



# Impact & Dissemination Report

CIVIS2 Deliverable 13.1

Approved by the Steering Committee of CIVIS  
on 17 September 2026

## 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                            |

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## 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

François HEINDERYCKX, ULB  
Maria-Isabel SOLDEVILA BREA, ULB  
Ulla HÄRMÄLÄ, ULB  
Camelia CUSNIR, UB  
Aikaterini STAVRIANE, NKUA

**1** Alliance  
**11** Universities  
**Countless** Possibilities

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## 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                                        |                                                          |
| WP6  | Connecting Student Communities through the Inter-University Campus                 | Stream 2: Inter-University Campus                        |
| WP7  | Connecting Staff Communities through the Inter-University Campus                   |                                                          |
| WP8  | Embedding Shared Educational Offer                                                 |                                                          |
| WP9  | Accredited Shared Undergraduate (Bachelor) and Graduate (Master) Educational Offer | Stream 3: Embedded Joint Educational offer               |
| WP10 | Doctoral Educational Offer                                                         |                                                          |
| WP11 | Accredited Modular Educational Offer                                               |                                                          |
| WP12 | Consolidation                                                                      |                                                          |
| WP13 | Impact and Dissemination                                                           |                                                          |

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

|           |                                                                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BoR       | Board of Rectors                                                                  |
| EG        | Expert Group                                                                      |
| 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 |
| GSC       | Global Student Council                                                            |
| MC        | Management Committee                                                              |
| OL        | Open Lab                                                                          |
| SC        | Steering Committee                                                                |
| SG        | Secretary general                                                                 |
| WP        | Work Package (of the CIVIS2 project, if not specified differently)                |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 4 years of the CIVIS2 project, CIVIS Alliance, and chiefly its Communication Unit, have considerably stepped-up communication and dissemination. Building on the Communication and Dissemination Strategy written in 2023, CIVIS moved from a predominantly centralised communication model towards a collaborative approach involving communication teams across all member universities, but also student ambassadors, academics, members of the professional staff and the other support units. This shift strengthened local ownership of CIVIS activities and contributed to embedding the Alliance more deeply within partner institutions.

A major achievement of these last four years was the diversification and consolidation of communication channels. The Alliance also successfully completed a full rebranding process, including a new visual identity and graphic charter. The website was entirely redesigned, developed over the course of 2025 then launched in February 2026, complemented by the new CIVIS Agora platform, a key component of the CIVIS digital campus. All signs point to a very successful redesign: between February and June 2026 alone, the CIVIS website recorded more than 106,000 visits, while the combined CIVIS digital ecosystem attracted over 185,000 visits. Social media audiences continued to grow, reaching nearly 20,000 followers by June 2026, while newsletter subscriptions increased to more than 7,600 recipients. These communication channels constitute the core set of tools for promoting opportunities, showcasing achievements and strengthening the sense of belonging within the CIVIS community.

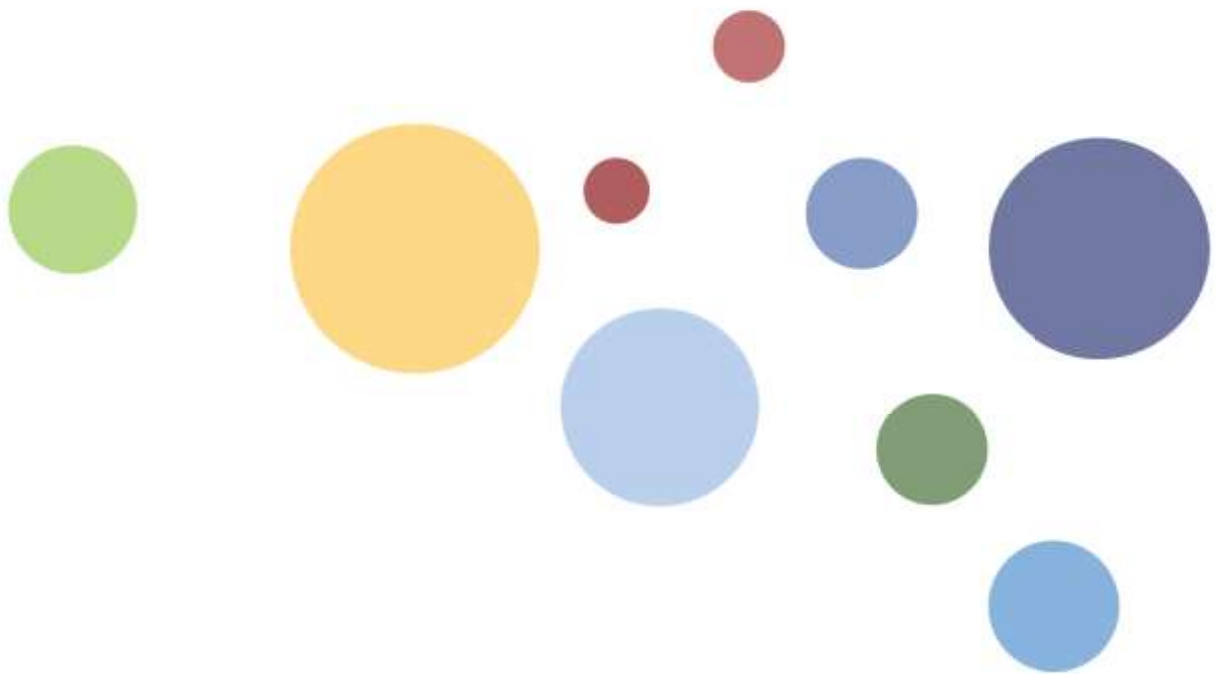
Communication material is increasingly devoted to human-centred storytelling and co-created content. Initiatives such as the #DiscoverCIVIS campaign, the Civizen stories, the CIVIS Student Newsroom, and the production of original multimedia content highlighted the experiences of students, academics and professional staff across the Alliance.

CIVIS2 also marked a significant step up in the promotion of innovative educational offers. CIVIS developed and tested a marketing and recruitment model for its joint master's programmes. The TRACEE Master's programme served as a pilot, allowing the Alliance to develop dedicated webpages, promotional videos, visual assets, and coordinated recruitment campaigns. Building on this experience, CIVIS successfully refined its recruitment strategy for other programmes.

Dissemination activities focused on ensuring that CIVIS results, methodologies and lessons learnt are widely shared and accessible to both the Alliance community and other alliances and the wider European higher education sector. Material are made available through the CIVIS website, while CIVIS representatives actively shared their experiences through conferences, workshops, policy discussions and many activities within the FOREU4ALL community of practice. The Alliance maintained a strong profile at major higher education events, including European Association for International Education conferences, where CIVIS projects, activities and educational innovations received international recognition.

The flagship recurring dissemination event of the Alliance remains the yearly CIVIS Days, which evolved into a central platform for community building, exchange of practices, and dissemination of results. Participation remains consistently high across editions, culminating in the 2026 CIVIS Days in Bucharest, which attracted 363 participants from 17 countries and nearly 40 institutions.

