and management structures

Key documents: translating strategic vision into daily missions

> *"European Universities develop and implement an integrated long-term joint strategy for education with, where possible, links to research and innovation, at the service of society. To achieve this, they are using joint management and governance structures and are building on a shared pool of resources," (EUI)*

To meet the objectives of this building block of the *European Universities Initiative (EUI)*, CIVIS has built a coherent framework of documents, jointly agreed by all Full Members, that provides both structure for clarity and flexibility to adapt to change**. Making 11 large, established institutions agree on a common cooperation framework is itself a core achievement of the Alliance**. These documents do not make the Alliance work, it is the students, academics, administrators and local partners, who do. However, clear documents guide and orient collaboration and are as such outputs of collaboration and mutual trust. **Table 2** summarises function and impact of the Description of Action (DoA) and the Technical Description, the Consortium Agreement, the Alliance Agreement and the Procedures and Guidelines[1].

Table 2. CIVIS Governance and Management Documents

Document title	Description, including objectives and key content	Impact
DoA + Technical description	Annexed to the Erasmus+ Grant Agreement and legally binding with the EACEA, these texts define the *why, what, how* and *when* of the CIVIS2 project: objectives, tasks, milestones, deliverables, governance structures, bodies, WPs, and partner roles. All activities must contribute to the stated expected outcomes.	Serve as the baseline for project management and quality assurance; contractual force ensures clear priorities; triggers risk mitigation when objectives are at risk.
Consortium Agreement	Signed by the 9 Erasmus+ beneficiaries (first October 2022, last amended January 2024), this agreement defines the roles and missions of all governing and consultative bodies, anchors the transnational organisational structure, and sets out decision-making processes. It also covers financial provisions between project beneficiaries, risk mitigation strategies, burden-sharing principles, and distribution of financial responsibilities.	Legal clarity and dispute prevention; governance stability; financial accountability and protection of beneficiaries; trust through transparent, mutually endorsed commitments.
Procedures and Guidelines	Fill operational gaps not covered by the Consortium Agreement or Technical Description, by formalising day-to-day workflows, such as establishing new bodies (i. e. Task Forces (TFs), Expert Groups (EGs)…), organising meetings, validating milestones and deliverables… Applies jointly to the CIVIS2 project and the broader CIVIS Alliance. Draws on the Grant Agreement, Consortium Agreement, and previous versions.	Operational continuity; clarity of responsibilities; smooth adaption; harmonised practices across all bodies; reduced risk of disputes or delays through procedural clarity.
Alliance Agreement	Creates the Alliance beyond the Consortium Agreement recognising UNIL and UofG as Full Members and 6 African universities as Associate Members as well as by integrating the Secretary General and the CIVIS Association. It articulates the relationship between CIVIS bodies, the CIVIS Association, the project, and Members.	High-level political validation; ensures the long-term commitment of all Members to the Alliance beyond the project period via the CIVIS Association.

Key bodies: engaging communities

In this chapter, we summarise how the organisational structure of CIVIS works and evolved; and secondly show how these bodies impact academics, administrative staff and students. This **relation is bidimensional: local university representatives are in CIVIS bodies**. At the same time, **through their role in CIVIS, they embed**

[1] Other documents are: Mission Statement (long term mission of CIVIS, approved by the BoR), Quality Assurance Plan, Project management Plan and individual ToRs of CIVIS Bodies (all approved by the SC).

CIVIS in their local universities. Often, these are also in-kind contribution since only a part of positions is financed by the Erasmus+ grant, translating the strategic importance that rectors and universities assign to CIVIS.

Table 3 summarises key CIVIS bodies (which are graphically represented in Annexe I: CIVIS organisational chart) and indicates their estimated average participation and meeting frequency. *Please note:* not all bodies and positions are explained in detail due to the scope of the present report. Details of functioning are written down in dedicated ToRs of each body.

Table 3. Brief Description of Key CIVIS Bodies

Board of Rectors (BoR)	Average of participants: 20 (est.)	2 meetings/year
Highest strategic decision-making body of CIVIS, deciding on partnerships, strategy, budget, and policy. Composed of the rectors of each Member University (plus up to two advisors each), chaired by the CIVIS President (rotating every 6 months). The Executive Director (ED) and Secretary General also assist to meetings.		
Secretary General (SG) and the CIVIS Association		
*The **CIVIS Association** is the Alliance's legal entity, established to provide a formal legal structure for its activities and to ensure better sustainability in the future. The **SG** is the strategic and political representative of the CIVIS Alliance and also serves as Secretary General of the CIVIS Association. The SG supports the governing bodies, ensures continuity across rotating roles, and represents CIVIS externally.*		
Steering Committee (SC)	Average of participants: 20 (est.)	12 meetings/year
Takes all operational and political decisions not reserved to the BoR, and acts on specific issues delegated by the BoR. Can mandate MC and other bodies with specific tasks/missions. Chaired by the CIVIS rotating Vice-President, and composed of two delegates per university, as well as consultatively by Student Council representatives, Hub Council chairs, and the ED.		
Hub Councils	Average of participants: 19,2 (est.)	appox. 5 meetings/year
Responsible for developing and monitoring academic activities within each of the five thematic Hubs, within limits set by the SC and BoR. Each Council is composed of two members per university. It is chaired by two academics designated by the BoR and supported by two coordinators. Two Student Council representatives shall be designated for each Hub.		
Management Committee (MC)	Average of participants: 22 (est.)	30-40 meetings/year
Central operational body ensuring coherence of project implementation, coordinating all management entities, and acting as the executive body of the SC. Chaired by the ED and composed of ICs, Heads of Units, and Officers. Initially, it also included WP Leaders (WPL), but this made discussions difficult to handle. The MC was supposed to meet every two weeks. We have switched to a weekly rhythm with decision and thematic meetings, alternating each week: this allows thematic discussions with ICs and relevant experts/WPs as well as concentrated decision meetings.		
Coordination Office (CO)	Average of participants: 8 (est.)	approx. 40 meetings/year
Alliance-level team consisting of (Deputy) Executive Director, Head of Units and Officers with cross-cutting responsibilities (quality, mobility, innovative pedagogy, partnerships, digital campus, communication, education, research), geographically spread across partner universities. All Members also sit on the MC and report to the ED. Coordinates operational management and aligns the Units on one common workplan.		
Units	12 (1 HoU + 11 Unit members)/Unit	12 meetings/year
Initially four transnational support Units (Mobility, Education, Digital Campus, Communication) providing administrative services across partners to support WP implementation and CIVIS activities. Each is led by a Head of Unit who is part of the MC. In 2025, the EG Research was transformed into a Unit. This shows the voluntary commitment to add a research dimension going beyond the pure Erasmus+ project, by committing staff (at least 10% FTE per university). Additionally, individual Officers ensure other transversal tasks (Quality, Innovative pedagogies, Global Partnerships).		
Councils	N/A (variation between Bodies)	N/A (variation between Bodies)
Advisory bodies feeding into the SC and BoR from different stakeholder groups engaging high level representatives from each university: • ***Student Council**, up to four elected student representatives from each university Discusses issues relevant for students and sends representatives to other CIVIS bodies to contribute the student perspective.* • ***Education Council,** constituted by Vice-Rectors for Education/Academic Affairs of each university (+1 deputy per university)* • ***Research Council,** constituted by Vice-Rectors for Research of each university (+1 deputy per university)* • ***Council of Open Labs:*** constituted by one expert member by university implementing local civic engagement activities and overviewing the OL call for projects. *These Councils make recommendations but hold no decision-making power. They strategically orient the Alliance. In the Project Description, the **Participative Council** was supposed to include stakeholders from across the university and the **Partners Council** to unite all associated partners. The Partners Council and Participative council changed from general meetings to project-based collaborations (see challenges/deviations below).*		
Expert Groups (EG)	N/A (variation between Bodies)	N/A (variation between Bodies)
Temporary or standing bodies convened by the MC at the request of WPLs, ICs or other bodies to address specific implementation needs, such as external funding, quality assurance, innovative pedagogies, lifelong learning, or others. Members of the EGs are in-kind contributions, they are not budgeted by the CIVIS2 project and show the commitment of universities to transcend the pure project. See Annexe II: List of Expert Groups.		

The principal mechanisms of CIVIS' institutional Architecture

Since the overall governance and management structures are well described in the technical description and in the final report, we only focus on the **added value of CIVIS' institutional architecture** which lies in its capacity to **connect local academic priorities with a coherent Alliance-wide strategy, and to bring European integration on the ground**. This is achieved through bodies that each play a distinct but interlocking role. If concrete projects are conducted and brought through live via specific teams of students, teachers, researchers, other staff and local partners, the centre of the Management and Governance architecture sits at the **triangle formed by the MC, SC and the BoR.**

The MC meets weekly (initially bi-weekly meetings were planned, but a weekly schedule alternating between decision and thematic meetings allows to better manage the wide range of the project) and is chaired by the ED or DED. It brings together CIVIS HoU and Officers and ICs of each member university. If needed, WPLs, Hub coordinators and an OL representative are invited as well. The **MC therefore functions as the operational body** where Alliance-wide operative decisions are taken and local implementation issues, workplans and emerging difficulties are consolidated before being either transferred to a higher level or implemented on the ground. The **SC** meets monthly to **decide on strategic matters and overview the MC and project management**. It is composed of up to two delegates per Full Member University (at least one Vice-Rector) together with one of the Student Council co-Chairs, the co-Chairs of each of the five Hub Councils, a delegate per Associate Member (non-voting) and the SG and ED (both non-voting). The SC arbitrates on all matters that are not purely operational and that are not reserved to the BoR. In that manner, the SC is effectively acting as the link between day-to-day management and strategic governance. Through the members of the SC, the Alliance is also anchored in the rectorates of each University. **The BoR, as the uppermost decision-making body**, composed of the rector of each Full Member University (or their designated representatives) with up to two advisors each, and attended in a non-voting capacity by the Rectors of Associate Members, the SG and the ED, reserves its consensus-based decisions for the Alliance's most structuring choices: partnership and expansion strategy, budget reallocation, and CIVIS policy. This central triangle is what makes it possible for local priorities to be aggregated into shared Alliance strategy, and, conversely, for Alliance-level decisions to be translated back into locally actionable tasks, without either level losing sight of the other, what will be illustrated through the sections *CIVIS Success Stories*: how transnational teams bring ideas to reality or the section *Call management* below.

The consultative bodies, the Education Council, Research Council, Council of the OLs, and Student Council, add substantive value to this loop by ensuring that disciplinary, research, civic-engagement and student perspectives are represented before decisions reach the SC and BoR, rather than being negotiated informally or lost at the institutional level. The Hub Councils, each co-chaired by two academics from two Full Member Universities and composed of two representatives per f=Full member University, one per involved Associate Member and two Student Council representatives, carry this same logic into the academic and interdisciplinary domain: they translate and co-construct Alliance-level orientations and then bring them into concrete joint educational and research initiatives, while feeding thematic input on emerging opportunities back. EGs (permanent) and TFs (temporary for specific tasks created by the SC when a specific cross-cutting issue requires dedicated expertise), provide additional flexibility to work out implementation details without permanently enlarging the governance structure itself.

Taken together, this layered but tightly interconnected structure is what allows CIVIS to function as a more and more integrated institution. Each university keeps the opportunity to shape Alliance-level strategy through their ICs, delegates and representatives, while giving the Alliance the means to have its strategic decisions consistently and coherently implemented across 11 autonomous Full Member University.

Getting ready for the future: the Secretary General and the CIVIS Association

Since taking up the position in October 2024, **the SG, also presiding the CIVIS Association**, plays a distinctive, transversal role in sustaining the coherence of this whole system over time. The SG has structured his work along three levels: **the CIVIS Alliance itself, the national level, and the European level**. At Alliance level, the SG has driven the consolidation of governance bodies, including the SG role itself. A recurring priority has been to deepen the "CIVIS-ness" of Member Universities beyond symbolic participation, for instance by proposing that CIVIS activities be recognised as part of academic career paths. The SG has also undertaken a series of dedicated strategic site visits to most Full, and all Associate Member Universities, for which the Consortium used their own funds, each combining high-level meetings with university leadership and CIVIS actors with

discussions on African-European science collaboration, equitable partnership, third-party funding strategy and the integration of Associate Members into CIVIS governance bodies.

At system and policy level, the SG represents CIVIS in advocacy and diplomacy activities: in close coordination with the ED, coordinating CIVIS input into the FOREU4ALL network (Topical Groups, MFF/ECF position papers), engaging with DG EAC, following policy developments, and representing CIVIS at events. More concretely, the SG has co-led the development of major EU-funded initiatives, notably the "PartiCIVIS" (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) MSCA Staff Exchanges project (involving over 100 CIVIS departments and 200+ individuals across 17 thematic clusters), and has been instrumental in organising and following up on the first African-European CIVIS Forum for Research and Education (Casablanca, March 2026), including the signature of the Africa Charter for Transformative Research Collaboration. This illustrates how the SG serves a purpose going beyond the project to make CIVIS more sustainable, including by exploring and securing additional financial resources.

Since September 2024, CIVIS is additionally underpinned by a legal entity, the CIVIS Association, a non-profit international organisation under Belgian law, approved by the Belgian Ministry of Justice in parallel with the signature of the Alliance Agreement. Based in Brussels and hosted by ULB, the CIVIS Association is conceived as an agile toolbox for the Alliance. The Association supports and represents CIVIS in fundraising, applying for and joining grant proposals, administrative and logistical support, resource management and advocacy, and facilitates communication and collaboration among the various projects carried out jointly within the Alliance. Any revenue it generates must be reinvested in the cooperation between Members and in the interest of CIVIS students and stakeholders. Hence, the CIVIS Association constitutes an asset for the future development of the Alliance, serving as a crucible to extend the scope of activities and resources. The SG and Treasury manage the Association's budget and day-to-day operations, prepares board and general assembly agendas together with the President (elected for 6 months by the BoR), and assumes its secretariat. The rectors have recognised the strategic role of the Association in the new Mission Statement "CIVIS 2035".

CIVIS Success Stories: how transnational teams bring ideas to reality

Knowing the key bodies and documents that give a framework to our Alliance, these success stories illustrate how ideas navigate through procedures and governance bodies until becoming reality. Since all our achievements are reported in other deliverables and the final report, we focus on illustrative cases to cover both, **top-down and bottom-up logics**, as well as **transnational teambuilding** and the ability of CIVIS to **go beyond the Erasmus+ project** with own funding and commitment.

Transnational team-building

The bodies represented in **Table 3** mostly meet virtually. However, CIVIS is committed to building real transnational knowledge-creating teams and professional support teams that are collegially interconnected. Thus, **meetings are also regularly organised in person** (as stated in the technical description). This builds so called **"*Everyday Europeanhood*"[2], by strengthening the sense of belonging** and serves as compensation for the professional engagement. In total we organised 6 BoR meetings, various SC meetings, 4 MC meetings, three Unit Summits, 1 WPLs Meeting, and annual Hub meetings for each Hub in person, where generally all Members were represented. Additionally, most educational, Seed-Funding, OL and Student-Led Projects (SLPs) incentivised by CIVIS have received funds for financing mobility to meet on site to advance these projects. In that sense, the transnational team building is taking place centrally and project-based.

Figure 2 illustrates the diversity of these meetings. Participants report that these meetings boost collaboration, help to break down silos and recompensate for the high professional commitment. During these events, **CIVIS as an Alliance is becoming more tangible**. The meeting organisation happens in close collaboration with the institutional coordinators of each Institution and the coordination team/the persons chairing the body which meets in person.

[2] Frame, A., & Curyło, B. (2024). Bringing Erasmus home: the European universities initiative as an example of 'Everyday Europeanhood.' *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, *32*(2), 334–349. https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2022.2134986

Figure 2. Images of CIVIS in-Person Meetings



CIVIS2 kick-off, 2022, AMU



Hub 1 Council, 2023, SUR



SC Meeting, 2024, SU



WPL-Meeting, 2025, AMU



Unit Summit, 2025 UB



Forum, 2026, UH2C (no E+ funds)

From the Expert Group to Casablanca: making the 1st CIVIS African–European Forum for Research and Education a reality[3]

In March 2026, UH2C hosted the First African–European CIVIS Forum for Research and Education. Bringing together 200+ researchers, educators, and professional staff from all 17 CIVIS universities and 10 further institutions, the event successfully delivered on its main objectives to: 1) showcase existing research and educational projects addressing joint challenges faced by African and European societies, 2) consolidate existing and create new networks of African and European scientists planning new joint projects in this realm, 3) engage scientists and professional staff in a dialogue on how to foster African-European science collaboration within and beyond the Alliance.

The pathway from idea to implementation of the Forum may itself stand for a successful collaboration between African and European as well as between scientific and managerial representatives of the Alliance. The idea originally emerged from open discussions during joint delegation visits of European CIVIS Member Universities, comprising academic as well as administrative staff, to African Associate Member Universities in late 2022/early 2023. In joint talks with African hosts, such an event appeared to be a promising measure to mobilise faculty at African and European CIVIS institutions around themes of common interest.