Overall, CIVIS2 demonstrates that communication and dissemination are integral drivers of innovation, transformation, and sustainability. Through modernised and stronger branding, overhauled website, expanded digital channels, innovative storytelling, targeted promotion of educational offer, and widespread dissemination of results, CIVIS has increased awareness and impact of the Alliance, within its community, and into the broader European higher education landscape.



# 1

## INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CIVIS Alliance's goals

CIVIS Alliance is a deeply integrated network of comprehensive, research-intensive universities rooted in their local communities and committed to innovative, responsible education, research, and cultural exchange across Europe and beyond. By combining complementary strengths and partnering with local communities and African universities, CIVIS aims to address global challenges and drive social impact, cultural diversity, and economic vitality at local and international levels.

CIVIS member universities share fundamental values which are intrinsic to our standing as civically minded universities:

- Scientific integrity and academic freedom
- Democracy
- European integration
- Participative governance
- Civic engagement
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Open science
- Sustainability

Efforts in communication and dissemination are not just a way to share and exchange about the impact of the Alliance and how it contributes to the transformation of European higher education. These efforts are part and parcel of producing and enhancing the impact at different levels: the member universities, the Alliance itself, and the broader higher education landscape. Though certain actions may be aimed more specifically at one of these levels, most will contribute to all three, to various degrees.

A comprehensive *Communication and Dissemination Strategy* was prepared (Milestone 13.1) to organise the tasks associated with "Impact and Dissemination" in relation to communication, dissemination, visibility and impact of the project. These tasks include developing and articulating CIVIS dissemination and communication policy (Task 13.1), heightening dissemination (Task 13.2), heightening communication (Task 13.3), identifying relevant external funding opportunities (Task 13.4), and engaging the growing community of CIVIS alumni (Task 13.5).

This report intends to present and summarise the various initiatives and concrete actions undertaken to achieve those tasks and the results they have produced. These results are sometimes characterised quantitatively, sometimes qualitatively, often both quantitatively and qualitatively.

## 1.2 Objectives & Methodology

This deliverable aims at describing and analysing the impact of the activities undertaken to carry out the tasks and reach the objectives planned within the work plan.

These objectives were initially listed in the application as:

- Foster dissemination of CIVIS result
- Enhance the overall impact of the Alliance
- Increase engagement of universities' communities in CIVIS initiatives
- Develop & maintain CIVIS communication channels towards different target groups

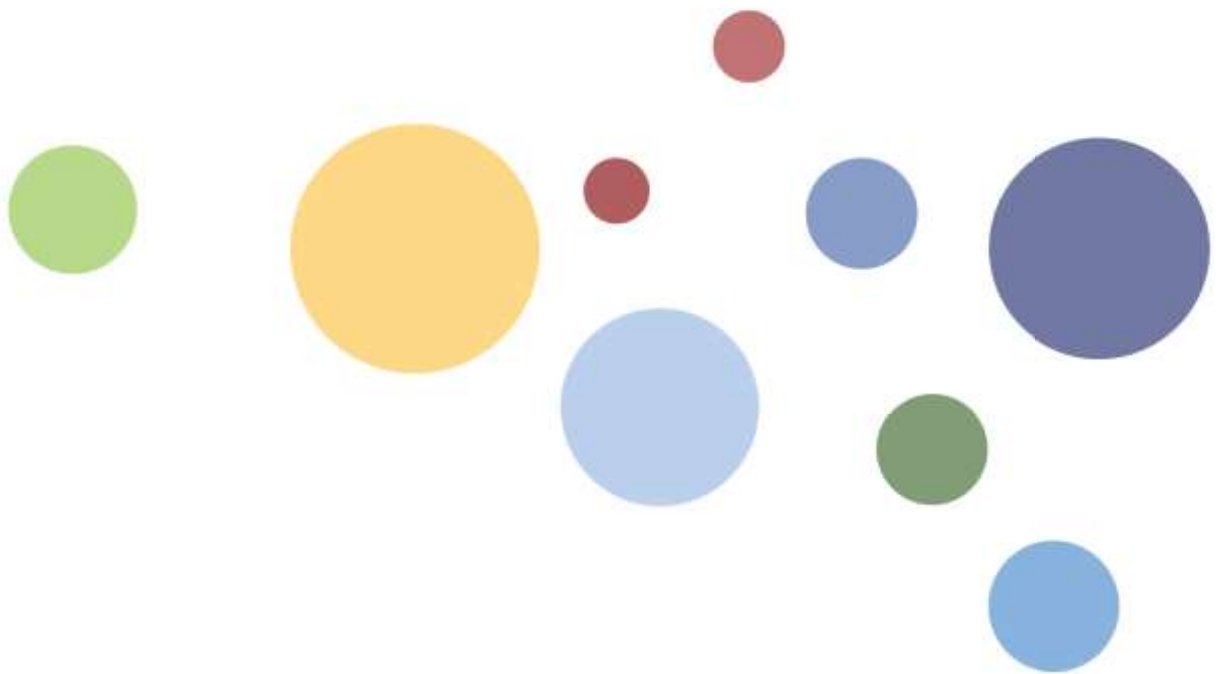
These objectives were unpacked and developed in the *Communication and Dissemination Strategy* (2023) as follows.

### **For communication:**

1. Raise awareness — informing our audiences that CIVIS exists.
2. Improve understanding by stakeholders of the scope and objectives of CIVIS.
3. Give visibility and context to CIVIS outcomes and achievements.
4. Increase brand adoption and usage — making our audiences feel a part of the CIVIS community and building positive feelings and attitudes towards the brand and the project.
5. Recruit participants: getting our audiences to actively engage in the CIVIS opportunities open to them.
6. Effectively communicate on how to make the most of the opportunities offered by CIVIS.
7. Showcase our communities, activities and achievements, and the positive impact these have on our communities and our society in general.
8. Encourage a sense of individual identification and belonging to create a CIVIS community and collective identity.

### **For dissemination:**

1. Share what we learn and develop so that others can use and build on it.
2. Present the concept and assets of a European University.
3. Showcase our democratic and participative governance model.
4. Consolidate awareness, and in some cases, prompt engagement.
5. Strengthen our reporting and build credibility.
6. Encourage the participation of all stakeholders, including those outside the university community.
7. Reinforce CIVIS's accountability and transparency to its funders and partners.
8. Catalyse new collaborations and highlight still untapped potentials.