Consequently, the basic idea was presented at a joint SC meeting of European CIVIS universities with representatives from African Associate Member Universities in June 2023. On this basis, two months later, the SC set up a special TF for developing a concrete proposal for implementing such an event. The group comprised members from European and African institutions, representatives of CIVIS Hubs, and Alliance management staff. It explored various organisational features, formats, themes as well as funding options and received thereby input from the EG 'Global Partnerships', too.

The TF presented a first concept note to the SC in June 2024. The latter confirmed the potential of the plan and asked the TF, in a next step, for an elaborated, final version. Based on the affirmative SC discussions, the newly founded Research Council integrated the event in its proposal for a CIVIS Research Roadmap, adopted by the BoR in September 2024. After consultation with all CIVIS Member Universities and Hub Councils, the TF submitted a final implementation plan, adopted by the SC in January 2025. The TF was thereby dissolved due to the completion of its task. Based on TF recommendations for subsequent steps, the SC introduced a Programme Committee, including again African and European scientists, for preparing the academic contents of the event as well as an Organising Committee dealing with its practical implementation. The latter received

[3] No CIVIS2 funds were used to organise the meeting in Casablanca itself. However, CIVIS management and governance structures that are only possible through CIVIS2 funds (according to various tasks of the project regarding external partner inclusion), allowed the institutions to join efforts to make this Forum become a reality beyond the CIVIS2 project.

support from ICs in the MC as well as those in the Associate Member contact group in implementing staff mobilities to Casablanca.

Four main governance and management factors facilitated the complex process from idea to implementation: 1) the setting-up of an inclusive, goal-oriented, single-purpose TF, backed in its mission and objectives by the governance of the Alliance while enjoying the necessary freedom to explore and eventually propose the most adequate approach to implementation. 2) The consensus-generating, coordinating function of the SC in key moments of the process. This was supported by the SC acting as a plenary for African and European as well as research, educational, and thematic stakeholders (i.e., CIVIS Hubs). This inclusivity was key, for instance, in arriving at joint approach to an inclusive, equitable sharing of parts of the financial costs of the event among European and African Associate Member Universities, apart from the substantial additional inputs from UH2C and AMU. 3) The cross-participation of several Alliance representatives in several groups and bodies involved in the process. This facilitated the communication, mutual understanding, and effective collaboration over a longer period (e.g., several SC members and scientists from CIVIS Hubs participated in the initial discussions during delegation visits to African universities, some later joined the TF and eventually the Programme or Organising Committee). 4) The investment in dedicated management staff for African-European collaboration. This facilitated the communication and coordination between the various bodies involved in the process, apart from supporting the preparation and implementation of the event itself. Beyond this governance and management success, the Forum illustrates how CIVIS also serves as a bridge between the ERA and African scientific communities.

Going Beyond Grant Obligations: The CIVIS Research Unit and Seed-Funding

The commitment of CIVIS member universities has consistently extended well beyond the obligations fixed in the Grant Agreement to fulfil its Members priorities. An example of this is the establishment of a dedicated Research Unit, which grew partly out of the RIS4CIVIS project (Horizon Europe/SwafS, 2021–2023). Each member university voluntarily contributed at least 10% full-time equivalents to this structure, an investment driven by a shared conviction that research collaboration is central to the Alliance's long-term mission. This collective commitment transformed a project-based initiative into a more durable institutional structure, with every participating university actively invested in its success. Collaboratively, the Research Council and the Research Unit have worked towards the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding for shared Research Infrastructures, giving our universities the opportunity to power-up their research through shared facilities, catalogued in the CIVIS Agora.

Also, in line with these efforts, CIVIS launched two Seed Funding Calls for enhancing Research Collaborations, respectively in 2024 and 2025. This initiative, which stems from a political commitment to support the Alliance's research dimension, arose from a proposal by the Research Council. It also demonstrates the commitment of the institutions, all of which have contributed additional funding on top of CIVIS2 project funds (used only for academic collaboration and doctoral activities) to ensure its feasibility and success. Since research activities as such cannot be funded by CIVIS2 funds, own universities contributions have enlarged the pool of eligible activities and enabled the participation of African partners. This point illustrates the added value of building Alliances - the Erasmus+ and institutional investments provide a collaborative framework from which other types of collaborations can then also stem, not limited to education. Our 'teachers' are first and foremost researchers, and they bring this dimension to their engagement with CIVIS.

Through the first two calls, managed by the Research Unit in close alignment with the MC and the SC, over 50 projects have been funded in the areas of the five CIVIS Hubs, in line with the Alliance's objectives of promoting interdisciplinarity and civic values (civic engagement, tackling societal challenges). The majority of the projects supported established numerous links with other initiatives and networks promoted by CIVIS (doctoral schools, BIPs, transdisciplinary research networks, etc.). Some of them have even proven their value well beyond the Alliance support: one seed-funded project, spaXio, focused on spatial crosstalk in immuno-oncology, successfully secured an MSCA DN programme.

This demonstrates how individual universities' interests and strategies can be combined with the Alliance's research strategy, serving the Alliance's integration while contributing to reinforcing the ERA (including through generating additional Horizon Europe-funded collaborations).

Institutional transformations induced by CIVIS

Besides Alliance-wide success stories, CIVIS also slowly changes each institution. We are all very diverse and different comprehensive HEIs, so achieving transformation is all but self-evident. Here is a selection of one or two meaningful transformational success stories per university, without the ambition to cover the whole picture. This shows that CIVIS transcends its management bodies and the Alliance structure and has tangible effect within and across its Members.

Univ.	Example for transformation
AMU	1. Only thanks to the CIVIS BIP initiative, AMU has established a general institutional framework for setting up the BIPs at AMU, including an internal approval process from project creation through the issuance of transcripts. Creation of a guide, implementation of cross-departmental meetings, and systematic support for project leaders. This shows that CIVIS allowed new activities to be accepted and mainstreamed across AMU. 2. CIVIS has induced a department-level curriculum change: Following a training delivered under the CIVIS-linked Erasmus+ KA2 project on Service-Learning (SL), further deepening at the CIVIS SL forum in Bucharest (June 2024) and the CIVIS SL awards, a teacher embedded Service-Learning elements across all the three years of the general Bachelor cycle of her institute. This shows that CIVIS activities can produce lasting infra-Alliance curriculum transformation, reaching well beyond the Alliance's own structure
NKUA	On 8 July 2026, the updated version of the Internal Regulation of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) was published in the Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (Government Gazette Issue 4173), following the NKUA Senate Decision No. 542/30.6.2026. The 278-page document mentions CIVIS 17 times across various sections, including provisions concerning the study programmes implemented by NKUA, ECTS recognition, and Open Science. In practice, the new Regulation formally incorporates the CIVIS Alliance into NKUA's day-to-day operations. This can be seen as a follow-up to an earlier intervention proposed by NKUA to the Greek Ministry of Education. As a result of this earlier initiative, the Greek Ministry of Education introduced legislative changes that were approved by the Greek Parliament in July 2022 as part of the new higher education legislation. These changes formally recognised the European Universities Initiative and removed existing legal obstacles that had prevented Greek universities from participating fully in European University Alliances.
UB	1. Structural institutional transformation - Transdisciplinary approaches led to the establishment of the 20th faculty at the University of Bucharest: the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Sciences, the first faculty of its type in Romania. 2. Transnational cooperation led to transformation, diversification and expansion of a flexible curriculum offer. For example, a Service-Learning approach has been integrated in more syllabi/courses, and is now included in the training for teachers and the mentoring programme for young professors.
ULB	Following the identification of common priorities by the CIVIS Research Council, ULB launched an internal call for short-term (less than 30 days) doctoral mobility towards other CIVIS universities, during academic year 2025-2026. This type of mobility has not been supported before via the institutional Erasmus+ budget and the internal call thus represented a pilot to test out the format and uptake at the ULB. As such, it showcases the transformative impact that CIVIS can have when setting institutional priorities **and** leading to the creation of new concrete opportunities and operational structures.
UofG	Headstart on European Collaborations: Following the implementation of Brexit in 2021, the UK did not re-associate to Horizon and Erasmus+. As a result, new ECRS and internationalisation staff did not get the opportunity to develop European networks to the same extent as prior to Brexit. Following the announcement of the UK's re-association to Horizon, CIVIS played a key role in bridging the collaboration hiatus by providing a ready-formed and vibrant network, and by providing the expertise through Information sessions delivered by the Research Unit, and sharing calls for collaboration in project proposals. With the re-association to Erasmus, UofG is already a step ahead and, with the support of CIVIS colleagues, is delivering expert sessions on BIPs at the British Council KA1 event on 17 June 2026.
UNIL	Following UNIL's integration into the CIVIS Alliance in 2022, the university has revised its institutional policy on the development of international degrees and established internal processes to support this effort. In parallel, the Swiss Mobility Exchange Programme introduced short-term mobility schemes starting from the 2025–26 academic year. Through its participation in CIVIS, UNIL

	has been able to anticipate and streamline the management of these mobility and educational formats in close coordination with its faculties. From a Swiss perspective, CIVIS enables UNIL to remain closely aligned with European policy developments, actively contributing to the EHEA while maintaining its international competitiveness.
UAM	1. Job shadowing within the Alliance has had a transformative impact at UAM by fostering the exchange of good practices, strengthening professional capacities, and promoting a shared institutional culture. For six months, the UAM CIVIS Office hosted a member of ULB's communication team. This experience enabled both teams to observe and discuss their daily practices and working routines, gain new perspectives, develop innovative approaches to their work, and strengthen alignment and collaboration across the Alliance. 2. CIVIS contributed to strengthening UAM's relationship with the regional quality assurance agency. UAM's greater involvement in the design and implementation of new educational programmes has encouraged closer dialogue with the agency, especially on European collaboration, enhanced mutual understanding of emerging educational formats, and supported the development of more effective approaches to quality assurance and accreditation.
SUR	1. At Sapienza's level, being part of CIVIS enhanced the creation of the OL and all the civic engagement activities connected. 2. At national level, Italian HEI members of alliances pushed ANVUR (national accreditation agency) to facilitate the accreditation of joint programmes through the European Approach. Thanks to this initiative, ANVUR updated the Guidelines for the initial accreditation of joint international study programmes in 2024 and became part of EQAR IN 2025. The simplified process enhanced the number of joint degree proposals also in Sapienza, especially programmes developed in CIVIS Alliance. 3. In Sapienza the massive effort put on BIPs implementation sped up the digitalisation of recognition process for ECTS obtained after the completion of a BIP.
PLUS	CIVIS has made a significant strategic contribution to the internationalisation of the University of Salzburg by broadening international opportunities for students and staff and by strengthening participation in joint educational programmes, (BIPs, and collaborative research initiatives, including MSCA Doctoral Networks and MSCA Staff Exchanges. To support these activities, the University adapted internal guidelines, administrative processes, and institutional frameworks, enabling the effective planning and implementation of CIVIS educational formats, particularly BIPs and other collaborative learning activities. These organisational developments have strengthened the University's capacity for international cooperation. CIVIS has raised the visibility and strategic importance of staff development. The University of Salzburg played a leading role in designing the concept and framework for the CIVIS Internationalisation Academy, an initiative that was subsequently adopted across the Alliance, which ultimately shows the University's capacity to shape Alliance-wide institutional development while reinforcing its own international profile
SU	1) In preparation of a common agreement on joint programs, internal procedures and routines were established above faculty level to better facilitate the development of joint programs leading to the award of a joint, multiple and/or double degree. 2) In conjunction to the establishment of TRACEE, SU has applied a new financial model on fees in an international masters' programme. This development is a step towards a more sustainable financial model that makes it possible for a Swedish university like SU to coordinate an international masters' programme of this size and complexity. However, additional external funding (Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters and/or equivalent alternative funding) is still required in order to cover costs. The development of a new financial model at SU has gained interest with several stakeholders nationally, including other universities and national authorities.
UT	As a part of wider institutional development and as a result of CIVIS collaboration in the Education Unit, and not least following the experiences with both ART-W and TRACEE, the UT team tasked with planning and implementing degree programmes drafted guidelines and procedures for initiating and implementing collaborations within study programmes, ranging from single courses and exchange semester to full joint degree programmes. These guidelines have now been implemented as the standard procedure at UT for all types of learning collaboration, with all partners (not just CIVIS). Interestingly, these internal UT guidelines, which are themselves an outcome of CIVIS2, now served as the template for the CIVIS guidelines for planning and implementing joint degree programmes (not yet validated at the time of writing). So, this internal, institutional change through CIVIS is already indirectly paying back to CIVIS in becoming a template for CIVIS' own procedures and guidelines.

Taken together, these examples show that CIVIS's transformational effect does not stop at the Alliance's own structures: it reaches into member universities' internal rules, structures and culture. The forms this takes vary: new institutional frameworks and approval procedures, structural change such as a new faculty, new institutional policies on international degrees, national/regional-level regulatory shifts triggered through the Alliance, or staff-level practice change... In several cases, what began as internal institutional adaptation to CIVIS has itself fed back into the Alliance, becoming a template for CIVIS-wide guidelines or initiatives, showing that the relationship between CIVIS and its Members is reciprocal.

Finally, Associate Member Universities in Africa, although not benefitting from the CIVIS2 project funding, have gained valuable experience in Alliance-based collaboration between higher education institution. This is an innovative, high-potential format also in the African context. Associating to CIVIS has allowed Associate Members to enhance their capacity-strengthening for this collaboration mode, also due to CIVIS' approach to integrate Associate Members in all governance and most managerial bodies of the Alliance.

Challenges and deviations

(1) Overload of the project (DoA and Technical Description): The ambition to deliver on all fronts at once, resulted in an overwhelming number of tasks, too many partners involved and a lack of overview. At the same time, in the sense of participative co-construction, the involvement of different stakeholders is crucial. This challenge is addressed through various management tools mentioned later in this report (see below). Key organisational adjustments included introducing dedicated thematic and decision-focused MC meetings, replacing the unwieldy "extended MC" format, and establishing monthly WPL meetings to ensure coherence and adequate follow-up across WP.

(2) Fuzziness of responsibilities: Some WP tasks overlapped and responsibilities were not always clearly delineated (e.g. mobility in WP6, challenge-based education in WP3, modularity in WP11). Originally, this interdependence has been voluntarily decided to ensure better collaboration. However, it rather created unclarity. This fuzziness was solved through internal discussions or through MC deliberation. The transversal support provided by Units was frequently decisive in achieving cross-WP coherence.

(3) Information fragmentation across bodies: Given the number of bodies and WPs, information could not, and should not, flow equally to all. The ED therefore bridges the MC and SC in both directions. Governance members, ICs and the Coordination Office are kept informed of key Alliance-wide developments. The internal CIVIS Info Newsletter, which provided an accessible overview of ongoing activities, calls and deadlines, was discontinued following a staff turnover but will be reintroduced in CIVIS 2.1. Cross-thematic formats such as WPL meetings, the annual Unit Summit and CIVIS Days proved effective in breaking barriers, enabling in-person exchange and raising mutual awareness of activities across the Alliance. The common construction of timelines has been an efficient tool for this issue, and should be pursued more systematically.

(4) Dependence on individual capacity and commitment: CIVIS is characterised by high engagement from its Members. However, where positions are part-time or contributions are made entirely in-kind (as in the EGs or Student Council) the pace and depth of work depends on the capacity available. In some cases, initiatives were launched but could not be completed due to the combination of high complexity and limited resources (e.g. the EG on Doctoral Education). WP10 ensured follow-up on this work, and in CIVIS 2.1 doctoral short-term mobilities have been formalised as a dedicated milestone.

(5) Stakeholder inclusion: The Partners Council convened only once. Given the diversity of partner profiles and geographic dispersion, the added value of the format remained unclear. There was a disconnect between the understanding of Civic Engagement (narrowly focused on local community engagement) and the type of civil partners selected by each partner institution at the beginning of the project, that would have been more suitable for larger scale projects for social impact. It was difficult to reconcile the minutiae addressed in OL and SLP projects with the broader outlook of the Partners Council. However, OL projects (see Deliverable 4.1) proved highly effective at engaging local stakeholders on a project-by-project basis, embedding community actors directly into educational activities and generating concrete local impact.

Also, CIVIS bodies might better include academics and students that are not mainly in touch with CIVIS to broaden the perspective. The Participative Council (reuniting different stakeholder groups within university) only convened twice. Here again, within the concrete co-creation of OL projects, SLP or educational activities,

for example the TRACEE board, students and different types of staff are included decentrally wherever added value was perceived. However, the Alliance has not found a sustainable and efficient way yet to ensure this across all management bodies. This is also due to the high specialisation required in the day-to-day Alliance work. The Alliance will work on the updated membership of various CIVIS bodies to further improve stakeholder inclusion.

For African CIVIS universities, the assumed function of the Partner Council to provide an interface for their views and inputs was assigned to the more adequate and targeted working group for Associate Member Institutional Contacts, organised by the Global Partnerships Officer, as well as regular joint SC and BoR meetings. After signing the Alliance Agreement in 2024, Associate Members were anyway invited to all governance bodies and Units, thus enabling the direct collaboration on joint affairs with this stakeholder group. Although special meeting and collaboration formats, tailored to the needs, interests, and capacities of Associate Members have largely been implemented, including all Associate Members systematically in the relevant CIVIS management and governance bodies remains a continuous task, also in light of their unequal capacity (including resources) to participate in the project as non-beneficiaries.

(6) Recognition of engagement: The absence of formal recognition, whether financial or in terms of workload relief, for contributions to CIVIS activities remained a structural challenge throughout the project. For specific projects, such as the Service-Learning Awards, this recognition went well thanks to the support of the OLs. For further and more mainstreamed improvement, exchange with other European University Alliances and internal reflection generated several ideas for the future: closer engagement with institutional HR departments, the introduction of a CIVIS label for educational activities as a form of symbolic recognition, and a more structured use of Alliance's mobility and exchange opportunities as a meaningful, experience-based reward for active contributors.

Monitoring and management processes

Documents and tools for day-to-day management and tracking progress

Lack of communication and overlap of tasks and fragmentation of information have been identified as major challenges and risks, specific tools mitigate these risks. These tools, presented below in **Table 4** provide transparency, track risks and facilitate knowledge sharing to improve task visibility and reduce reliance on individuals. They are continuously monitored and improved by the coordinating university in collaboration with the affected entities. In addition to these tools, each Unit or relevant CIVIS body had their own communication, monitoring and reporting tools to follow-up on activities, such as educational projects, OL projects, etc.

Table 4. Central Project Management Tools

Tool	Purpose	Key Benefits	Limitations / Challenges
Asana	Project management: tracking tasks, milestones, deliverables and risks across WPs.	Shared visibility for WPLs and Coordinator; cross-tracking of risks.	Uneven adoption; not accessible for all team members; hard to maintain after key person left. Consequently, partly replaced by other tools.
CIVIS Box (Nextcloud)	Collaborative Cloud for the whole CIVIS community.	Preparing and sharing meeting agendas and reports collaboratively, allowing access to relevant documents across all partners. Independence from non-European cloud providers.	The complex project structure is difficult to manage in linear folder structures, making updating and overviewing the Box challenging.
Slack	Instant messaging for informal and direct team exchanges.	Lower threshold to contact colleagues; quick sharing of informal information.	Adds new communication channel; unevenly adopted alongside email.
Periodic Progress Report	Quarterly written updates from each WPL, discussed at WPL meetings (started after mid-term review).	Structured overview of WP progress; enables bilateral follow-up and course correction.	Adds reporting burden; not sustainable with other implementation and reporting obligations.
Database Overview (Excel)	Shared repository of key project data following staff changes.	Equal access to information; reduces duplicated effort for deliverables and reporting.	Requires active maintenance to stay up-to-date.
Milestones & Deliverables Tracker	Excel table tracking status, comments and links for all milestones and deliverables.	Supported catching-up delayed milestones; serves as overview of progress and repository.	Manual tool requiring regular updates.
Milestone Checklist	Criteria checklist ensuring milestones meet standards of the Grant Agreement and Alliance.	Ensures compliance with Grant Agreement and internal rules; promotes consistency.	Possibility of just ticking boxes.
Mailing Lists & Airtable Nominations	Communication lists for project-related exchanges involving ICs.	Allows relevant bodies to be included for information and accompany various decision stages.	Risk of outdated contacts; updates depend on initiative from new individuals/ICs.
Airtable Budget	Budgetary follow-up for CIVIS incentivised projects; supports amendments.	Efficient budget tracking structure.	Licence issue prevented full sharing across all relevant people.
Survey Monkey	Joint evaluation and follow-up of project applications (Hubs, BIPs calls for proposals).	Enables collaborative review of applications.	—
Mobility Management Platform (Fullfabric)	Tracks student enrolments and mobilities; currently used for BIPs.	Centralised mobility tracking with planned expansion to wider CIVIS activities.	Currently limited to BIPs; broader rollout pending.

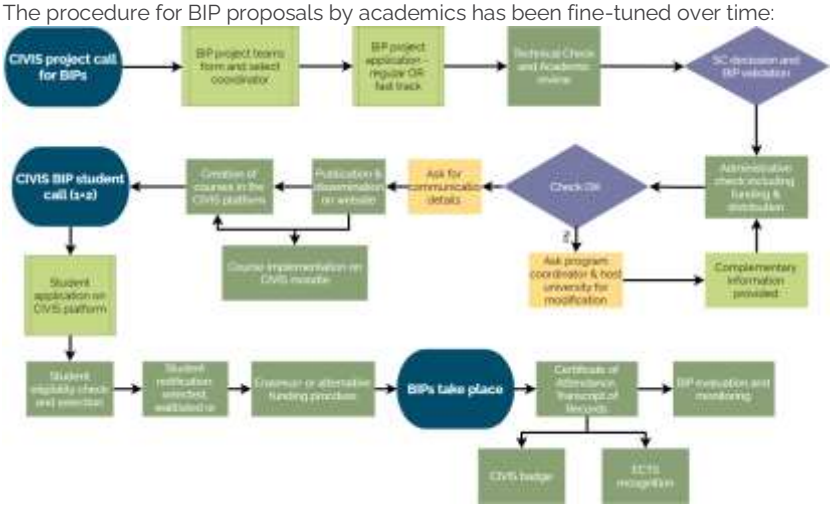
Risk management

The risk management process is based on Table 2.1.5 in the application for CIVIS2, the report on the evaluation of the application by the European Commission and other data, such as SWOT workshops. The risk management plan lists possible difficulties that may arise in the course of the CIVIS2 project and provides a protocol for adequate preventive measures and solutions. A dedicated sub-group, consisting of key management personnel from the CIVIS2 beneficiaries, UNIL and UofG, continued the process in February 2023. This subgroup planned and structured the monitoring process for updating the risk management plan, which was subsequently validated by the MC in collaboration with the WPLs during a joint meeting in May 2023. In practice, the MC served also as body to alert on risks. Ad-hoc groups were introduced to tackle the identified risk accordingly. Some risks, for example delays because of missing evaluators for proposals responding call, have not finally been tackled due to too many institutional constraints, delaying call evaluation.

Call management

To articulate transformational strategy and bottom-up approaches, calls have been a central tool to make CIVIS become reality and to engage different communities. All these calls have been managed from the definition of objectives (preparation by competent body such as the Education Unit/OLs Council/WPs… validation by MC and SC), to the publication and operational functioning (Communications Unit and Digital Campus Unit), evaluated (technical and academic), selected (then the selection might be confirmed by the SC) and then supported and followed up by the relevant management bodies. One central strength of these calls: setting a minimum of three participating member universities allowed us to maintain a transnational collaborative spirit in all our projects, to ensure Civisness (together with other criteria such as pedagogic innovation, transdisciplinarity, societal relevance…). Overall CIVIS bodies managed 27 central calls.

Table 5. Key Calls Managed by CIVIS

Call for	Number of calls/editions	Outline of the Procedure
BIP call for proposals + call for students	6 calls for BIP proposals during CIVIS2 10 BIP calls for students	The procedure for BIP proposals by academics has been fine-tuned over time: 
Call for educational activities	2	The first and the second call set different priorities for the format and followed the so called "flagship" projects of the Hubs. Key steps include: drafting the call (objectives, criteria, budget) by Education Unit, Education Council, MC; validation by SC; publication; technical evaluation; academic evaluation; selection and validation by SC; notification; support, follow-up and monitoring through Unit and MC (on budgetary questions).
Call for SLPs	3 (of which 1 pilot call)	After a pilot call, two other calls have been launched. The steps consisted of the definition of the call (objectives, criteria, budget) by WP4 and WP6, publication and promotion, evaluation and selection by panel (students, academic and administrative staff), validation by SC, implementation support by Support group led by UT/WP6. Otherwise, budget and organisation were managed autonomously by students.

Call for	Number of calls/editions	Outline of the Procedure
Call for Seed-Funding projects	2	Proposed by the Research Council, implemented by Research Unit, with a mix of CIVIS2 and own university funds (depending on eligibility); competitive call with defined eligibility, evaluation and sustainability criteria; multi-level governance (Hub Councils, MC, Research Council, SC) and independent peer review; implementation coordinated through local CIVIS offices with shared funding and reporting responsibilities.
Call for Staff Weeks	3	Three calls for Staff Weeks (2024, 2025, 2026 rolling call for continuity beyond CIVIS2) have been launched by the WP 7 lead with the support of relevant CIVIS bodies; the call required mobility plan with ring-fenced STT/STA funding to secure institutional resources; proposals submitted by organisers, eligibility check by WP7 (alignment with CIVIS WPs/objectives), validation by the MC, information to the SC; implementation by host institutions with local resources, central coordination, communication and dissemination through CIVIS.
Rolling call for OL Projects	Rolling call (monthly evaluation rounds), opened in June 2024	Definition of criteria and objectives, publication and communication (incl. info session); monthly evaluation by a multidisciplinary committee (OL Council, CIVIS management, and EGs on Civic Engagement and Service-Learning). Selected projects received lump-sum funding and were monitored through mid-term and final impact reports.

Financial management

Financial allocations related to calls, incentives, and mobility activities follow a clear validation circuit involving the SC and MC. Summary tables are systematically developed to track the distribution of funds per call, while the yearly mobility plan is coordinated in collaboration with the Mobility Unit. Budgetary data are centrally collected and monitored through a shared database, allowing for continuous oversight and eligibility check at the coordination level. Budget review points are integrated into MC meetings to assess the state of consumed and remaining funds, and to adopt corrective measures if necessary.

To give one specific example, the projects resulting of the educational calls have been financially managed as follows:

1. The SC establishes the maximum budget per project activity for the call, based on a decision note prepared by the Education Unit and the Coordination Team, and studied by the MC in accordance with applicable procedures and guidelines.
2. Projects undergo a selection and evaluation process (technical and scientific). During this phase, proposed budgets may be subject to modification requests/recommendations
3. The SC reviews and formally validates the outcomes of the evaluation process.
4. Project Coordinators integrate the approved proposals in close coordination with the Education Unit and the Financial Manager, in accordance with the applicable grant provisions.
5. The IC of the lead university and the Education Unit present the updated proposals to the MC, where they are validated or returned with requests for further revision.
6. Implementation is monitored by ICs and the Education Unit. Reporting is carried out by the Coordination Team, the Education Unit, and individual projects to verify that activities have been executed as planned.
7. The Financial Manager, in cooperation with Institutional Coordinators, prepares amendments to the Consortium agreement to redistribute centrally managed call funds among partner universities in line with the validated budget

Challenges and deviations

(1) **Maintaining management and coordination tools up to date**. 13 WPs, 5 Units, 78 Milestones, and multiple governance bodies to coordinate, updating calendars, agendas, newsletters, website information, and reporting tools required constant follow-up. In many cases, even if a fixed procedure was foreseen, the functioning depended to a large extent on the availability and proactivity of the people involved. Changes in tools and personnel further complicated continuity.

(2) **Diversity of institutional habits** across partner universities. Each university has its own administrative traditions, internal structures, and digital practices, meaning that common tools had to be adapted differently depending on the local context. While platforms such as Asana worked very well for some partners, they were less effective for others. Similar differences could be observed in reporting practices, with some partners consistently meeting deadlines while others submitted material much later. Therefore, the project managers (one paid by Erasmus+ grant and one by the French ANR) at AMU were central to support these efforts and synchronise the work as good as possible.

(3) **Staff turnover within the Coordination Team.** This challenge is also highlighted in reports on the Alliance's transformational potential[4]. At the same time, the growing maturity of the Alliance allowed CIVIS to maintain continuity despite these changes and even opened spaces for innovation and renewed perspectives, particularly in the transition towards CIVIS2.1 and the CIVIS 2035 vision. Nevertheless, turnover remained challenging in terms of continuity and the preservation of institutional knowledge.

CIVIS2 Timeline

Table 6 showcases key steps for CIVIS2 governance and management. It offers an overview of the diversity of activities, including important management/coordination activities, governance meetings, key events, related European projects, and successes. The detailed timeline figures in the continuous and final report.

This timeline reveals how **CIVIS is operating at considerable scale and complexity** by showing (just a snapshot of) a **dense, overlapping rhythm of governance cycles** (recurring BoR meetings), call management (BIPs, SLPs, staff weeks, educational activities), in-person strategic or **operational meetings** (CIVIS Days, Unit Summits, MC meetings), CIVIS **sister projects** (RIS4CIVIS, SMARTT, UNI-T, PartiCIVIS,…) and **external milestones** (EAIE conferences, alliance agreements, CIVIS Association formation). Other topics such as participation at events in Brussels, launches of communication events, local CIVIS Days, etc. are not covered by this illustrative overview. From a project management standpoint, the sheer volume of actions points to a highly distributed coordination burden, where Alliance-level coordination and local institutional implementation are interdependent. This big range of activities across 11 comprehensive universities might also be overwhelming for university governance and administration. It will be key during CIVIS2.1 to streamline and mainstream all these actions.

[4] European Commission: Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, PPMI, Grumbinaitė, I., Colus, F. and Buitrago Carvajal, H., Report on the outcomes and transformational potential of the European Universities initiative, Publications Office of the European Union, 2025, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/32313, p. 116

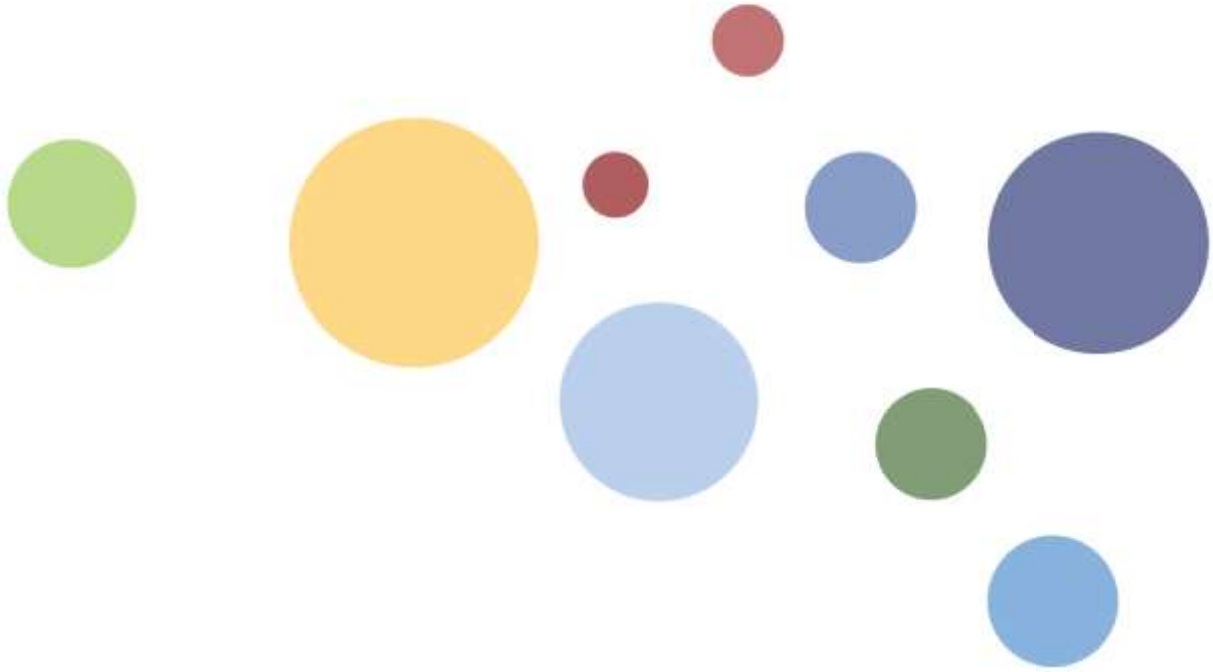
Table 6 Timeline of CIVIS-Related Activities during CIVIS2

2022/23	
01/10/22	Launch Art-W Master
01/10/22	1st BIP call for proposals closed (for AY 2022/23)
11-13/10/22	UNI-T Kick-Off Meeting (not funded by CIVIS2)
11/10/22	BoR in Person at AMU
11/22	2nd BIP call for proposals
11/22	2nd BIP call for students
01/01/23	Launch flagship educational initiatives via Hubs
02/23	3rd BIP call for students
16/02/23	CIVIS SMARTT Kick-off meeting (not funded by CIVIS2)
09/03/23	BoR
03/23	3rd BIP call for proposals
24-26/05/23	CIVIS Days 23
26/05/23	BoR in Person at UT
09/2023	4th (special) BIP call for students
26-29/09/23	EAIE Rotterdam

2023/24	
01/10/23	Launch PolyCIVIS
02-03/10/23	MC in Person Meeting (Lausanne, no CIVIS2 funds)
10/23	4th BIP call for proposals
10/23	4th BIP call for students
24/11/23	BoR
29/11/23	RIS4CIVIS final conference (not funded by CIVIS2)
30/01/24	PolyCIVIS Conference (not funded by CIVIS2)
22/02/24	BoR
02/24	5th (special) BIP call for students
12-14/03/24	MC in Person Meeting SUR
04/24	5th BIP call for proposals
04/24	5th BIP call for students
30/04/24	Student Council Meeting at UNIL (no CIVIS2 funds)
23/05/24	BoR
01/06/24	OL project rolling call
12/06/24	Cross-unit meeting Madrid
12/07/24	BoR: SG election
17/07/24	Call for educational activities 24
01/09/24	AISBL creation
01/09/24	SLP pilot call
17-20/09/24	EAIE Toulouse
24-26/09/24	CIVIS Days 24
26/09/24	Alliance Agreement
26/09/24	BoR in Person at PLUS
26/09/24	Student Council in Person Meeting at PLUS