# 2

## COMMUNICATION

## 2.1 Strategy and assets

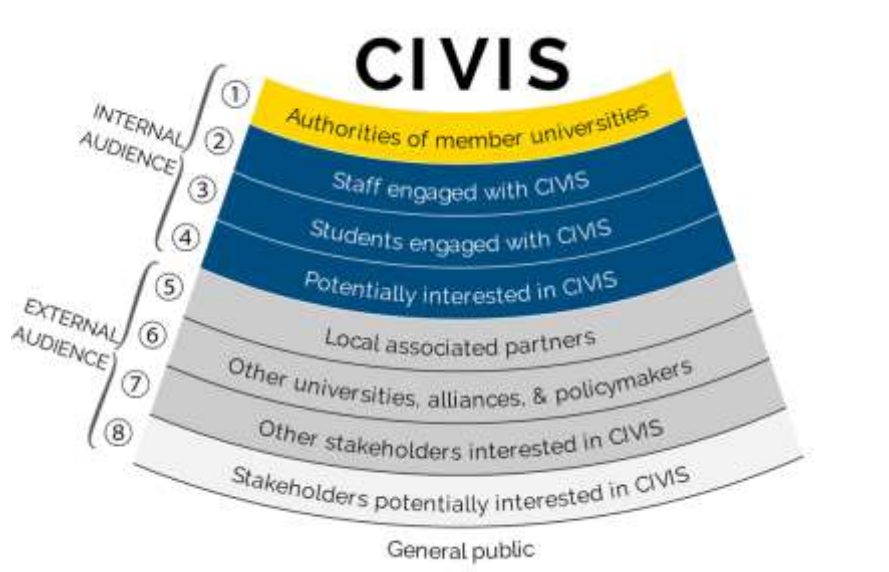
The communication and dissemination of CIVIS activities are coordinated by the leadership of the corresponding work package, with members designated by the co-leading universities (ULB, UB, and NKUA respectively). These members co-lead the relevant activities, supervise the preparation of any reporting or output, and, together with the Head of the Communication Unit, decide on strategic actions to improve the visibility and impact of CIVIS. CIVIS communication and dissemination rely chiefly on 3 groups of highly specialised people:

- The central **CIVIS Communications Team** is made of 5 members: 3 based in Brussels (including the Head of the Communication Unit), 1 based in Athens and 1 in Bucharest.
- The central CIVIS Communications Team works together with a broader **Communication Unit** consisting of one member in each member university. These members are essentially staff in the central communications office of their university where they manage CIVIS-related communication activities.
- An **Expert Group of Communication Directors** made of the heads of Communication of each of the member universities. The group meets twice a year (or whenever needed) to provide input and feedback on the communication and dissemination actions envisioned by the Alliance leadership and activated by the Communication Unit.

Building on the rich experience of the pilot phase of CIVIS (2019-2022), a **Communication and Dissemination Strategy** (MS13.1) was finalised in 2023 to cover the full span of CIVIS2, with 4 phases corresponding broadly to the 4 years of the project:

- Year 1: Transition from pilot to consolidation.
- Year 2: Flagship projects, reflecting on forces for radical innovation.
- Year 3: Many universities, one campus.
- Year 4: Long-term perspectives.

It outlined key objectives and goals, identified key stakeholders and communication channels, and described communication and dissemination guidelines, activities and how their success will be evaluated throughout the next 4 years of the project. This strategy was set in place with the help of the Communication Team and the Communication Unit and involved communication and dissemination stakeholders from all 11 universities forming the Alliance.



*The layers of target audiences as defined in the Communication and Dissemination Strategy.*

The audience targeted by the communication and dissemination efforts of CIVIS can be segmented into 8 concentric groups forming the *internal audience* (layers 1 to 4) and the *external audience* (layers 5 to 8). In the right context, some of the specific audiences of each member university would likely see CIVIS as an asset and an advantage associated with that university.

Student involvement is vital for reaching the goals of our Alliance's. Each university is invited to identify **CIVIS Ambassadors**, promoting CIVIS Alliance's mission and goals within their institutions. Ideally, the Ambassadors represent all three study cycles and various academic disciplines. Student Ambassadors contribute to the CIVIS mission and vision by, for example:

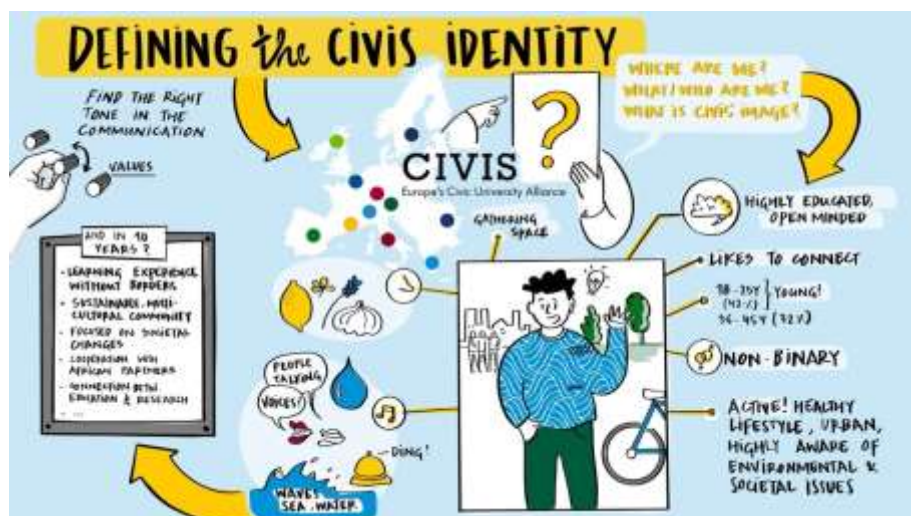
- Promoting CIVIS initiatives at the home university and helping to connect incoming CIVIS students and local students
- Supporting and helping organise CIVIS-related events, including Student Days and other local activities.
- Co-creating and implementing communication campaigns to raise visibility of CIVIS, in collaboration with fellow Ambassadors and with support from the CIVIS Communications Unit.
- Engaging in cross-campus collaboration, sharing ideas and initiatives with other Ambassadors across the Alliance and contributing to the development of the CIVIS "inter-university campus."
- Cooperating with the CIVIS Student Council to align efforts and represent student interests.

## 2.2 CIVIS Branding

Efforts to make CIVIS Alliance known and to increase brand recognition, it became increasingly obvious that the initial branding could be improved. The central component of the branding, the logo, appeared especially suboptimal as the name "CIVIS" was hardly visible whenever the logo was used in small sizes. The initial branding was also lacking a full graphic charter to ensure coherence in all branded material. It was therefore decided to proceed to a full rebranding.

### Visual revamp

The original CIVIS logo was visually impactful, and a clear summary of who we are and where we are. However, a new version was designed to make it easier to read (even in small sizes) and less dependent on changes in membership (the original design shows one dot per member on a map of Europe, which also seem to exclude our African associate members). Internal surveys and consultations were undertaken to ensure the rebranding was properly anchored in the community. Respondents included members of the Participative Council, the Student Council, CIVIS Ambassadors, recipients of the CIVIS Info newsletter, and members of the Hub Councils. Three rounds of consultation were also held with the Expert Group formed by the Heads of Communication from CIVIS member universities.



Sketchnote graphic summary of the results of the internal consultation about CIVIS identity.