2024/25	
10/24	6th BIP call for proposals
10/24	6th BIP call for students
01/11/24	SLP call 24
15-16/01/25	WPL meeting Marseille
25/01/25	CIVIS Vice-Rector elected to FOREU4ALL Board
01/02/25	SLP Call 25
13/03/25	BoR
07/04/25	Staff Weeks Call 1
04/25	7th BIP call for students
09-11/04/25	Unit Summit 25
13-14/05/25	MC in Person Meeting SU
17/05/25	Launch Cascade Network
11-13/06/25	CIVIS Days 25
13/06/25	BoR in Person at SUR
13/06/25	Student Council in Person Meeting SUR
13/06/25	Memorandum of Understanding on Sharing Research Infrastructures
20/06/25	Call for educational activities 25
01/09/25	Staff Weeks Call 2
01/09/25	Launch TRACEE
09-12/09/25	EAIE Gothenburg
30/09/25	(Re)Launch Eurosud

2025/26	
10/25	8th BIP call for students
10/25	7th BIP call for proposals
10/11/25	BoR in Person at UNIL (travel not funded by CIVIS2)
01/02/26	Relaunch Website
01/02/26	Launch Agora
11/02/26	New Mission Statement (CIVIS 2035) approved by BoR
11/02/26	BoR
01/03/26	Staff Weeks Rolling Call
03/03/26	Submission of the successful CIVIS 2.1 proposal (not funded by CIVIS2)
25-27/03/26	First CIVIS African–European Forum for Research and Education (no CIVIS2 funds)
04/26	8th BIP call for students
28-30/04/26	Unit Summit 26
30/04/26	Successful Closing of CIVIS3i (not funded by CIVIS2)
09/06/26	MC in Person Meeting UB
10-12/06/26	CIVIS Days 26
11/06/26	BoR in Person at GCD in UB
12/06/26	Student Council in Person Meeting UB
08-11/09/26	EAIE Glasgow
30/09/26	Launch PartiCIVIS (not funded by CIVIS2)



3

FROM PROCEDURES TO OUTCOMES

Main results, impact and challenges of the CIVIS2 project

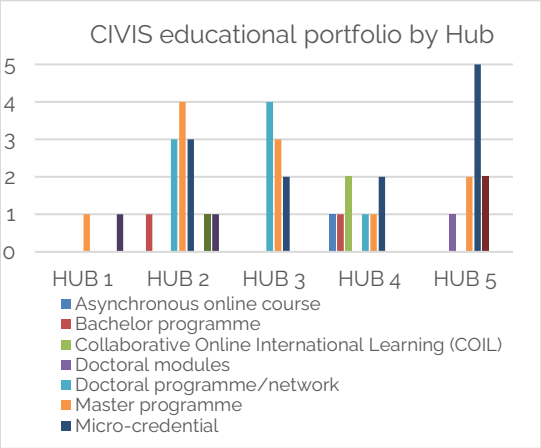
As outlined in the description of the deliverable in the DoA, this chapter aims to serve as "a description of the main results, the potential impact and the main dissemination activities". Since each WP reports on key achievements and impact in their publicly available deliverables, this chapter only proposes a global overview and inform on governance and management decisions behind these achievements. The chapter will be organised by Streams and other CIVIS2 bodies.

Stream 1: *Challenge-based education and civic engagement*

WP2 has prepared a strategy on civic engagement and challenge-based education. This work served as a reference for WP3 and WP4 and is publicly available on our website.

Challenge-based education in CIVIS – BIPs and the CIVIS educational portfolio (WP3)

One of CIVIS assets is the BIP coordination, allowing CIVIS to propose 236 BIPs during CIVIS2. Concretely this allowed 5086 mobile students (+ local participants) to learn together with transnational teaching teams. In the calls for BIP proposals, it is a necessary condition that BIPs are connected to the societal challenges of the Hubs. The integration of innovative pedagogies such as challenge-based education are evaluated positively. Additionally, external stakeholder inclusion as well as civic engagement elements were positively evaluated. Through the BIP calls, managed by CIVIS2, Hub's academics actively contribute to the learning offer of CIVIS.[5]



Concerning the core educational portfolio, two different approaches have been pursued: a first generation of so called "flagship" initiatives, where each Hub could individually identify collaborations to create joint bachelor or master programmes, doctoral offer or modular offer. These projects have then been incentivised by the CIVIS2 budget.

This approach by Hub has been changed to more open, central calls: the CIVIS 2024 and 2025 calls for educational provisions. These clearly also encourage the link to the Hubs challenges and they attribute better scores in evaluation if challenge-based education is considered and external stakeholders are included in the programme. Hubs played here a considerable role in proposing the educational projects and also in evaluation. Without these transnational and transdisciplinary communities, the creation of the CIVIS educational offer would not have been possible.

On the partnership with the Associate Members in Africa, for BIPs the inclusion was encouraged, for the calls of educational activities the participation as well as the diversity of the academic approach was evaluated positively leading to 38% of BIP projects submitted in collaboration between European and African member universities, which is enormous given the funding constraints within the Erasmus+ framework.

The support of the Innovative Pedagogies Officer and the EG on Innovative Pedagogies has been essential to the implementation of formats, both through the development of upskilling initiatives, such as a series of workshops on pedagogical innovation, and through supporting academics in CIVIS strategic projects. One example of this is the event held during the CIVIS Days in Salzburg (2024) around the teaching challenges of transdisciplinarity, organised at the request of the coordinators of the TRACEE Master's program.

CIVIS has also produced and made available online training resources to spread innovative pedagogies and challenge-based education through the CIVIS Moodle. Particularly valuable is the CIVIS guide for Service Learning for lecturers which has been transformed into an online learning module that includes the integration

[5] This aspect is more deeply considered in Deliverable D3.1 and in the BIP report that present an annual evaluation of BIPs.

of a project builder AI Assistant. This pedagogical resource has been developed to support teachers throughout the whole process of designing a service-learning project, following the CIVIS principles set out in the guide. Finally, an online module on challenge-based learning addressed to teachers has been developed in 2026: Applying a Challenge-based learning approach in course design.

One major challenge in this regard is the follow-up and monitoring of educational activities, including the support regarding innovative pedagogies. External evaluators have created mini case studies documenting some of these educational activities and their innovative approaches.

Civic engagement projects and local stakeholder collaboration (WP4)

WP 4 focused on strengthening civic engagement through OL and OL projects, building connections between universities and the broader public, and fostering active European citizenship. The initial transition between CIVIS 1 and CIVIS 2 presented significant challenges. Where CIVIS 1 had adopted a more locally-oriented approach, CIVIS 2 introduced a stronger European dimension following the EACEA's recommendations, while keeping the local anchor at the same time. OLs represent dynamic structures (physical, hybrid, or virtual) designed to foster collaborative projects that respond to societal needs.

A rolling OL call proved instrumental in driving a dynamic momentum overcoming the challenges of the Partners Council (see above), since this mechanism enabled a genuine bottom-up approach to partnership and collaboration. The rolling call resulted in 29 OL projects, demonstrating that CIVIS has successfully caught up on its earlier delays in this area. At the same, time OL continued working outside the projects on local events, always including partners from at least 3 different countries. OL projects have generated tangible outputs made publicly available, including good practices, citizen science results, and policy recommendations. The 29 validated OL projects included 35 local stakeholders and, notably, 10 projects involved African Associate Member universities reflecting a systemic integration of African-European collaboration despite funding and mobility constraints. If the OL Council successfully launched the OL call and supported the development of transnational collaborations, facilitated the sharing of practices, the WP 4 leaders nevertheless identified that a governance body such as the OL Council might not be sufficiently adapted to provide the operational support needed for civic engagement initiatives. As a result, the Civic Engagement Unit was introduced in CIVIS 2.1.

One challenge that remains partially unresolved is the direct collaboration between OLs and Hubs in developing inclusive partnerships. This relationship proved too artificial in its original design. In practice, a decentralised, project-driven model has worked effectively, and is now the preferred approach. The project period nonetheless saw improvement: In 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 three workshops or meetings have been arranged per year between Hubs and Open Labs. In 2025-2026 seven meetings have taken place, making a total of 13. Thus, the target of 'at least five' by the end of the project has clearly been reach.. Cross-Hub exchanges were further supported through the launch of the CASCADE Network in January 2025, which has since hosted 11 workshops and webinars on participatory research, challenge-based education, and co-creation of knowledge.

Capacity-building has been advanced through staff weeks reaching over 100 participants, covering SL, citizen science, and co-creation of knowledge. EGs and the CASCADE Network have produced publicly available resources, including the CIVIS Service-Learning Guide for Lecturers and for Community Partners. They have also resulted in the creation of the Service Learning Awards, a successful application to an Erasmus+ Project ("SL2.0 ColLab"), and an enhanced educational offer:

- BIP 'Civic Engagement & Football: A Transdisciplinary Approach' (2024-2025)
- Micro-programme 'Civic Engagement' (launch 2024-2025, on-going)
- BIP 'Civic Engagement in Europe: A Transdisciplinary Approach' (2025-2026)
- Modular offer 'Civic Engagement meets University (CEMU) – Transversal Skills Through Social Commitment' (2025-2026) '
- Staff training 'Service-Learning - Discover service-learning and develop your own project' (2025)
- Online module in CIVIS Moodle 'Applying a Service-Learning approach in course design' (2026)
- Two staff weeks on participatory research (2025 and 2026, the staff week in Lausanne was not financed by CIVIS2 funds)
- Staff week on Challenge-based education on real life cases (2025)

Stream 2 – *CIVIS Inter-University Campus*

Stream 2 operationalised the CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus strategy (see Deliverable 5.1) developed under WP5 through two parallel WPs: WP6 (student community) and WP7 (staff community). Both WPs followed the same implementation logic: enabling rather than centralising and working through existing CIVIS structures and institutional Units. WP5 ensured the development of the overall strategy, that has then been deployed by WP6 and WP7. We shall highlight here the key achievements of both WPs, and then spotlight the development of the CIVIS Digital Campus.

Students

Under WP6 lead, the Alliance has developed a comprehensive framework for attracting and welcoming students, including a multilingualism agenda spanning over 40 modern and 10 ancient languages. Student ambassadors and representatives of the Student Council serve as personal contact points, and a buddy system supports new arrivals across CIVIS universities.

SLPs represent one of the most innovative contributions deployed under WP6: a full framework and process was established, two open calls were launched receiving 27 and 12 applications respectively, resulting in 17 validated projects in total with up to 300 participants. The approach for the student-led calls derived from a student and staff week aiming to explore what SLPs could/should look like. The prototypes were used to then develop a call, which also taps into the experience and format of the OL rolling call. The SLP Implementation Subgroup (SLP-ISG) of the MC was operationalised to provide bi-weekly oversight and support throughout project implementation. The SLP-ISG composition brought together experienced staff from different backgrounds, not just mobility, helping to deal with the diversity of projects and student needs.

On mobility, BIPs have been the outstanding success story of CIVIS2, strongly supported by the Mobility Unit's work on aligning academic calendars and institutional procedures. The programme offering has also diversified significantly, with three new joint degree programmes established and virtual mobility (Collaborative Online International Learning - COILs) embedded as a permanent complement to physical exchanges.

Governance of CIVIS mobility and welcoming activities has operated through a subsidiarity-based model as described above: strategic decisions were taken by the CIVIS SC and MC, while operational delivery was coordinated by the CIVIS Mobility Unit together with the local International Offices, the Community of Practice Heads of International Offices, and the EG Heads of Mobility in each partner university and where necessary with the other CIVIS Units. This structure allowed CIVIS to build on each university's existing Erasmus+ processes rather than replacing them. The WP6 lead worked towards the European standard Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) to interconnect local mobility management tools (which still needs to be pursued beyond CIVIS2) and on locally embedded welcoming cultures to receive incoming Civizens. All in all, this was a pragmatic choice that let the Alliance scale up BIPs, long-term mobilities and, more recently, CIVIS SLPs without demanding a single centralised process. At the same time, this same decentralised governance exposed its limits where local administrative capacity was uneven: several university administrations proved insufficiently equipped to sustain the close, hands-on support that bottom-up formats such as SLPs require, a key reason why CIVIS governance chose to quietly discontinue the format after two calls. More broadly, the MC and SC have had to balance ambitious Alliance-level targets, such as the (ultimately unmet) goal of doubling mobility numbers compared to CIVIS1, against the reality of limited Erasmus+ funding and a heterogeneous administrative landscape across 11 comprehensive universities, underlining that mobility governance remains as much a matter of coordinating local capacity as of setting central strategy. However, we succeeded in growing mobility numbers, and huge learnings regarding the BIP process even beyond CIVIS and new formats of student engagement.

In collaboration with the WP7 lead and the Communications and Digital Campus Units, WP6 leaders co-led the launch of the CIVIS Agora and the relaunch of the CIVIS website, contributing to a shared digital infrastructure accessible to all Alliance members via their home university account (see below). Next steps in for the Alliance include continued progress towards the European Student Card Initiative (ESCI) and the European Student Exchange Platform, building on the institutional processes already developed in CIVIS2.

Key staff achievements

Under WP7 staff mobility and services including a quality framework, an online playbook, institutional fact sheets, welcome checklist and templates have been developed. Additionally, through Internationalisation Academy, WP7 boosted internationalisation across our institutions and made CIVIS a contact and reference point for such initiatives:

- 107 participants in 4 annual conferences (Unconference, SUCTI, WIII)
- 28 Staff Weeks (the target of 5 per year has been largely exceeded), with 823 staff weeks participants
- Job Shadowing via Agora matchmaking
- Innovative Pedagogies Workshops for trainers and resources page online (see Stream 1)

With the implementation of the Internationalisation Academy, the creation of EGs and Community of Practices, the work implemented in WP7 has enabled new communities of staff to participate in international opportunities, hence boosting internationalisation in CIVIS and within the respective institutions. In addition to all the CIVIS EGs, WP7 has supported five communities of practice/peer networks (Libraries, Communication, Heads of HR departments, Human Resources and Career Service Centres).

Streamlining Diversity Equity and Inclusion was based on an action plan based on WP5 survey; "Making Barriers Visible". A Staff Week on DEI has been organised (Salzburg, Apr 2026), various multilingualism actions took place and global Partner engagement was pursued beyond CIVIS2 for example through the PolyCIVIS & PartiCIVIS projects.

Digital Campus – co-creating the European Digital Campus of tomorrow

Stream 2 operationalised the Digital Campus strategy developed in WP5 in close collaboration with the Digital Campus Unit and the Communication Unit through a clear guiding principle: *as decentralised as possible, as centralised as necessary* (Digital Campus Strategy). Rather than imposing a unified system on 11 universities with deeply rooted local IT infrastructures, CIVIS built a federated approach and implemented shared tools only where they add Alliance-wide value. Decisions on which functionalities to centralise versus leave to local systems were informed by the EG Heads of IT and the Digital Campus Unit's operational-level connection to each university's IT department. This illustrates how the overall strategy of the Alliance is linked to the concrete realities of each university avoiding unworkable proposals and solutions. Instead, this method allowed CIVIS to incrementally move towards the fully integrated inter-university campus.

The most consequential early decision was to federate existing home-university credentials via EduGAIN (interfederation service), rather than creating a separate CIVIS login. This became the founding principle of the entire digital campus: all tools are accessible without an additional account. On this basis, a core toolkit was built and is now fully operational: Moodle (learning management), FullFabric (mobility applications), Nextcloud/CIVIS Box (collaborative storage), SurveyMonkey Apply (project calls), BCDiploma (digital credentials), and OpenDataSoft (research databases). Together, these tools support all major CIVIS journeys from BIPs, SLPs, staff weeks, job shadowing, and innovative pedagogies.

Despite this progress, a structural gap remained throughout CIVIS2: no central hub where students, academics and staff could discover and access the full CIVIS offer in one place. The existing website, a content management system, was never designed for the interactive, data-driven needs of a maturing alliance: course listings, academic matchmaking, research databases, job shadowing opportunities, and support ticketing all required something more. This gap is addressed through the dual launch of the **CIVIS Website** and **CIVIS Agora**.

The narrative part of the CIVIS new website, refocused on external communication and dissemination across all nine CIVIS languages. The Agora has been developed as an inter-alliance project through the aUPaEU Horizon Europe Project and adopted by CIVIS as an early partner. It serves as the internal hub: a data-oriented platform covering course listings, staff training and staff weeks, research groups and infrastructures, thesis supervision, short-term PhD mobilities, job shadowing, and a support ticketing function, with further features planned (such as an intranet, common calendars, etc.).

From a project management perspective, Agora will further support automated monitoring, strategic independence from other (non-European) tools, group and identity management and internal communication. Both platforms launched in early 2026, marking the end of the consolidation phase of the CIVIS Digital Campus and the beginning of a stronger focus on interoperability, particularly through EMREX (procedure for the international and electronic exchange of student data) and Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI).

This consolidation of the Digital Campus during CIVIS2 and in the future is not evident: each of the 11 Full Member Universities carries significant sunk investment in its own, well-established Campus Management System, and the scarcity of IT staff at public-sector pay levels has repeatedly constrained the pace at which local systems could be connected to the central toolkit. Integrating the six African Associate Members, whose IT capacity profiles differ on average from the European partners, adds a further dimension that governance will need to address as EMREX- and LTI-based interoperability will be the next steps. These steps essentially also depend on internal university recruitment and decisions beyond an Erasmus+ project. CIVIS will serve here as an opportunity to test and get familiar with these necessary measures but will not overtake the digital infrastructures of each university.

Stream 3 – *Embedded Joint and Flexible Educational Offer*

Under WPs 9, 10 and 11 educational activities have been developed by academic and administrative staff with the support of the different CIVIS Units on the base of WP8's Deliverable 8.1 (Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple and Joint Education). In the beginning of 2023, CIVIS launched its work on the so called "Flagship" projects. If these projects are not intended to be superior to other educational activities, they were the pioneers resulting from bottom-up initiatives within the Hubs, while the SC decided on how to allocate the available funds. This initiative resulted in 11 flagship projects (see **Table 7**).

To enlarge this portfolio, in July 2024 a central call, open to the whole CIVIS community was launched, with a special focus on Joint Bachelor Degrees, Single Learning Activities (SLAs), Micro-credentials and COILs. A second call for educational activities in 2025 was open to all types of learning offer. This call development and management was linked to various steps in governance and management: setting the call priorities, mobilising the academic communities, providing the application platform, doing the evaluation thanks to the commitment of the Hubs, developing and accompanying the projects (see section on Call management). Importantly, many of these programmes, courses, micro-credentials and other provisions also include local stakeholders and employ innovative pedagogies. These aspects are more detailed in Deliverables 3.1 and 9.1, 10.1 and 11.1. **Table 7** also shows that Associate Members are systemically included in the construction of these activities, even to a different extent, depending the opportunities.

During the whole project, Hubs played a key role as incubator for educational projects, identifying key priorities and creating the networks actually implementing the educational activities for students in collaboration with the staff at each university's administration.

Table 7. CIVIS Educational Portfolio under Development or Running.

Call	Title of activity	Type of activity	Related HUB	Coord. HEI	Partner HEIs
2024	Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainable Mobility	Asynchronous online course	HUB 4	PLUS	ULB, UAM, UH2C
2024	Joint bachelor's in international Tourism	Bachelor programme	HUB 4	UAM	NKUA, UAM, PLUS, SFAX
2025	Co-Designing a CIVIS Bachelor in "Empirical Economics and Social Sciences"	Bachelor programme	HUB 2	SUR	NKUA, UB, UNIL, WITS
2025	Competition for natural resources in rural areas, conflict mechanisms and management through a comprehensive approach	COIL	HUB 4	UB	UAM, SUR
2024	Competition for natural resources and conflict management in a complex approach	COIL	HUB 4	UB	UAM, SUR
2025	Artificial Intelligence and Research: Opportunities Across Disciplines	Doctoral modules	HUB 5	UAM	NKUA, SUR, UB, UofG, PLUS, WITS, MAK
2023	Doctoral Network Museum University Forum	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 2	UT	AMU, NKUA
2023	Hub4 Doctoral Network	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 4	ULB	NKUA, UB, UAM, SUR, UofG, PLUS, MAK, UH2C
2023	Joint Doctoral Programme in Plural Ontologies and Intercultural Philosophy	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 2	UB	UT, AMU, NKUA, SUR, UH2C
2023	Joint PhD in Translational Cardiometabolic Biomedicine & Health	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 3	ULB	UAM, UB, SUR, NKUA, SFAX
2023	Joint PhD Programme in Medical Systems Biology	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 3	PLUS	UT, AMU
2025	CIVIS PhD programme in Bioinformatics	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 3	SUR	AMU, UAM, ULB
2025	Joint European Doctoral Programme in Life and Health Sciences: Innovation and Societal Impact (CIVIS Life & Health PhD)	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 3	UAM	UT, NKUA
2025	Transitive Modernities: Comparative Literary and Visual Studies	Doctoral programme/network	HUB 2	NKUA	AMU, UT, SU, UB, UofG, UCAD, WITS
2023	CIVIS Multiple-Degree Program for Palaeolithic Archaeology	Master programme	HUB 2	UT	SUR, AMU, UT

2023	Drug development: from natural products to formulations and applications	Master programme	HUB 3	NKUA	SUR, UB
2023	International Master of Science in Biochemistry	Master programme	HUB 3	SUR	AMU, UB, UT
2023	Master in South European Studies	Master programme	HUB 2	UAM	AMU, ULB, SUR, UB, UH2C
2023	Transdisciplinary Master Programme in Climate, Environment, Energy	Master programme	HUB 1	SU	AMU, ULB, UB, UAM, SUR, NKUA, PLUS, UT, UofG, UNIL, UH2C, WITS
2025	CIVIS Joint Master Programme in International Education (CIMIE)	Master programme	HUB 5	UB	NKUA, UAM
2025	CIVIS–4CITIES Joint Master's in Urban Studies	Master programme	HUB 4	UAM	NKUA, UB, UofG
2025	European Master in Population Health and Policy	Master programme	HUB 3	UT	UAM, UNIL
2025	International Integrative Master in Applied AI - IIMAA	Master programme	HUB 5	UNIL	AMU, UT, NKUA, SUR, UAM, ULB, UB, PLUS
2025	MA in Advanced Linguistics: Theoretical, Diachronic, Computational Approaches	Master programme	HUB 2	NKUA	UAM, UB
2025	Public Anthropology, Ethnology and Folklore - research and practice with, in and for the society	Master programme	HUB 2	UB	UT, NKUA
2024	Design and development of RNA therapies for human diseases	Micro-credential	HUB 3	UAM	UT, SUR, UB, SFAX
2024	Digital Humanities for Renaissance studies	Micro-credential	HUB 2	UB	AMU, NKUA, SUR, UAM, UH2C, SFAX
2024	IA et travail : accompagner ses équipes face au changement	Micro-credential	HUB 5	ULB	AMU, UNIL
2024	Micro-credential on University Civic Engagement: Making a positive impact on the world from the University	Micro-credential	HUB 2	UAM	UT, NKUA, SUR, ULB, UB, UofG, UNIL, UEM, WITS
2024	The Creative Tourism: Strategies for Designing & Planning Original Itineraries	Micro-credential	HUB 4	UAM	ULB, UB
2025	AI Tools for Audiovisual Content Creation	Micro-credential	HUB 5	NKUA	UB, UNIL, SFAX
2025	Circular and Sustainable Tourism: Cruises, Islands, Alpine Destinations and UNESCO Heritage Sites	Micro-credential	HUB 4	PLUS	NKUA, UAM, SFAX
2025	CUBITUS Microcredential - Communiquer la science à travers les arts	Micro-credential	HUB 2	UNIL	AMU, ULB
2025	Design your Micro-credential : From Idea to Practice	Micro-credential	HUB 5	ULB	NKUA, UB, UNIL, SFAX
2025	Micro-credential on Transversal Competences for PhD candidates and Early Stage Researchers	Micro-credential	HUB 5	SUR	AMU, NKUA, UAM, ULB, UB, UCAD, SFAX
2025	Modern Complex Systems: Testing, Assurance and Challenges	Micro-credential	HUB 5	PLUS	UB, UofG
2025	Unveiling the Complexities of Clinical Immunology: A Case-Based Approach with Interactive Case Discussions	Micro-credential	HUB 3	NKUA	ULB, UB, UH2C
2023	Digital Transformations in Health and Wellbeing	Micro-programme	HUB 5	UB	UAM, UT, AMU, NKUA, SUR
2023	Equitable and Just Digital Society: Developing Interdisciplinary Skills and Knowledge	Micro-programme	HUB 5	UofG	UT, SU, UAM, WITS
2025	Civic Engagement meets University (CEMU) – Transversal Skills Through Social Commitment	Modular learning units	HUB 2	UT	NKUA, UAM, ULB, UB
CIVIS1	Climate and Energy: An Interdisciplinary Perspective	MOOC	HUB 1	SU	AMU, ULB, UB, UAM, SUR, NKUA, PLUS, UT, UofG,
2024	DAE MOOC. Apprentissage de l'expression écrite en Français	MOOC	HUB 2	UAM	NKUA, ULB, UB, UH2C

Building on this experience in developing and launching new joint educational activities, the Education Unit has by now consolidated three common reference documents (a Joint Diploma and Joint Diploma Supplement Template, a Student Handbook Template, and Academic Guidelines for Joint Programmes) translating lessons learned from the design, approval and implementation of the educational portfolio into shared, adaptable tools for academic teams, programme consortia and institutional administrations of the CIVIS universities. Following endorsement by the CIVIS Education Council (Vice Rectors for Academic Affairs) in June 2026, the CIVIS SC

formally validated the three documents in July 2026. They are intended as common, evolving reference tools (and not fixed mandatory rules) that programme teams can adapt to specific consortium arrangements, national legislation and accreditation requirements, thereby reducing duplication of work across consortia, providing a shared language between programme teams and governance structures, and strengthening coherence and transparency across the Alliance. Their relevance also extends beyond CIVIS: as European frameworks move from policy to implementation, the templates and guidelines offer a tested, transferable model that will resonate with the ongoing European Degree discussion and the rollout of the Joint European Degree Label. The SC further mandated the CIVIS Education Council to review and validate the forthcoming Administrative Guidelines for Joint Programmes, ensuring these remain aligned with the newly validated framework and supporting a smoother, more operational implementation process going forward.

Progress in multiple and joint Bachelor and Master Programmes (WP9)

Two Bachelor degree programmes and 11 Master degree programmes are either running or under development. CIVIS is not only committed to the development of these programmes but also to follow the European Approach of Accreditation, with the "Transdisciplinary Master Programme in Climate, Environment, Energy" (TRACEE) and the "Master in South European Studies" (EUROSUD) having successfully obtained European accreditation and the Master "Drug development: from natural products to formulations and applications" (NAT4DD) currently passing it. This does not only require project management of the Alliance, but institutional transformation of the teaching and learning departments of all Member Universities.

Beyond the creation of joint and multiple degree programmes, Staff Weeks and an EG on External Funding allowed the academic and administrative staff to build capacities regarding multiple and joint degrees[6]:

- Erasmus Mundus Unlocked: Preparing Successful Proposals for Sustainable CIVIS Joint Master's Programmes at NKUA, 34 participants
- Designing Competence-Oriented Joint Programmes, at UT (in July 2026, so no participation data available yet)
- From a KPI perspective, the goal of reaching at least 2 joint/multiple master programmes has been achieved with three Master programmes being operational (ART-W, EUROSUD, TRACEE), and even more in preparation (one currently passing accreditation). All the three masters applied, without using CIVIS2 funds, for EMJM funds, reaching the threshold for eligibility, but not funded due to other project reaching higher scores.

Finally, within the SMARTT project, CIVIS actively contributed to the development of criteria for the European Degree Label and built synergies between its own development of degree programmes, other alliances (EUTOPIA, NEUROTECH-EU and UNITA), and the wider European higher education landscape. Without the capacity of the CIVIS project and consortium resulting out of this project, deploying the SMARTT project would not have been possible (see also chapter *Engaging with EU projects*).

Progress regarding a common doctoral offer (WP10)

Developing a common doctoral offer was especially challenging, since national systems are highly differentiated and research collaboration is very decentralised and bottom-up. So, instead of awarding one "European Degree", towards which the Alliance still actively works, CIVIS started creating conditions that allow further integration through facts: networks, co-tutelle mechanisms, and opportunities. More specifically:

- A co-tutelle agreement template and process has been designed, resulting in an increase of internal CIVIS co-tutelles, suggesting that CIVIS prepares institutional learning.
- CIVIS shared the doctoral offer/opportunities among their universities
- Created a job board for doctoral candidate and post-docs on Agora
- Conducted several BIPs, webinars and workshops, for example Hub 5 (Digital and Technological transformation) conducted 4 editions of their doctoral webinars.
- One micro-credential on science communication (in French) has been developed, and another micro-credential on transversal skills for doctoral candidates is under preparation.

[6] These staff weeks and expert groups are not funded by CIVIS2. However, the existing governance and management structures allowed these activities to emerge.

Finally, CIVIS serves as an incubator for MSCA. The MSCA network "Participatory research to action facilitating transformation and innovation in African-European perspectives" has been submitted in October 2025 and accepted in in February 2026. The MSCA applications of MedSysBio (doctoral flagship of Hub3) got granted a MSCA Network named "SpaXio" while Translational Biomedicine and Health is drafting an application for a MSCA Doctoral network. Other smaller consortia within CIVIS also apply for these networks and are reported under Deliverable 10.1.

Progress regarded modular and flexible learning pathways (WP11)

CIVIS has pursued a shift from micro-programmes (which are still ongoing) towards micro-credentials, aligning with EU policy developments (European approach to micro-credentials). The second call for educational activities shows progress towards spreading modular offer among the Alliance with the proposals of 8 micro-credentials, 1 doctoral module, 1 bachelor module. Beyond this offer in the educational portfolio of CIVIS, one must also underline, that according to local rules of faculties and institutes, CIVIS students might get the CIVIS BIPs recognised in their regular curricula. This shows the variety in which the Alliance deals with different forms of modularity and flexible learning pathways.

Regulatory differences in national and institutional policies are difficult to overcome just by the Alliance's commitment. CIVIS contributes to familiarise institutions with transnational modular offer by building trust and taking away fears but without regulatory changes, to which we contribute through this steady commitment, cannot be brought alone by the Alliance.

However, CIVIS contributes to embedding modular offer in programmes in a twofold way:

- **(1)** Embed modules in programmes: in the 2nd CIVIS call, the joint BA in international Tourism (under design) plans to include two micro-credentials in the curriculum: (1.) Creative Tourism (2024 Education call, already designed and to be launched before the end of CIVIS2); (2.) Circular and sustainable tourism (2025 Education call).
- **(2)** Build stacked modular learning units, i. e. "explore how existing short learning units — including CIVIS BIPs, micro-credentials, seasonal schools, and other modular courses— can be stacked into coherent, recognisable learning pathways. […] The aim is to capitalise] on pre-existing CIVIS modules to construct modular, multi-institutional learning pathways."[7]During the 2024 call, a BIP has been transformed into the micro-credential "Digital Humanities for Renaissance studies".

Three staff weeks have been conducted on micro-credentials: the first one at UNIL (not funded by CIVIS2 project funds) and two at UAM.

Practically, as long as certification of the credentials remains an administrative barrier that an alliance alone cannot overcome, CIVIS creates a *de facto* solidarity: some universities that are able to issue certificates and ECTS for micro-credentials (notably UAM and ULB) issue these, allowing other partners to participate in these activities. This allows first experience, capacity building and shows also the added value of alliances in experimental phases. Of course, more sustainable paths will be continued to be developed.

[7] Education Call 2025, P. 3-4 : https://civis.eu/storage/files/20250620-call-education-provision.pdf

Sustainability (WP12), Communication, Dissemination and Impact (WP13)

The WP13 lead worked in close collaboration with the Communications Unit across all communication activities. This covered regular campaigns (#DiscoverCIVIS – A Journey through the Alliance; Civisness, or How to Cook a CIVIS Project; Civizens Campaign with personal profile stories), the promotion of opportunities ranging from BIPs, Staff Weeks and Webinars to Degree Programmes, the organisation of info sessions, the dissemination of calls, and coverage of CIVIS events. Member universities actively pushed CIVIS visibility on their own websites and linked CIVIS activities locally. CIVIS, through WP13, also participated in external networking and dissemination events such as the EAIE. A Communication and Dissemination Strategy (validated in 2023) guided this work, and a rebranding (September 2024) together with the launch of the new website in February 2026 marked key strategic milestones, both involving high-level university representatives.

The Communications Unit made the CIVIS identity a reality: through templates, posters, and materials for special events, but also through sustained content production such as newsletters, podcasts, and stories distributed across mailing lists, the website, and social media. All public CIVIS documents and outputs are centralised on a dedicated resources page, making WP13 a connective layer across all CIVIS WPs and bodies.

The CIVIS Days, organised yearly across four editions with more than 1100 participants in total, were the central community event of CIVIS2, bringing together students, academic and administrative staff, governance members, external stakeholders, and national and European decision-makers. Live-streamed dissemination sessions ensured that CIVIS results and good practices were accessible to and reusable by other HEIs beyond the Alliance. Within the universities, CIVIS Ambassadors served as representatives and contact points, forming an important internal communication pillar.

An alumni strategy was developed and validated. However, the centralised follow-up and activation of alumni networks remains challenging due to GDPR constraints and limited administrative capacity, remaining thus an open issue to be addressed in CIVIS 2.1.