The new CIVIS Alliance logo was launched in October 2024. The graphic charter ensuring consistency, visibility of the EU co-funding and uniformity in all CIVIS's communication actions was adjusted accordingly and branding materials and templates were created. It has been an evolving process in which the basic elements were created by external agencies (logo, working materials and social media style) with continued renewal by the internal team (Graphic designer and social media manager).

## Making it real in all presentation materials and channels

To explain the complexity of a University Alliance, CIVIS has chosen a narrative based on human experience. The CIVIS Journey allowed us to combine the metaphor of the voyage, with the mobility ambitions, the commitment to sustainability and the growth that comes from co-constructing your learning process.



A mock-up ticket as part of the welcome material for participants to the CIVIS Days in Bucharest (2026)

To embody it, our brochures became maps and train tickets, our graphic design increasingly includes visual cues from the travelling experience and we started a slow, but steady production of our own, real-life, stock photos and videos. Almost the entirety of our visual content portrays real people from CIVIS universities, both collected through our local Communication Unit members or produced by the central Communication Team during events.



Typical promotional material for a BIP.

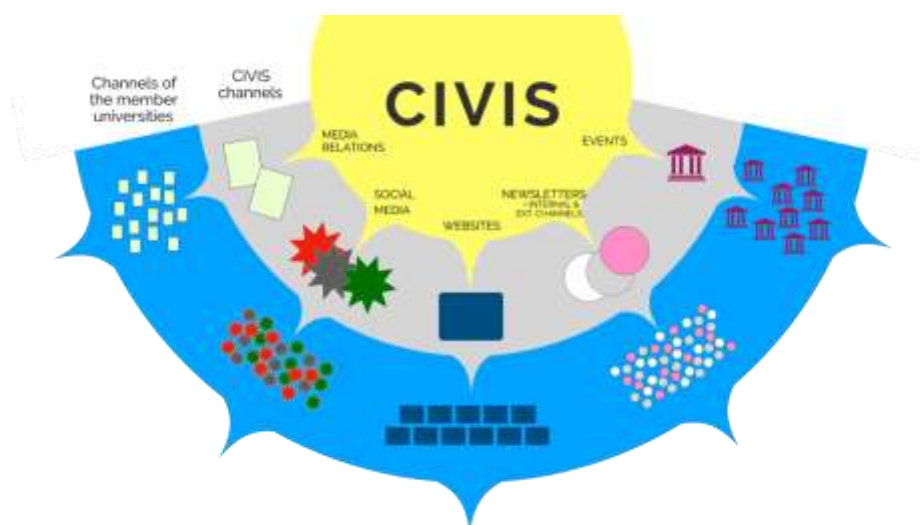
## 2.3 Channels

Communication and Dissemination activities have expanded throughout CIVIS2, increasing the visibility of the Alliance's results and the opportunities it provides. Consistent with the European Commission's distinction between dissemination (making project results available for further use) and communication (promoting the action and its results to broader audiences), CIVIS has combined targeted dissemination towards higher education stakeholders with wider communication activities aimed at students, staff, partner organisations and the general public.

The alliance has activated three main types of channels to promote itself and its opportunities:

1. CIVIS-level channels (website, social media, newsletters, etc.).
2. University-level channels managed by the central communications department of each university, which is normally the department represented in the CIVIS Communications Unit.
3. Semi-informal channels inside faculties and departments, including email and word-of-mouth.

The first two types of channels can be modelled as shown on the following diagram.



Five types and two levels of communication channels as modelled in the Communication and Dissemination Strategy.

Previous audience surveys have revealed that our audiences tend to engage with CIVIS messages mainly using the university channels. Therefore, the main shift in the CIVIS communication as compared to the pilot phase of the project has been a shift from centrally produced content alone, to incremental co-construction with local Communication Unit members and other CIVIS representatives, such as Student Ambassadors, Open Labs or the Student Council to name a few. Over 200 dissemination activities have been organised and over 1.600 communication actions have been completed by CIVIS universities and the central Communication Unit in the past four years

This quantitative impact shows the strength of the strategy. A deepening local embedding of CIVIS remains a challenge that CIVIS teams will keep on addressing going forward.

## **CIVIS Website**

To meet the dual demands of storytelling and operational functionality, CIVIS has moved towards a two-platform logic: a renewed [CIVIS website](#) (February 2026), focused on communication and dissemination, and a new [CIVIS Agora](#), designed to act as the Alliance's internal, data-driven hub for academic collaboration, course listings, support services and interoperability. The delays achieving this important upgrade are explained by the need to strike a balance between the narrative and operational needs, the necessary coordination between Units, Work Packages and local administrative requirements. The result, in terms of Communication and Dissemination, is a storytelling platform, with a [fully-fledged CIVIS Newsroom](#).

The new narrative website highlights the stories, achievements, results, opportunities, and events that define CIVIS, bringing together news, blogs, podcasts, special features, photo stories in one cohesive narrative space. With multilingual support in all eight CIVIS languages and an audience-focused structure, the website guides users smoothly toward key information and onward into CIVIS' digital ecosystem (i.e. CIVIS Agora) Its primary missions are:

- To communicate, to make CIVIS visible and understandable to students, staff, partners, and the wider public, and to house the Alliance's narrative identity and published documentation,
- To disseminate CIVIS results, best practices, lessons learned with the larger community of Alliances and other audiences in both the Newsroom and the [Resources section](#).



## I AM A STUDENT

Are you a student at one of CIVIS universities? Welcome to the community!

As a CIVIS student, you gain access to a wealth of opportunities designed to help you thrive in a vibrant, multicultural, and multilingual environment. Our member universities work closely together to offer joint programmes and courses of excellence. Featuring physical, virtual, or blended international mobility. Take advantage of outstanding academic offer, connect with students from across Europe, and expand your network within CIVIS Alliance.

[I AM A STUDENT](#)
[I AM AN ACADEMIC/RESEARCHER](#)
[I AM AN ADMINISTRATOR](#)

[DISCOVER OUR COURSE CATALOGUE](#)



## WHAT'S IT LIKE TO STUDY WITHIN CIVIS?

[▶ PLAY THE VIDEO](#)

### CIVIS FOR STUDENTS


[DISCOVER](#)
[LEARN](#)
[TEACH](#)
[RESEARCH](#)
[CONNECT](#)

[OUR STORIES](#)



universities. Some courses offer the possibility of studying in Africa, in one of our associate member universities.

- Excellent courses** Join high-quality, interdisciplinary courses tackling urgent societal challenges. Our programmes bring the academic excellence CIVIS universities are renowned for and are designed for real-world skills and employability. Our courses and programmes usually involve at least three universities.
- Student networking** Enjoy numerous opportunities to meet and collaborate with fellow students from diverse backgrounds. Become a student ambassador or develop your own project.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIS STUDENTS

Whether you are interested in online courses, @Rs, Master's programmes, or opportunities for PhD students, CIVIS offers pathways to academic excellence and practical experience across Europe and beyond.



**BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES**



**BUILD YOUR LEARNING PATH WITH OUR FLEXIBLE OFFER**



**FIND YOUR MASTER'S PROGRAMME**



**STUDY ABROAD AND CONNECT WITH CIVIS UNIVERSITIES**



**STUDENT-LED PROJECTS**



**DISCOVER CIVIS ALLIANCE**

Sample page of the new website (navigation by profile of visitor, here: students)

In the 2025–2026 revamp, particular emphasis was placed on accessibility, visibility, and user experience. This was achieved through design considerations, including extensive consultations with CIVIS Units and the Student Council, alongside targeted technical assessments.

Accessibility was integrated from the start, notably through work on graphic design, and reinforced by systematic evaluations using tools such as WebAIM WAVE (a suite of tools to assess a website's accessibility to users with disabilities), Google Lighthouse (an open-source tool assessing, among other factors, the accessibility of web pages), and Axe DevTools (web and mobile accessibility testing tools) to identify and address compliance and usability issues.

In parallel, efforts to enhance visibility included the implementation of a dedicated llms.txt file (<https://civis.eu/llms.txt>) and the provision of key pages in markdown format (<https://civis.eu/en.md>), supporting improved indexing and content accessibility for a broader range of automated systems and services. The website also incorporates structured data, enabling search engines to better interpret and present its content.

### *What the numbers say*

Website visibility remained strong, with nearly 574,000 cumulative visitors since the launch of CIVIS in 2019. However, challenges have emerged in data collection due to (1) the transition from Google Analytics to the more restrictive, yet GDPR compliant Matomo analytics system (2023) and (2) to technical glitches that produced complete data loss (July 2025–Feb 2026). Rather than assuming reduced audience interest, comparing statistics from the period that encompasses the launch of the new website (Feb 9, 2026) and the end of June and the same period in 2025.

A few KPIs show clearly the impact of the new two-platform experience:

- According to data extracted from Matomo between Feb. 9, 2026, and June 30 of the same year, civis.eu received 106,417 visits, a 207% increase compared with the same period in 2025. This is without counting visits to the new CIVIS Agora, that now hosts the course catalogues, among other services and that received 75,666 visits during that timeframe in 2026. Combined, the platforms brought in a total of 185,083 visits in only 5 months.
- 12% of those 106,417 visits to civis.eu were to the CIVIS Newsroom, a place where CIVIS' impact is showcased through stories (including multimedia), opportunities and news. The Newsroom is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most visited page, and the top 10 news of the period show diverse thematics and experiences and cater to different audiences.
- Top 10 News on the website show diversity of interest and profiles of users:
  1. [Calling academic teams to set in motion impactful projects for democracy](#)
  2. [First CIVIS African–European Forum for Research and Education continues today in Casablanca](#)
  3. [CIVIS BIPs: strong impact and high satisfaction, new report finds](#)
  4. [The saltwater tolerance is what kept the dinosaur-eating giant crocodile alive, UT-led study reveals](#)
  5. [Study, Travel, Connect: CIVIS Launches New Wave of BIPs Across Europe](#)
  6. [Facing Common Challenges, Shaping Joint Solutions for Africa and Europe](#)
  7. [CIVIS Days 2026 will bring high-level debates, open dialogue and community spirit to Bucharest](#)
  8. [Make Some Waves: CIVIS Launches New Podcast Series](#)
  9. [Building an Alliance That Works: Five Lessons from the CIVIS Units](#)
  10. [CIVIS launches new job space for early-stage researchers across Europe and Africa](#)

- The most visited pages are, besides the home page in English, (1) [LEARN](#), (2) [DISCOVER CIVIS](#) (3) [The CIVIS Newsroom](#) and (4) [I AM A STUDENT](#)
- Visits after finding civis.eu in Search engines blew up with a 563% increase amounting to 59% of visits. Some 147 keywords were reported. AI Assistants showed up for the first time with 1% of visits, a trend we'll be looking at to reinforce the indexing actions already in place. Other referring channels are social media, with LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram at the top, and our Newsletter campaigns.
- The top 3 referral websites are two member universities and the CIVIS Agora, which show the interactions are taking place. Websites amount to 8% of visits in the reference period.
  1. [Home | Sapienza Università di Roma](#).
  2. [Home | CIVIS Agora](#)
  3. [Université de Lausanne - Unil](#)

## Social media

The aim of the social media accounts was initially to make our target audiences aware of the existence of CIVIS, to grow our community, and to build a relationship by introducing CIVIS and sharing the different opportunities we offer. Today, the goal remains to increase engagement and visibility via CIVIS Social Media accounts especially in the framework of sharing the experience of CIVIS with our various, both external and internal, audiences. This is best achieved by reaching them both directly (exposure to messages posted on CIVIS social media accounts) and indirectly (by relying on CIVIS member universities and partners to relay those posts on their own social media accounts).

Evidence of this growth can be seen in the continuous expansion of CIVIS audiences. But it goes beyond numbers. Social media audiences have grown consistently, from 11,520 followers in 2022–2023 to 14,171 in 2023–2024, a total of 17,396 in 2024–2025 to 19,781 by June 2026 across CIVIS channels, demonstrating a gradual strengthening of the Alliance's digital reach.

From October 2022 to June 2026, CIVIS' social media presence grew as follows:

- Facebook increased from 2,544 to 4,064 fans (+60%), Instagram from 2,794 to 6,367 followers (+128%), and LinkedIn from 1,448 followers in March 2023 to 6,362 (+339%).
- LinkedIn clearly stands out as the strongest channel, both in terms of audience growth and engagement: its engagement rate rose from 7.9% in 2022–2024 to 21% in 2025–2026, with 26,080 post clicks in the latest period. When compared with available education-sector benchmarks, CIVIS performs particularly well on LinkedIn and Facebook, whose engagement rate remained close to 5% throughout the period. This is the fastest-growing community on social media, one of the possible reasons being the freeze of our Twitter/X account following the questionable environment on this platform and the growing attention of the alliances' community to LinkedIn.
- Instagram engagement became more moderate after 2024, but the platform generated very high visibility in 2025–2026, with 876,700 post views and over 1.2 million profile views.

These results suggest that CIVIS' progress was not only driven by audience growth, but also by a more strategic and collaborative approach to social media. Specialised training, closer coordination with member universities, and stronger working relationships built through key moments such as CIVIS Days 2025 in Rome and CIVIS Days 2026 in Bucharest helped improve both content quality and cross-alliance visibility.

The student ambassador pilot (mentioned below, in special campaigns) also contributed to this evolution by bringing more authentic student voices into CIVIS communication. Collaborative campaigns, such as the September 2025 BIPs launch on Instagram, confirmed the value of co-created content, with one joint reel reaching a record 1,103 likes. The main lesson learnt is that CIVIS performs best when content is co-created, people-centred and connected to real Alliance experiences, rather than relying only on institutional announcements. Going forward, this confirms the value of using LinkedIn for institutional visibility and traffic, Instagram for storytelling and community engagement, Facebook for stable audience interaction, and YouTube as a complementary video archive.