WP12 led work on the future and sustainability of CIVIS, in close collaboration with WP1. Through the TF CIVIS 3, a Mission Statement for 2035 was developed by the Rectors, which formed the strategic basis for CIVIS 2.1. External evaluation activities were extended to cover questions of impact, to better consolidate CIVIS's direction going forward. Deliverable 12.1 documents the CIVIS Alliance Model and the envisioned path toward the universities of the future. In CIVIS 2.1, a dedicated sustainability team has been introduced, with a mission to more systematically identify sustainable investment pathways. Concretely, two EGs on External Funding (one focused on Research, one on Education) meet regularly and have identified collaboration possibilities leading to the active participation of CIVIS communities in other collaborative projects. Synergies between WP13's external funding strategy and WP12's sustainability work have been identified and are being taken forward to CIVIS 2.1 jointly.

Units and Officers: The Backbone of CIVIS

CIVIS Units and Officers are the operational backbone of the Alliance. With one member per university and a Head of Unit, each Unit has specialised expertise on institutional and local functioning and Alliance developments. In this report, we cannot showcase the whole work of the Units but outline the key functioning and key achievements. Additionally, and again without aiming to be exhaustive, we present the outcomes of the 2026 Unit Summit at ULB, where each Unit reflected on one of its successes, considering its past, present, and future. The results have been published on the website, and the activities themselves are already covered throughout this report. Complementarily, "*Annexe III: Success stories of the 2026 Unit Summit*" illustrates how the Units operationally support CIVIS activities and help translate the Alliance's strategy into day-to-day practice.

Units

The Communication Unit supports WP13 in activities concerning the implementation of the communication and dissemination strategy across CIVIS, bringing together a central communications team and representatives from all Member Universities to promote CIVIS, strengthen its brand, and engage internal and external audiences. The Unit ensures that CIVIS opportunities, achievements, and stories are communicated effectively across local and Alliance-wide channels, adapting messages to different audiences while fostering collaboration among communications professionals. Its work includes producing and distributing content, supporting news and social media activities, gathering and sharing success stories, developing communication plans and campaigns to deploy the strategy, coordinating regular meetings and collaborative projects, and reporting activities linked to European funding. Through this networked approach, the Unit helps increase the visibility, impact, and understanding of CIVIS as *Europe's Civic University Alliance.*

The Digital Campus Unit coordinates and supports the technical and operational activities of the CIVIS Digital Campus, contributing to the development, maintenance and integration of the digital tools that support the Alliance's teaching, mobility and collaboration activities. The Unit also provides expertise to support the implementation of the Alliance's digital strategy within the Stream 2 WPs. Beyond the visible launch of flagship platforms such as CIVIS Agora, the Unit's day-to-day work covers a broad range of operational tasks, including maintaining CIVIS-wide mailing lists and contact databases, managing the digital infrastructure behind educational and mobility calls (SurveyMonkey Apply, FullFabric), publishing and administering CIVIS job and opportunity offers, and supporting shared services such as Moodle and Nextcloud/CIVIS Box. Key achievements include the continued development and operation of a common digital toolkit for the Alliance, progress towards federated access through home-university credentials for selected CIVIS services, and the implementation of CIVIS-specific requirements within CIVIS Agora, a platform developed through the aUPaEU project to support digital transformation at alliance level. Key challenges have included navigating diverse institutional IT landscapes and campus management systems across the Alliance, addressing limited technical resources, and advancing interoperability through standards and APIs such as EWP, EMREX and LTI while accommodating the varying capabilities and priorities of partner universities. The Unit works closely with the Mobility, Education and Communication Units, as well as the Heads of IT EG, to translate the Digital Campus strategy into practical tools and services for students, academics and staff.

The **Education Unit** supports the development and implementation of the Alliance's educational portfolio, covering bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes, micro-credentials, micro-programmes, BIPs, COILs and other educational formats. It coordinates Alliance-wide educational calls and assists academic teams throughout the development cycle, including with administrative, regulatory and programme-design matters, while also providing CIVIS governance bodies and WPs with analyses, data, reports, guidelines and operational tools. Between 2023 and 2025, the Unit managed three calls for educational initiatives, resulting in more than 40 validated projects, and co-managed the annual CIVIS BIP calls, supporting over 55 BIPs per year across the Alliance. It also developed and tested key templates and guidance for joint programmes, supported the launch of three CIVIS master's programmes and several other educational initiatives, and contributed to European Approach accreditation processes, while addressing the challenge of aligning diverse institutional and national regulatory frameworks. The Unit works closely with the Mobility, Digital Campus and Communication Units, QA Officers and CIVIS Hubs on BIPs, mobility, evaluation and quality follow-up, and collaborates with Stream 3/WP8-11 on the CIVIS educational framework, calls, templates, guidelines and comparative analyses. It also supports the CIVIS Education Council and wider governance structures with evidence and expertise for strategic discussions concerning the European Degree, micro-credentials, the Union of Skills, the CIVIS mission and the preparation of CIVIS 2.1.

The **Mobility Unit** coordinates and promotes student and staff mobility within the CIVIS Alliance. It supports the implementation of physical and blended mobility (and virtual learning) activities and facilitates cooperation among partner universities. Key achievements include the expansion of mobility opportunities and the implementation of new mobility formats, such as BIPs. Main challenges were the harmonisation of procedures across partners, ensuring sustainable funding and adapting to an increased need for digitalisation. The Mobility Unit collaborates closely with all other units (see for example BIP process), relevant WPLs, student ambassadors, as well as with mobility coordinators across all CIVIS Members Universities.

The **Research Unit** ensures the concrete implementation of the Research & Innovation strategy of the Alliance, in close collaboration with the Research Council. As mentioned above, this Unit is funded on top of the CIVIS2 project by own university funds. Its main priority areas include: support to early-career researchers, facilitating the sharing of research infrastructures, fostering networking and research collaborations and exchange of good practices at Alliance level. Key achievements we can highlight include the elaboration of tools and funding schemes that have facilitated and strengthened scientific collaboration between Alliance Members, particularly with our African Associate Members (e.g. research infrastructures platform, Seed-Funding calls, enabling joint applications to EU collaborative grants, support for MSCA applicants, etc.). The issue of funding specifically dedicated to research activities that enable the development and sustainability of established collaborations remains, however, a challenge within the context of a project that relies predominantly on the Erasmus+ funding framework.

Officers

The **Innovative Pedagogies Officer (IPO)** coordinates and implements innovative pedagogies across CIVIS activities, addressing large-scale challenges such as digital transformation, societal needs, and flexible learning pathways. He leads the EG on Innovative Pedagogies to identify academic needs, advise strategic projects, and support the co-creation of transdisciplinary joint courses. The IPO is responsible for coordinating initiatives aimed at upskilling the CIVIS teaching community, including the organisation of educational innovation workshops and the design of targeted training modules. He collaborates closely with the Education Unit, streams, Digital Campus, and Hubs to ensure that pedagogical innovation remains a transversal element of CIVIS's educational offer.

According to the CIVIS2 DoA (p. 45) **Global Partnership Officer** is "in charge of maintaining, developing and monitoring relations between CIVIS and its strategic partners in Africa and the Mediterranean. The GPO is to facilitate their involvement across the project and act as a go-between and even as an ombudsman, for the concerns of the global associated partners." This objective was pursued by engaging in three main tasks: 1) Supporting CIVIS bodies and WPs in their tasks related to strategic partners and facilitating the latter's integration in those bodies and tasks; 2) Organising and preparing the strategic partners for their involvement in the project (mainly through the Institutional Contact Working group); 3) Initiating and supporting joint actions of CIVIS universities with strategic partners, such as workshops, networking events, or policy initiatives. The GPO contributed to achieving the associate membership of the formerly strategic partners, the systematic integration of Associate Members Universities in CIVIS bodies as well as in several key CIVIS activities (e.g., BIP, seed-funding calls), and the successful acquisition of several third-party funded projects. Notably, stimulated by the integration of Associate Members Universities in CIVIS calls and activities, communication, and information, the CIVIS2 project saw the rise of a bottom-up 'cooperation dynamic' among academics from Associate and Full Member Universities, in which inclusive academic networks around joint topics and interests have been created. Main challenges remain managing and compensating for differential capacities and resources between Associate Members Universities and Full Members Universities to engage in the project. Fulfilling a transversal role, the GPO collaborated with all Units and WPs, albeit with a stronger focus on the former due to the more demanding practical task of managing the inclusion of Associate Members Universities in concrete CIVIS actions

The **Quality Officers** implement and develop the Alliance's quality assurance system, which includes measuring 80 indicators across 25 different bodies, and supporting monitoring and management in CIVIS, primarily by ensuring the implementation of the Plan-Do-Act-Check (PDCA) cycle. They act as consultants to external evaluators, programme coordinators and WPs. They collaborate closely with Units and officers, especially the Education Unit, to ensure the quality of CIVIS's educational provision, for example by implementing follow-up surveys and supporting external accreditation processes (European Approach). They work on policy impact, such as European Standards and Guidelines and European Degree Label/European Degree, mainly through FOREU4ALL.

Hubs

While Units and Officers form the backbone of CIVIS, the CIVIS Hubs are its beating heart since they are the academic communities that drive the Alliance forward. CIVIS has five thematic, cross- and interdisciplinary Hubs, each with an institutionalised Hub Council, along with broader networks extending beyond these councils. Each Hub Council is chaired by two Co-Chairs and supported by two coordinators. Councils meet monthly. A key governance challenge has been balancing academic autonomy with alignment to project goals, as independent academic work does not naturally fit within the scope of a defined project like the alliances. Several approaches have helped bridge this gap: the "flagship" initiative enabled the development of a shared educational offer out of the Hubs, Hub members contribute directly to CIVIS's educational portfolio. Hub members played an important role in the scientific evaluation of Education and BIP calls; and each Hub was invited to present its work to the SC. Hubs have also been highly active in Seed-Funding calls. In that sense, Hubs are key incubators for educational and research (not funded by CIVIS2) activities.

One challenge that remains only partially addressed is the integration between Hubs and LOs: several workshops took place, but further progress is still needed. Looking ahead, Hub positions will no longer be financed under CIVIS2.1. Work is underway to develop a model that preserves academic collaboration while maintaining the Alliance's role as an incubator for excellent and inclusive collaboration.

Please note: the list of educational activities developed or offered by the Hubs is just a selection. The complete overview can be found in **Table 7**, under the chapter of Stream 3.

Hub 1: Climate and Environment

- Launch of TRACEE, a groundbreaking programme taught by 39 educators from 14 HEIs, including the welcoming of its first student cohort and passed European accreditation
- Creation of an interdisciplinary MOOC on Climate and Energy
- Production of several TED Talks (1, 2, 3)
- Creation of and contributions to BIPs
- Webinar series in the Spring 2025 on transdisciplinary teaching

Hub 2: Society, Culture and Heritage

- MA in Palaeolithic Archaeology (ART-W) ; MA in South European Studies (EUROSUD), including calls for guest lecturers
- Preparation of an MSCA Doctoral Network "Industrial Doctorate" application (without CIVIS2 funds)
- CIVIS Museum University Forum (MUF): a transdisciplinary doctoral programme fostering exchanges between preservation and innovation, exhibition and research, bringing together international academics, archivists, on-site professionals and the public
- A growing interdisciplinary doctoral programme in Plural Ontologies and Intercultural Philosophy
- Network growing out of BIP activities

Hub 3 : Health

- Joint PhD in Translational Cardiometabolic Biomedicine & Health
- Joint PhD Programme in Medical Systems Biology, with successful MSCA DN application SpaXio
- International Master of Science in Biochemistry (Master in Drug Development: from Natural Products to Formulations and Applications (Nat4DD), currently passing European accreditation
- Micro-credential on the design and development of RNA therapies for human diseases
- European Master in Population Health and Policy (consortium agreement signed)

Hub 4 : Cities, Spaces and Mobilities

- BIPs focused on real-life urban and spatial solutions
- Asynchronous courses on Sustainable Mobility and Creative Tourism
- Preparation of educational content for a Doctoral Network research community
- Joint Bachelor Degree in Global Destination and Tourist Organisation Management
- Organisation of the Hub 4 Conference: *Making Visible the Invisible*
- Publications: *Overtourism in Global Cities: Impacts, Challenges and Solutions*; *Circular Economy in Cities and Territories*

Hub 5 : Digital and Technological Transformations

Micro-programmes at bachelor's and postgraduate levels, including *Digital Transformations in Health and Wellbeing* (University of Bucharest) and *Equitable and Just Digital Society* (University of Glasgow)

Doctoral webinar series on digital and technological transformations

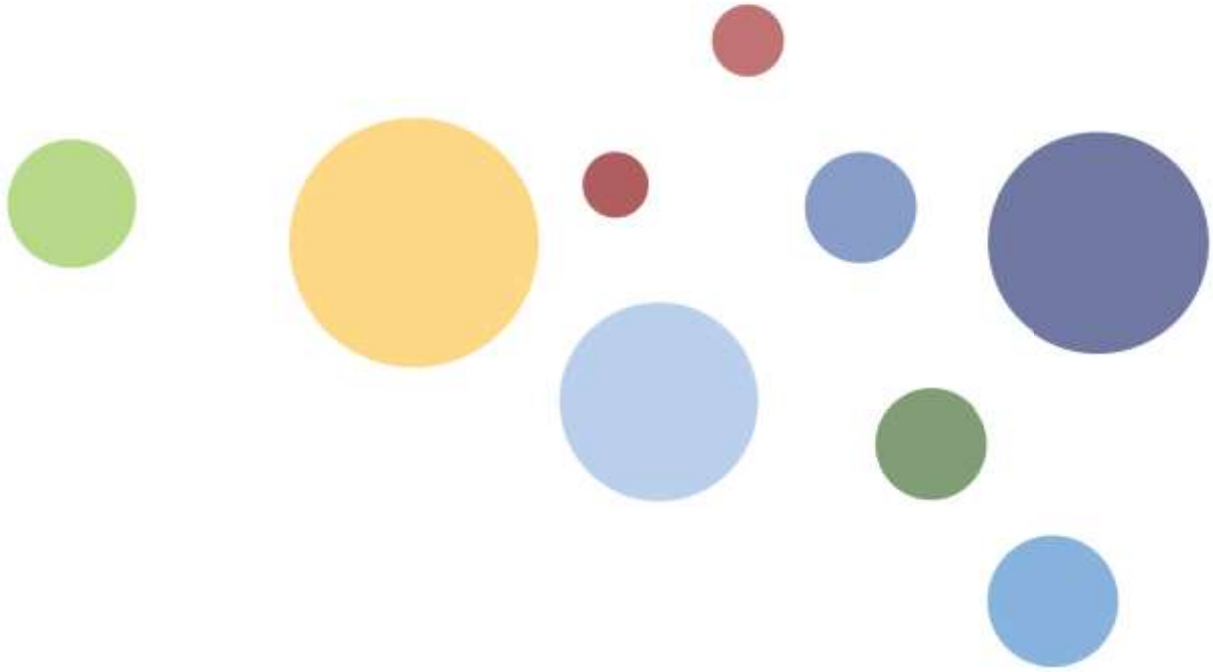
Collaborative research initiative CON-CHY on youth participation in urban spaces

Contributions to workshops on micro-credentials and inter-Hub academic evaluations

Development of a doctoral module on artificial intelligence and research

Internal research exchange initiatives and an AI-focused podcast

Ongoing administrative coordination: Hub meetings, BIP evaluations, and management of Seed-Funding projects and SLP



4

SHAPING THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

From advocacy to sharing good practices

All CIVIS activities and achievements described in this report as well as the integrated transnational governance and management of the Alliance already transform member institutions by embedding a civic, transnational and transdisciplinary European dimension across their missions. Beyond this, CIVIS is committed to actively sharing its learnings, contributing its positions, and shaping the European higher education landscape of tomorrow.

Policy papers and Expert Group Advocacy

Within WP1, CIVIS representatives with governance responsibilities developed and implemented an Advocacy Strategy (Task 1.4), with main priorities approved by the SC. A dedicated EG, operating under SC-approved ToR, has met every six weeks since January 2025. The EG identifies potential advocacy topics, submits them for WP1 approval, and routes finalised position papers to the SC before publication on the CIVIS website. During CIVIS2, the following papers were published:

- Position paper on the revision of the eligibility criteria of BIPs requesting to opening up more to non-EU students (Bologna process countries or KA171 countries).
- Position paper on the investment pathway of alliances.
- Via the Erasmus+ Sister project SMARTT, CIVIS issued recommendations for the European Degree criteria.
- Position paper on the involvement of third countries for EWP in October 2025
- Position Paper: "Academic Freedom Under Pressure: How CIVIS Universities Are Turning European Values into Concrete Action", to be published in September or October 2026 (approved by the SC)
- Position Paper: "Strengthening Africa-Europe academic mobility: visa policy for science partnerships", published in September 2026

Measuring the direct impact of policy papers is inherently difficult. However, the Coimbra Group's recommendations for the Erasmus+ programme 2021-2027 Interim Evaluation include a reference to CIVIS' position paper on eligibility criteria for BIPs and 4EU+ has actively referenced it. This provides a clear indication that CIVIS' advocacy resonates beyond the Alliance. Additionally, other publicly available resources (BIP report, Service-Learning Guides, etc…) also contribute to dissemination beyond the Alliance.