## Newsletters

The CIVIS Communication and Dissemination Strategy encouraged addressing the needs of different audiences with dedicated newsletters. Two public newsletters are created and distributed by the Communication Unit, while the third newsletter aimed at a strictly internal audience (authorities and staff engaged in operating the Alliance) is managed by the coordination team.



Three newsletters and their respective periodicity, audience, and focus.

General statistics show newsletter subscriptions increased from 5,777 in the first year of CIVIS2 to 6,399 in 2023–2024 and 7,290 in 2024–2025. By June 2026, numbers were up to 7,615 subscribers. This increase was supported by the complementary editorial formats of the monthly CIVIS Highlights and the quarterly CIVIS News, which provided regular updates on Alliance activities, opportunities and achievements.

## Highlights

The CIVIS Highlights newsletter is the third editorial format developed by the Alliance, designed to reinforce connections among member universities while bridging the information gap between the weekly CIVIS Info and the quarterly CIVIS Newsletter. Launched in December 2023 through the publication of member stories on the CIVIS website, the first edition was distributed in January 2024 to more than 5,000 contacts, with an invitation to subscribe. The distribution strategy was subsequently refined, targeting a steadily expanding subscriber base alongside the CIVIS Info mailing list. By June 2026, the newsletter had reached 1,514 subscribers and a total of 26 editions had been disseminated, reflecting regular production and sustained audience growth.

From an editorial perspective, the newsletter has evolved to include new formats, such as the CIVIS Corner (launched by the 4<sup>th</sup> edition), "civizen" stories (introduced in October 2025, see below), and a collaborative stories series (launched in March 2026), all aimed at showcasing the Alliance's achievements and added value.

Its performance indicators demonstrate strong engagement and relevance: the newsletter records an average open rate of 54%, significantly indicating sustained reader interest; an average click rate of 8.3%, with a notable peak of 31.2% in February 2026 linked to the launch of the new CIVIS website; and a click-to-open rate of 16.5%, confirming effective content relevance and user interaction. These results highlight the newsletter's role as an increasingly impactful communication tool despite ongoing coordination challenges across the Alliance.

Despite its success, the initiative faced notable challenges, particularly in ensuring that CIVIS remained a communication priority across all member institutions, maintaining coordination and adherence to deadlines,

and sustaining a consistent flow of contributions while strengthening collaboration between local communication teams and the central CIVIS Communication team.

## CIVIS News

A new format is being developed inspired by television newscasts. Short videos will feature on-set journalistic interviews providing insights on topics relevant to the development of the Alliance and, more broadly, to higher education. A first batch of footage was filmed during the CIVIS Days in Bucharest (June 2026) and will be edited into the first edition of CIVIS News in the autumn. The format requires specialised staff, equipment, and infrastructure, but it will provide a powerful medium to approach complex issues in ways that allow rich content in various forms while featuring and recognising members of the community. The format should appeal to a wide audience.

## 2.4 Special Campaigns - Examples

In addition to the many structural, regular communication activities, special campaigns have been undertaken in pursuit of specific objectives, ranging from reaching out to relevant target audiences to enhancing visibility and awareness of particular actions or objectives. Each of these special campaigns constitutes its own experiment both in form and substance. Some will be repeated whenever needed, others might become a regular feature, others still might prove underperforming and help us better understand the factors influencing performance in our communication undertakings.

### #DiscoverCIVIS and Instagram takeover by CIVIS Student Ambassadors

As part of a social media campaign "[#DiscoverCIVIS – A journey through the Alliance](#)," CIVIS students had the opportunity to take over the Alliance's Instagram to present their universities and local traditions. Between March and July 2024, the students were encouraged to explore, as creatively as possible, a new theme each month: buildings, nationalities, food, drinks and local celebrations. At the end of each month, Communication Team turned the stories into reels for the Alliance's social network feed.



Examples of special campaigns.

### Civisness, or how to “cook” a CIVIS project

One of our special communication initiatives aimed to bring to the spotlight the concept of “civisness”. To create a CIVIS story or to develop a CIVIS programme, there are a few ingredients that can help give them a true, CIVIS Alliance flavour. What is CIVIS all about? What makes it different from other alliances? The video campaign "[Civisness, or how to cook a CIVIS project](#)", launched in December 2024, had the objective of showing what we do, how we do it and the ingredients that create “CIVIS-ness” in the areas of mobility, civic engagement, challenge-based education, innovation or transformation, co-creation, local to global actions, multilingualism, and more. Around a kitchen table, academics, researchers and administrators from CIVIS “cooked up” some civisness and, through the metaphor of the “cooking show”, not only explained the key

elements and values of our alliance, but also showed the human experience, the friendships and complicity that grew by working together.



*Screenshots from How to cook a CIVIS project videos*

## Civizens Campaign

"Civizens" are active members of a CIVIS community of shared dreams and values, that embrace the individual and promote a path where each can contribute to a larger goal. This series of personal profile feature stories was launched in March 2025 and has allowed us to share, so far, the CIVIS Journey of six students, administrative and academic members of our community.

The "civizen" campaign shows how communication can evolve from promotion to participation. What began as a three-part video series grew into a community-branding effort during the first Units Summit in Bucharest (2025), then into a publication series profiling individual "civizen" journeys. It will next take the shape of a trivia game "Who wants to be a civizen?" proposed by the Mobility Unit for CIVIS Days 2026.

Translating the impact of a very abstract construct, like a European university alliance, into something concrete, real, human is no easy task. The civizen campaign is a great example of how to give the alliance a face, something all can identify with.



*An example of My CIVIS Journey campaign.*

## CIVIS Student Newsroom

CIVIS Newsroom is an integrated instrument at the crossroads of targeted, newsworthy, and promotional messaging on the Alliance for both internal and external audiences. It serves to showcase news and stories from CIVIS and produces longer-term messaging with an eye to developing a CIVIS narrative, reinforcing the identity of CIVIS as a European Alliance of civically engaged research universities.

A 4-month special campaign, the CIVIS Ambassadors Newsroom Project was launched in February 2026 to empower students to become active communicators of CIVIS activities, while building skills in storytelling, collaboration and digital content creation. Over the course of the pilot, the project brought together 15 ambassadors from across the alliance, with 12 travelling to Bucharest to form the first student-led newsroom covering CIVIS Days 2026. Ambassadors were not only active online: they also contributed to student fairs, welcome days and local outreach activities, helping connect CIVIS opportunities with their peers on campus. This dual role as communicators and local representatives reflects the broader ambition of the project: to strengthen the link between the Alliance and its student community.

The Project in numbers:

- 15 Ambassadors participated in the pilot
- 12 Ambassadors attended CIVIS Days in Bucharest
- 7 Social media publications Meet the ambassadors, BIPs, mobility, favourite spot, CIVIS Days
- 5 Additional social campaigns filmed and in post-production
- 5 Civizen stories (two published, three upcoming)



*CIVIS Student Ambassadors.*

## Promotion of new educational offer

### *BIP campaigns*

Blended Intensive Programmes are a key educational format for CIVIS. To maximise impact, a coordinated calendar of actions is agreed upon and organised by the Education, Mobility, Digital Campus and Communication Units, allowing for a workflow of data collection, checks, digital platform availability and support and content creation.

This is followed by the creation of a content campaign calendar and editable templates, open and shared with all CIVIS universities. Production is coordinated by the Communication Unit, working in collaboration with local Communication members and Student Ambassadors or Council members. This allows for brand coherence while allowing for personalisation at the local level (language, logos, images).

The campaign includes the creation and publication of individual course pages, social media and newsletter content. The timeline of a typical campaign looks like this:



*Timeline for the promotion campaign for the BIPs.*

## TRACEE Master's programme

CIVIS provided sustained communication and promotional (marketing) support for the Master's Programme in Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment, and Energy (TRACEE) through a coordinated, multi-channel promotion campaign implemented throughout 2025. As the first CIVIS joint master's programme to reach the recruitment and marketing stage, TRACEE was a testbed that helped us shape many how the Alliance would handle the promotion of degree-awarding programmes in the future and how it could collaborate with coordinating and participating universities.

This effort included the development of dedicated programme webpages, promotional video formats, and collaborative workflows between academic and communication teams. The campaign included the production of two promotional videos developed internally by the CIVIS communications team, the creation of infographics, animated visual assets, and the core TRACEE visual identity (including the logo designed by Azote) led by the Stockholm University team in their role as coordinator. Promotion combined specialised international recruitment platforms with Alliance-wide communication efforts, helping establish TRACEE as a flagship educational offer within CIVIS.

The campaign generated substantial visibility and engagement. Through Studyportals, TRACEE achieved 60,969 impressions, 1,611 programme-page views, 244 clicks to the programme website, and 46 qualified leads through a dedicated landing page. Interest originated primarily from Europe and Asia, with Africa also showing strong engagement. In parallel, Keystone Academic Solutions generated 142,802 impressions, 1,532 clicks, and 136 leads through organic listings, achieving a click-to-lead conversion rate of 9%, well above the provider's average benchmark. Additional Keystone promotional activities included a direct e-mail campaign sent to 1,515 prospective students, generating 26 conversions, and a Meta campaign that reached 66,546 individuals, generated 228,303 impressions, 630 clicks, and 129 leads. Altogether, Keystone-supported actions generated 293 qualified leads, demonstrating a strong demand for a specialised and interdisciplinary programme.

These external campaigns were complemented by significant in-house efforts led by the CIVIS Communication Unit. The campaign included the production of two promotional videos developed internally by the CIVIS communications team, the creation of infographics and animated visual assets by Stockholm University teams, dedicated e-mail marketing campaigns, and close collaboration between communication, academic and programme-management staff across the Alliance. A dedicated information session for

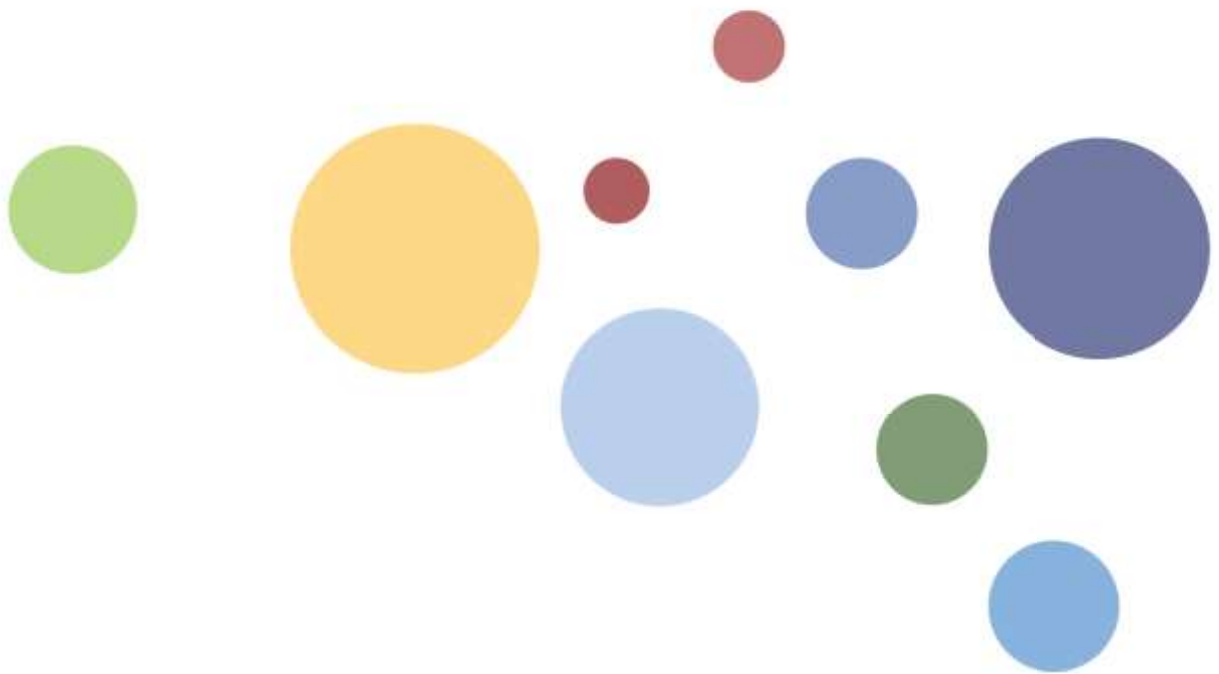
prospective applicants, together with ongoing outreach activities, contributed to the establishment of a recruitment database of more than 1,000 contacts, creating a valuable foundation for future recruitment cycles. As the first CIVIS master's programme to undergo a full recruitment campaign, TRACEE provided the testing ground for communication tools, promotional content formats and inter-unit collaboration models that are now supporting the promotion of subsequent CIVIS joint degree programmes.

### *EUROSUD Master's Programme*

Following the model established with the TRACEE experience, a campaign was also developed and deployed for the International Master in South European Studies (EUROSUD). The campaign was implemented between May 2025 and February 2026. Promotion was carried out across the CIVIS website, newsletters, social media channels and specialised international study portals. Overall, the campaign generated more than 285,000 impressions, attracted thousands of visits to programme information pages and produced almost 150 qualified student leads through paid recruitment channels. A dedicated online information session held on 11 June 2025 further supported recruitment efforts, generating 531 page views, 83 registrations and 43 attendees, with participants remaining connected for an average of 45 minutes.