An advocacy section was prepared on the new CIVIS website. The EG prepared CIVIS' reply to the European Commission's call for evidence on the 'EU Visa Policy Strategy'. Moreover, it prepared the participation of CIVIS in various joint policy statements with other organisations, e.g., on the EU's strategic commitment to Low- and Middle-Income Countries in the Global Gateway and submitted for the approval to the BoR the CIVIS application for the *Magna Charta Universitatum* as an Alliance for November 2026. The EG has launched consultations around the idea of hosting academics in distress to highlight the opportunity within CIVIS universities to defend academic liberty.

Advocacy activities shall be consolidated in CIVIS2.1, especially through a more active role of the CIVIS Association and the SG.

Engaging in European, national and regional policy communities

FOREU4ALL and other European fora

CIVIS rectors and the SG or ED regularly participated at high-level meetings organised by the European Commission in Brussels. Furthermore, CIVIS is actively participating in the board of the community of practice FOREU4ALL. CIVIS aims at disseminating best practices within this community, but also for all universities that do not participate yet. Especially thanks to the CIVIS related Erasmus+ project SMARTT, CIVIS contributes to the advancement of the European Degree (Label). Four CIVIS professors/administrators are chairs or vice-chairs of subgroups within FOREU4ALL, i. e. on "*European Degrees & Joint Programmes*", "*Alliances for Lifelong Learning, Improvement, Empowerment and Skills*", "*Communication & Dissemination*", and "*Quality Assurance*". At the European Association of International Education (EAIE) conference 2025, the co-chair of the Subgroup on

European Degrees advocated for centring the EDL around students. Finally, CIVIS is also active in other FOREU4ALL subgroups. This illustrates CIVIS' engagement towards the community of alliances, and the EHEA.

Beyond formal position papers and FOREU4ALL, CIVIS experts contributed to conferences, talks and discussion panels in a variety of formats, reflecting that CIVIS is increasingly recognised as a reference among its peers. This is further illustrated by requests from other alliances to share internal documents such as the Alliance Agreement, which CIVIS is happy to provide where approved by the SC.

If FOREU4ALL is a valuable forum for exchange and experimentation, WP1 will in the future better focus efforts on coordinating the contributions to the FOREU4ALL subgroups, to fully exploit and leverage the expertise that is available across our alliance.

National groups, Communities of Practice and lobbying

Table 8. CIVIS Policy Activity on National/Regional Level

University	Exchange Forum on national/regional level		(Semi-)Formal ties with ministries or public authorities
	Management	Governance	
AMU	Yes	Yes	Yes
NKUA	Yes	Ad hoc	Yes
UB	Yes	Yes	Yes
ULB	Yes	Yes	Yes
UofG	No	No	Yes
UNIL	Yes	Indirectly	Indirectly
UAM	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUR	yes	Yes	Yes
PLUS	Yes	Yes	Yes
SU	Yes	N/A	Yes
UT	Yes	Yes	Yes

CIVIS and its members are not only actively engaged in FOREU4ALL, but also in national/regional communities and exchanges with ministries. The following table gives an overview over the efforts: These exchanges allow to find concrete solutions for challenges, for example regarding joint/multiple programmes or the CIVIS Association, and softly influence policy-processes.

National and European policy activity came together in March 2025 when the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research invited high-level CIVIS representatives and representatives of national and regional authorities from CIVIS countries to discuss key challenges and opportunities. The meeting focused in particular on the inter-university campus and barriers to delivering joint degrees. It demonstrated how CIVIS can build bridges between European and national policy levels, supporting European integration both within and beyond the Alliance. At the same time, CIVIS serves as a testbed for developing effective models of European collaboration among large, research-intensive and high-ranking universities.

These collaborations take place organically. In the future, CIVIS WP1 aims to make efforts to better coordinate and overview these decentralised efforts without intervening in local affairs. For example, most CIVIS universities also simply exchange on practical issues, for example on joint degrees or micro-credentials with their ministries in order to find workable solutions where possible.

Engaging with EU projects

Through the EGs on External Funding (Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe) and the Research Unit, CIVIS has successfully engaged in additional European projects alongside CIVIS2. The impact is twofold: for the Alliance, these projects bring in supplementary funding; for the broader European higher education landscape, they allow CIVIS to actively contribute to shaping its future, most notably through projects such as SMARTT.

It should be noted that without the structures and the network of CIVIS2, the acquisition and coordination of these additional projects would not have been possible; responsible persons ensured throughout that activities were not double-funded and that each project remained clearly distinguishable. WP13, through the EGs on External Funding, provides a more comprehensive overview of the full project portfolio. The following **Table 9** focuses specifically on strategic CIVIS sister projects that directly contribute to the development of the EHEA and the ERA.

Table 9. Selection of CIVIS2 Sister Projects

Name	Funding	Short description and impact
RIS4CIVIS	Horizon 2020	Through 3 stages and 6 modules, this project developed the CIVIS R&I Strategy and Institutional Transformational Model to be shared with other European Universities.
UNI-T European Civic Teacher Academy	Erasmus+	improve the European dimension and Internationalisation of teacher training in order to enhance its attractiveness and mobility between countries through communities
SMARTT	Erasmus+	Pilot a European Degree label, leading to concrete proposals and recommendations. Inclusion of national ministries and authorities as well as other alliances.
PolyCIVIS	Erasmus+ (JMO)	All 17 CIVIS universities and 4 more universities in Africa joined this Jean Monnet Network was committed to fostering discussions and exchanges between researchers from different disciplines and geographies, and policymakers from various fields to jointly advance crisis resilience.
PartiCIVIS	Horizon 2020 (MSCA)	Building on PolyCIVIS, PartiCIVIS enriches participatory research as a strategy to strengthen and broaden the third mission of HEIs, a tight research-to-action coupling, research-based education and challenge-driven civic engagement. It shall drive the current societal transformation processes in local and regional innovation ecosystems, by taking leadership and engaging in transdisciplinary approaches with societal actors outside academia

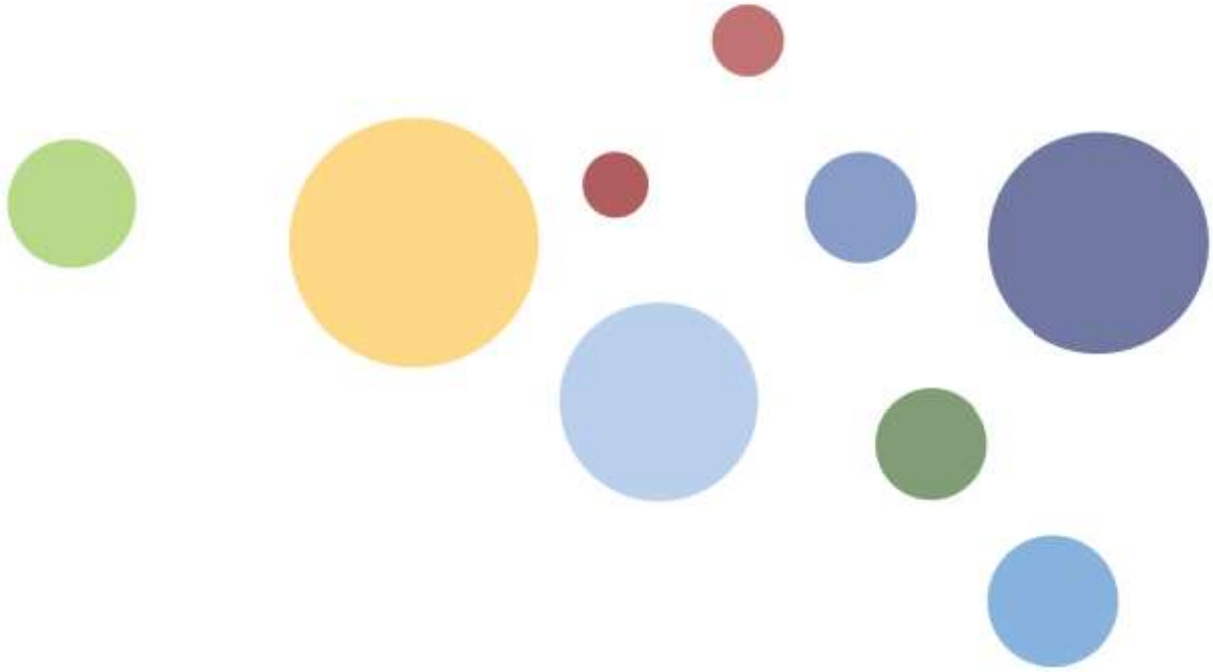
Additionally, with the CIVIS Agora, CIVIS engaged with the AUPaEU Horizon Europe project, aiming to build shared collaboration spaces for universities and relevant stakeholders. These projects contribute directly to European policy goals: the development of the European Degree Label, Europeanization of teacher training, the AU-EU Innovation Agenda, and better linking the research dimension to the alliances. If CIVIS has had an EG on Research, thanks also to the capacity building of RIS4CIVIS, we decided to build a Research Unit with dedicated staff to maintain these efforts.

Challenges and deviations

(1) Overviewing and streamlining advocacy activities. Central CIVIS advocacy activities represented only a small part of the total advocacy taking place across the Alliance. With 11 European partners and many different local priorities, maintaining a general overview of all actions was difficult. The MC served as an occasional information-sharing forum, but not as a systematic coordination mechanism.

(2) Changing commitment of political representatives and WP1 leaders. WP1 depended on the sustained commitment of governance leaders; the WP1 lead changed twice during CIVIS2. WP1 meetings including managerial and governance representatives form all partner universities ensured continuity. While alliance governance and management remained stable overall, thanks to the maturity of the partnership, the commitment of the coordinating university, and the autonomy of all partners, this affected the pace of policy paper publication and the coordination of advocacy activities. Nonetheless, CIVIS remained highly active in disseminating good practices and pursuing advocacy through actions (see also Deliverable 13.1).

(3) Advocacy alongside governance and management. The first priorities of the activities under WP1 were the drafting of the Consortium Agreement and Alliance Agreement, the establishment of the legal entity, and participation in FOREU and FOREU4ALL. Concerted, proactive advocacy could therefore not be a priority in the early phases of the project. With the SG now in place, this has become considerably more manageable and will be taken forward more systematically in CIVIS 2.1.



5

CONCLUSION & OUTLOOK

Governing and Managing CIVIS: Implications for the EUI and European Higher Education

Key conclusions

This report already being a conclusion of four years of transnational and cross-institutional collaboration, the conclusions presented now consist of our key strengths and challenges. They will then be followed by recommendations regarding governance and management for ourselves, for other alliances, for HEIs in Europe and for policy makers. CIVIS2 demonstrates that effective governance and management are a prerequisite for turning the European University Alliance from a project into sustained institutional cooperation. The main achievements are the governance structure itself and its capacity to connect institutional priorities, Alliance-level decisions, European policy and added value for students and academics.

Strengths and good practices

Several practices proved particularly effective:

- **The MC–SC–BoR triangle** provides a clear link between operational implementation, strategic decision-making and institutional ownership.
- **Calls** such as BIPs, educational activities, Seed Funding, Staff Weeks and OLs translate Alliance priorities into concrete bottom-up activities while maintaining a transnational CIVIS dimension including "civisness" criteria.
- **Institutional transformation** translates differently everywhere, depending on the local conditions. This diversity needs to be acknowledged and shows that beyond the Alliance-wide benefits, CIVIS brings change according to local needs and opportunities.
- **TFs and EGs** allow specific challenges to be addressed with the necessary expertise without permanently increasing the governance structure. The Casablanca Forum provides a concrete example of this model.
- **Institutional exchange and in-person meetings** help build transnational teams, break silos and make CIVIS tangible beyond virtual governance structures.
- **Institutional commitment goes beyond the project grant**, as demonstrated by the Research Unit and Seed Funding or the Forum.

And of course, all the concrete results achieved under the 12 other WPs of CIVIS.

Learnings

The main learning from CIVIS2 is that the Alliance needs to be **as light as possible, but as complex as necessary**. The initial combination of 13 WPs, 78 milestones and multiple overlapping responsibilities created unnecessary coordination costs. The resulting simplification in CIVIS2.1 is therefore not only an organisational adjustment but a direct learning from implementation.

A second learning is that **harmonisation should not mean standardisation**. CIVIS has been able to work across different institutional contexts by agreeing on common objectives and frameworks while allowing implementation to remain adapted to local structures. The same applies to the Digital Campus and to educational cooperation.

Finally, **institutional ownership is essential for impact and sustainability**. Where CIVIS activities have been taken up in institutional procedures, structures or funding decisions, the impact extends beyond the Alliance and beyond the project period. At the same time, the absence of formal recognition and dedicated capacity remains a limitation that CIVIS needs to address.

The priority is therefore to consolidate these proven approaches: a simpler governance structure, clearer responsibilities, stronger cross-WP coordination, evidence-based quality and risk management, and continued institutional commitment to CIVIS beyond individual project cycles.

Recommendations

For CIVIS (internal)

1) **Planning & project management:** Combine the existing yearly cycle, the SC/MC calendar and the yearly internal management, quality and progress reports, with flexible, iterative project-management methods (e.g. Scrum-inspired sprints) at Unit and WP level. Additionally, for more efficient risk management and task follow-up a periodic traffic-light status report should be introduced to ensure smooth project management and swift risk mitigation.
2) **Governance and Quality:** Quality Officers already anchor the PDCA cycle across 80 indicators and 25 bodies. This cycle should be more visibly and systematically linked to the Units, Officers and Hubs that generate the underlying data, ensuring that quality and evaluation feed into planning, decisions and follow-up actions across all governance levels. This would further strengthen the Alliance's evidence-based steering and ensure that the PDCA cycle drives continuous improvement across CIVIS.

For alliances in general

3) **Govern as light as possible, as complex as necessary:** CIVIS own architecture shows that a framework can provide clarity and flexibility at once. Harmonisation is valuable, but our experience (e.g. adapting the same digital tools differently across 11 institutional cultures) shows alliances can also manage diversity productively. Alliances should keep building integration without equating it with standardisation: harmonisation is one tool among several, and diversity is a capacity, not a problem to be managed away.
4) **Translate governance priorities through calls:** BIP, Seed-Funding, OLs and educational calls have proven to be the mechanism through which top-down priorities become bottom-up academic reality, nurturing diversity while rewarding excellence. Alliances should keep using calls this way, including to academic and student communities to lead their own civic-engagement initiatives, rather than delivering civic engagement top-down.

For HEIs in Europe

5) **Set priorities and use alliances as strategic tools:** Alliances' role is not to impose priorities on member HEIs, but to aggregate their individual priorities into a European reality none of them could achieve alone, concrete joint action creating solidarity, in the spirit of Schuman's "*solidarité de fait*," rather than solidarity by declaration. CIVIS is a driver of change, but the change itself must originate from the HEIs (top-down and bottom-up). For alliances to carry it forward, HEIs need to recognise and resource it as a legitimate strategic agent, not a side project.
6) **Perennise alliance positions beyond project structures:** As CIVIS and other alliances move from launch and development towards consolidation, HEIs should, in line with the Joint Mission statement priorities and within budgetary constraints and institutional autonomy, sustain a minimum of alliance-dedicated capacity beyond individual project cycles, while recognising that ambitious European alliances will continue to require adequate European and national public investment to maintain their scale and strategic ambition, notably in linking the EHEA, EEA and ERA.

For decision-makers

7) **Give transformation realistic time:** CIVIS2's own trajectory from establishing governance and legal structures, through staff turnover, to the maturity that allowed continuity and streamlining in CIVIS2.1, illustrates that deep institutional transformation does start but not end within a single 7-to-9-year funding cycle. The Erasmus(+) idea and programme itself took decades to reach its current impact. The European and national policy-makers should therefore combine realistic expectations of the time transformation requires with a clear long-term funding perspective, including via the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework, so that alliances can consolidate the structures and activities needed to deliver their ambition.
8) Create **the conditions for alliances to flourish:** Alliances such as CIVIS are already testing pragmatic, working solutions on the ground, from the SMARTT project piloting a European Degree Label to European Approach accreditation and multiple micro-credentials delivered across universities. For these pilots to translate into genuinely seamless mobility and recognition, EU policy on the European Degree Label and micro-credentials as well as member states need to reduce the remaining regulatory barriers, so that what already works in practice can become the European norm. As an Alliance, we will support policy makers wherever this collaboration can be fruitful.

REFERENCES

Published Resources

4EU+ Alliance. "4EU+ affirms its support for the CIVIS initiative for the revision of the Erasmus+ BIP criteria" [online]. URL: https://4euplus.eu/4EU-12.html?newsID=20619 [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance, Circle U, ENHANCE EUonAIR, EUTOPIA, 4EU+, UNITA, Una Europa. "Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) – Involvement of Third Countries: Position Paper" [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/erasmus-without-paper-ewp-involvement-of-third-countries-position-paper_1.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Applying a Service-Learning Approach in Course Design", 2026 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/resources/applying-a-service-learning-approach-in-course-design-2026 [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Building an Alliance That Works: Five Lessons from the CIVIS Units", 2026 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/building-an-alliance-that-works-five-lessons-from-the-civis-units [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Call for Education Provision", 20.06.2025 [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/20250620-call-education-provision.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS Advocates for Clear Conceptualisation and Criteria for a Joint European Degree", 2024 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/civis-advocates-for-clear-conceptualisation-and-criteria-for-a-joint-european-degree [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS Blended Intensive Programmes 2024–2025, 2026" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/resources/civis-blended-intensive-programmes-2024-2025-january-2026 [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS Digital Campus" [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/r13-civis-digital-campus.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS Hubs" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/our-work/our-hubs [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS Joint Mission Statement", February 2022 [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/civis-joint-mission-statement-february-2022.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Deliverable 5.1 – The CIVIS Inter-University and Digital Campus: A Strategic Guidebook for a Shared Community Space" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/fr/resources/the-civis-inter-university-and-digital-campus-a-strategic-guidebook-for-a-shared-community-space [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Deliverable 8.1 – Digital Guidebook on Credited Multiple and Joint Education [online]". URL: https://civis.eu/fr/resources/digital-guidebook-on-credited-multiple-and-joint-education [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach", 2024 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/resources/digital-guidebook-on-the-civis-challenge-driven-approach-2024 [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "European Universities Alliances Unite to Create a Joint Community of Practice (FOREU4ALL)", 2024 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/european-universities-alliances-unite-create-joint-community-practice [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Governance and Management" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/governance-andamp-management [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Investment Pathway for EUI Contribution by CIVIS" [online], 2023. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/investment-pathway-for-eui-contribution-by-civis.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "PolyCIVIS – Confronting the Polycrisis in Europe and Africa: Project" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/our-work/civis-alliance-projects/polycivis [Accessed 31.08.2026].

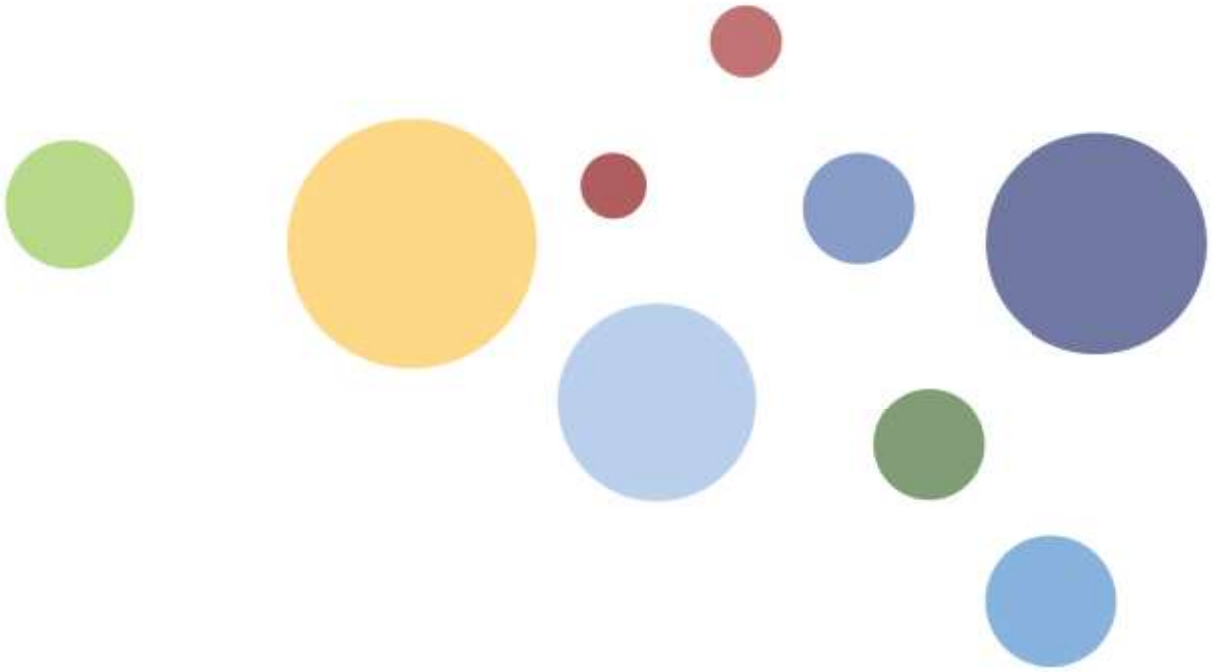
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Position Paper: Review on Eligibility Criteria of BIP", August 2023 [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/civis-position-paper-review-on-eligiility-criteria-of-bip-august-2023.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "RIS4CIVIS – Project" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/our-work/civis-alliance-projects/recent-projects/ris4civis [Accessed 31.08.2026].

CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Seed Funding Calls for Research Collaborations" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/providing-the-tools-for-innovative-research/research-collaboration/seed-funding-research [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Service-Learning Guidelines for Lecturers", 2024 [online]. (PDF) URL: https://civis.eu/storage/files/civis-service-learning-guidelines-for-lecturers-2024.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "SMARTT Project" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/our-work/civis-alliance-projects/recent-projects/smartt [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "Students Must Be at the Centre of the Development of the European Degree", 2025 [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/students-must-be-centre-development-european-degree [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "UNI-T European Civic Teacher Academy – Project" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/our-work/civis-alliance-projects/recent-projects/uni-t-european-teacher-academy [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance." Building an Alliance That Works: Five Lessons from the CIVIS Units" [online]. URL: https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/building-an-alliance-that-works-five-lessons-from-the-civis-units [Accessed 31.08.2026].
Coimbra Group. "Coimbra Group's Recommendations for the Erasmus+ Programme 2021–2027 Interim Evaluation", 2023 [online]. (PDF) URL: https://www.coimbra-group.eu/wp-content/uploads/CG-Erasmus-2021-27-interim-evaluation.pdf [Accessed 31.08.2026].
CIVIS (2026) 'Strengthening Africa-Europe academic mobility: visa policy for science partnerships', Position Paper, CIVIS Alliance. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.22346322
European Commission, CORDIS. "A University Partnership for Acceleration of European Universities (aUPaEU)", HORIZON Project GA 101095314 [online]. URL: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095314 [Accessed 31.08.2026].
European Commission, CORDIS. "PartiCIVIS, GA 101300135" [online]. URL: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101300135/fr [Accessed 31.08.2026].
European Commission. "European Universities Initiative – About" [online]. URL: https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative/about [Accessed 31.08.2026].
Touzot, David and Martin, Enrique. "CIVIS Digital Campus." https://civis.eu/storage/files/r13-civis-digital-campus.pdf (accessed 5 June 2024)European Commission. "European Universities Initiative" [online]. URL: https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative [Accessed 31.08.2026].
European Commission: Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, PPMI, Grumbinaitė, I., Colus, F., Buitrago Carvajal, H. (2025) "*Report on the outcomes and transformational potential of the European Universities initiative*." Publications Office of the European Union. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/32313
Frame, Alexander, and Barbara Curyło. 2024. "Bringing Erasmus Home: The European Universities Initiative as an Example of 'Everyday Europeanhood.'" *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 32 (2): 334–49. doi:10.1080/14782804.2022.2134986. CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. Research Infrastructures – CIVIS Agora [online]. URL: https://civis.widening.eu/research-infrastructures [Accessed 31.08.2026].
Magna Charta Observatory. "Magna Charta Universitatum" [online]. URL: https://www.magna-charta.org/magna-charta-universitatum [Accessed 31.08.2026].

Unpublished Internal Resources

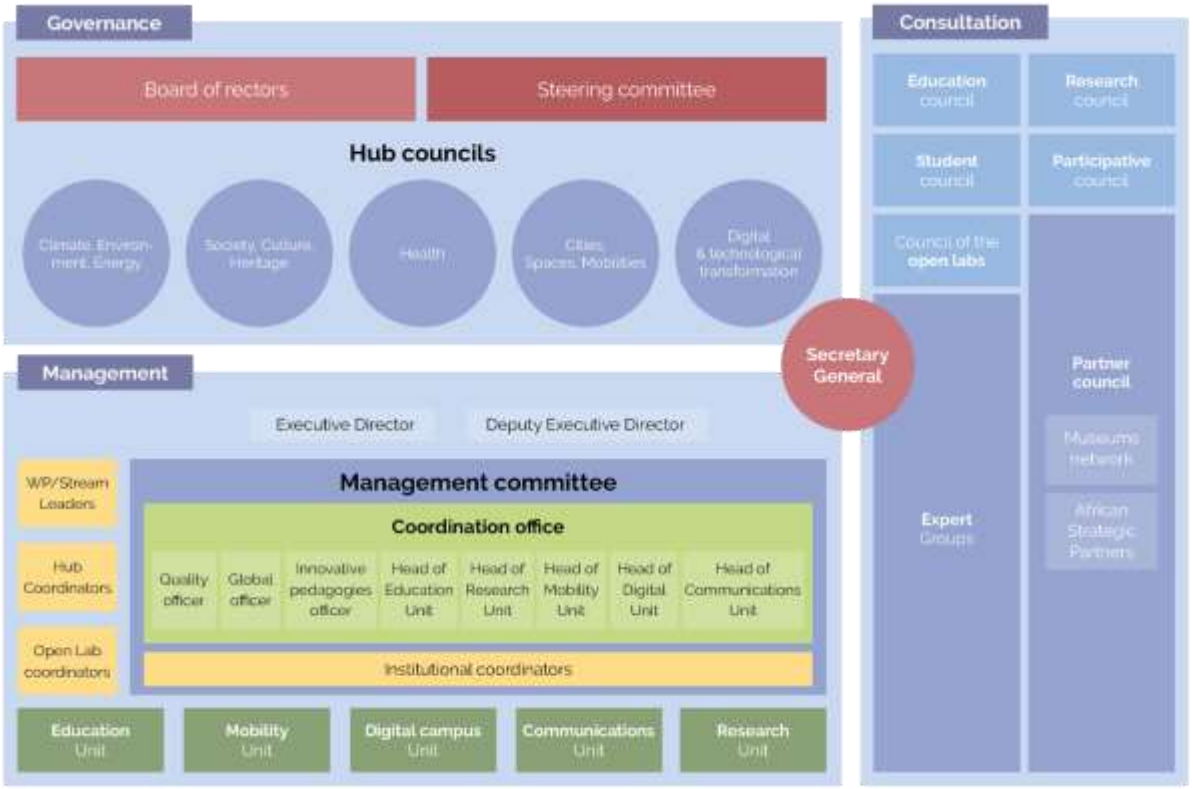
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. CIVIS2 Grant Agreement, 1 October 2022.
CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance. "CIVIS 2035. Vision and Mission Statement" Internal Mission and Vision Statement. Approved by the CIVIS Board of Rectors in February 2026



ANNEXES

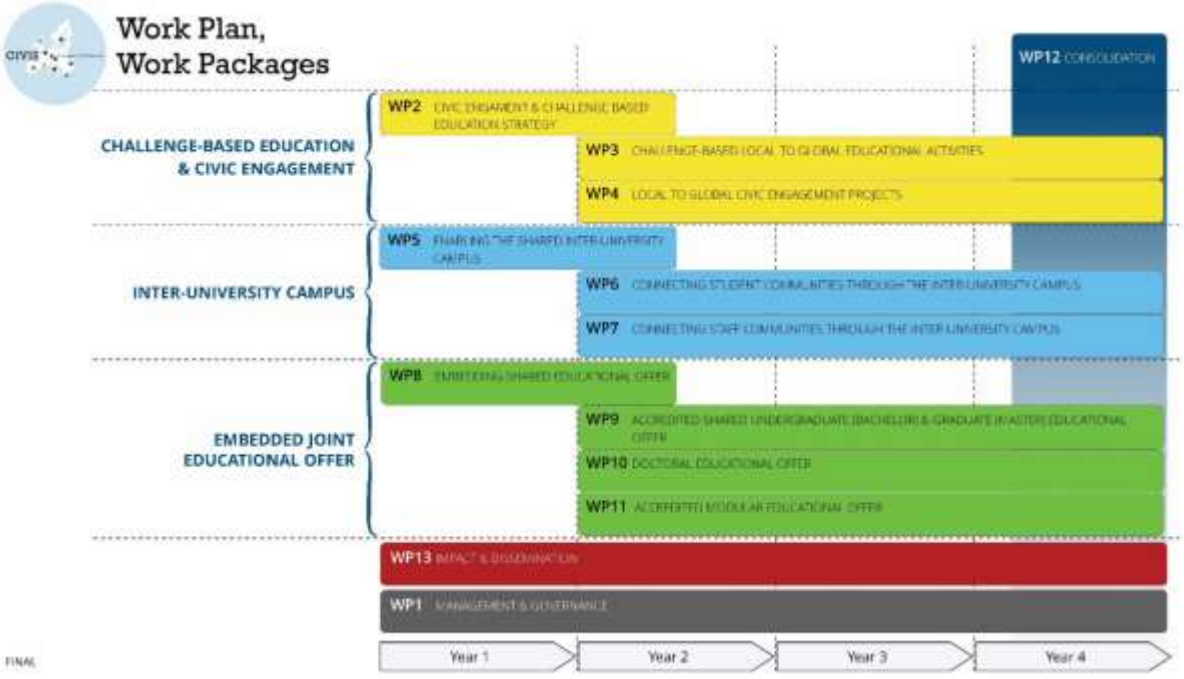
Supporting Documents

Annexe I: CIVIS organisational chart and Streams/WPs



Source : https://civis.eu/en/discover-civis-alliance/governance-andamp-management

CIVIS2 Work Plan as outlined in the CIVIS2 Technical Description:



Annexe II: List of Expert Groups

Each EG consists of one member per university that is not budgeted.

1. Advocacy
2. Civic Engagement
3. Communications Directors
4. Doctoral Education
5. External Funding
    a. Sub group: Education
    b. Sub group: Research
6. Global Partnerships
7. Heads of IT
8. Heads of Mobility
9. Heads of Inclusion & Diversity
10. Innovative Pedagogies
11. Lifelong Learning
12. Multilingualism
13. Quality Assurance
14. Service Learning

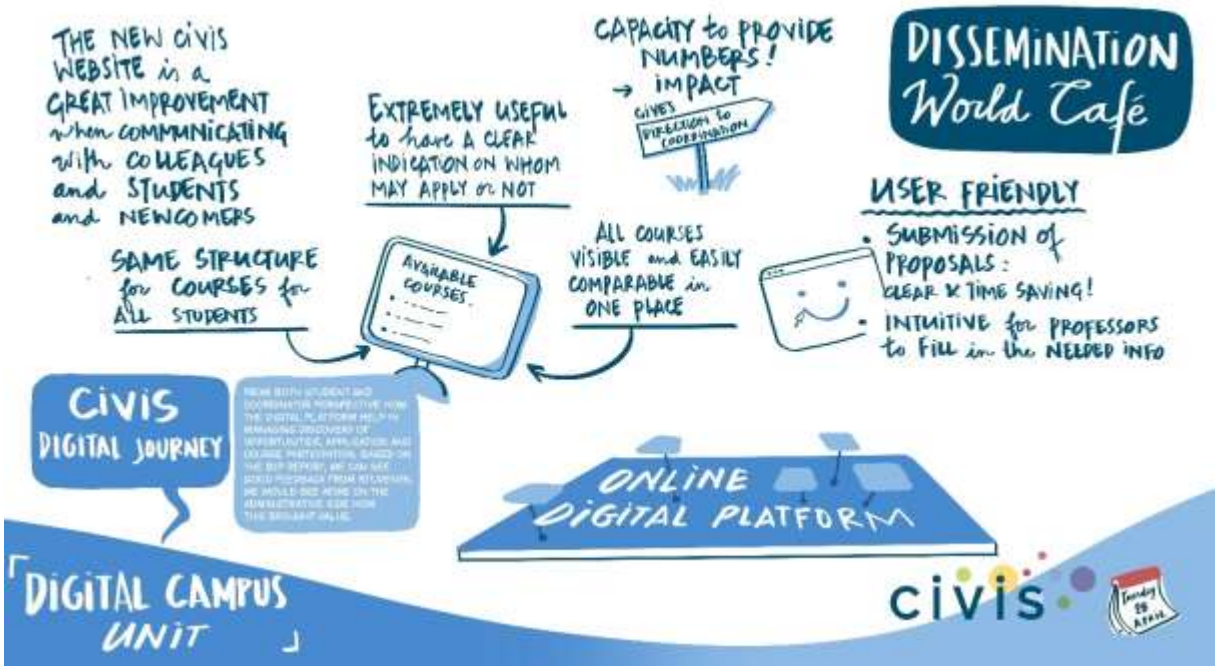
Annexe III: Success stories of the 2026 Unit Summit

These are illustrations used for the website article "**Building an Alliance That Works: Five Lessons from the CIVIS Units"** (https://civis.eu/en/the-civis-newsroom/building-an-alliance-that-works-five-lessons-from-the-civis-units)

1. Communication Unit



2. Digital Campus Unit



3. Education Unit



4. Mobility Unit



5. Research Unit