The campaign combined Alliance-wide dissemination with targeted international outreach. EUROSUD was featured in the *CIVIS Highlights* and *CIVIS News* newsletters, reaching more than 5,000 recipients per edition and generating substantial engagement. Paid promotion through StudyPortals and Keystone Academic Solutions delivered 238,930 impressions, 1,559 programme page visits or clicks, and 145 qualified leads, with interest coming from markets including the United States, Germany, Argentina, Ecuador and the United Kingdom. Social media promotion on Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook further increased programme visibility, with some Instagram posts exceeding 80,000 views and LinkedIn posts achieving engagement rates of up to 34.8%. CIVIS also invested in dedicated multimedia content and promotional services, with a total financial commitment of €13,851.40 for the 2025 and 2026 recruitment campaigns, excluding the significant in-kind contribution of CIVIS staff involved in campaign design, content creation and organic promotion.

The success of the campaign can be measured by the fact that EUROSUD now has a waiting list of potential students.



# 3

## DISSEMINATION & IMPACT

### 3.1 Impact and Dissemination Agenda

The impact and dissemination agenda of CIVIS aims at increasing the visibility of the process and lessons learnt as our Alliance grows into a mature collaborative endeavour, both internally (among the various communities of the partner universities, in the case of impact) and externally (other alliances and any relevant third parties, in the case of dissemination).

Dissemination and impact require clear and regular messaging about the activities of CIVIS and about what it represents in terms of its civic engagement, challenge-driven educational philosophy and as a role model for European universities alliances' practices. And they provide tools for relevant actors to follow the same paths using tried and tested methodologies. CIVIS must ensure a durable and recognisable presence in the debates and considerations surrounding the future of the European Higher Education Area. At the heart of the project's impact and dissemination efforts, CIVIS has worked towards enhancing the overall impact of the Alliance, which involves both maintaining and developing the CIVIS public communication channels as well as developing new impactful messages on CIVIS, targeting its different target audiences.

### 3.2 Homegrown actions

The CIVIS Days is a yearly, in-person large-scale event hosted, in rotation, by one of the member universities. It brings together the different communities of CIVIS and provides opportunities to shine beyond our immediate communities for dissemination. Each of the CIVIS Days involves members from the different communities of the member and partner universities (students, academics & non-academic staff), also targeting the different stakeholders, other university alliances, higher education policymakers, etc. The programme is often built on (1) public keynote speeches and roundtables; (2) hybrid dissemination panels/presentations to share results and learnings on key topics, and (3) interactive sessions where participants take an active role in co-creating ideas and approaches for future actions of the Alliance.

The annual CIVIS Days has become the Alliance's flagship community event, bringing together students, academics, professional staff, governance representatives and external stakeholders to exchange experiences, showcase achievements and strengthen collaboration across CIVIS. While originally conceived primarily as a dissemination event, it has progressively evolved to serve as a key forum for community building and internal engagement, while continuing to be the main event for visibility and dissemination of CIVIS results, initiatives and lessons learnt with the community of practice. It also is an opportunity for the Communication Unit to produce content for its special campaigns.

During CIVIS2, CIVIS Days was hosted as follows:

- CIVIS Days 2023 – “Sustainably Connected Universities”, Tübingen, Germany.
- CIVIS Days 2024 – Salzburg, Austria.
- CIVIS Days 2025 – “Inclusion and Diversity in Higher Education”, Rome, Italy.
- CIVIS Days 2026 – “CIVIS is News – Seven Years of Shared Impact”, Bucharest, Romania.

The first event brought 230 participants to Tübingen (2023), 247 to Salzburg (2024), and 269 to Rome (2025), demonstrating sustained engagement from the CIVIS community. Selected sessions from the Rome edition were livestreamed, generating an additional 767 views and expanding the dissemination. Livestreams attracted 479 views the previous year, for the 2024 edition in Salzburg, further extending the dissemination of CIVIS activities and results.

Building on this momentum, the 2026 edition, hosted by the University of Bucharest, reached a new milestone, bringing together 363 participants from 17 countries and nearly 40 institutions, including universities, ministries, embassies and European bodies. The programme featured 31 sessions, combining dissemination activities, workshops, governance meetings and networking opportunities, and included the participation of 36 student musicians as part of the CIVIS Orchestra BIP. The steady growth in attendance and the increasing diversity of

participating organisations illustrate the CIVIS Days' role as a central platform for dissemination, collaboration and community building across the Alliance. It had recorded 1,945 views by September 2026.

## Communication & Dissemination guidelines

According to CIVIS Communication and Dissemination Strategy (Revised version, Year 1 of Roll-out Phase, 2023 – Approved by the Steering Committee 21 Sept. 2023) highlighted the need for a shift from “using CIVIS channels towards leaning more on the members' own channels, which should allow us to reach our audiences effectively and efficiently on channels that resonate with them.

To help local actors better communicate and disseminate CIVIS, the CIVIS Communication Core Team prepared a series of guidelines for communicating and disseminating CIVIS during the first quarter of 2024. These guidelines were discussed, reworked and improved during the full Communication Unit in-person meeting in Athens, in June 2024.

The guidelines include:

- Communicating CIVIS: Guidelines for great stories (for blogs, news, features)
- Step-by-step guide to write and disseminate a CIVIS policy paper (with the 2023 CIVIS advocacy strategy as an annexe)
- Promoting CIVIS courses to students
- Guidelines for CIVIS social media
- The CIVIS graphic charter

Other bonus guidelines include:

- Guide for CIVIS Communication and Dissemination reporting
- Template for CIVIS News and Events and other formats
- Guidelines for the Highlights (special newsletter dedicated to highlighting the work of our member universities).

While these are internal resources available in the CIVIS shared drive (“CIVIS Box”), some branding resources are publicly available on the website.

## Publication of outputs and resources

Through a dedicated [Resources page](#), CIVIS continues to share good practices and guides in terms of alliance management, challenge-based approaches to education, the building and accreditation of joint European programmes as well as the development of innovative teaching methods and digital learning instruments. For enhanced accessibility, the list of resources can be filtered by topic, category and target audience(s). To give a few examples;

- Report on CIVIS Blended Intensive Programmes 2024-2025 (2026)
- Digital Guidebook on the CIVIS Challenge-Driven Approach (2024)
- CIVIS Service-Learning guidelines for lecturers (2024)
- CIVIS guidelines to create digitally enhanced courses (2024)
- CIVIS micro-credentials. Notes for a challenge-based approach (2023)

In addition to the publication of resources produced centrally by different CIVIS entities, concrete outputs and results from individual transnational initiatives supported by the Alliance are made available on a continuous basis. These can include but are not limited to toolkits and guides; policy briefs; educational materials; reports; online data.

This section responds as well to the need to ensure easy access to dissemination resources on our website and, along with the Newsroom, enhances visibility of those lessons learnt, methodologies, guidelines and other formats.

### 3.3 External dissemination opportunities

As a first-generation alliance with a member university and a legal entity based in Brussels, CIVIS enjoys an exceptional range of dissemination opportunities. CIVIS also ensured a significant presence and activity at the annual conference of the European Association for International Education (EAIE), both during the conferences and at the exhibition area.

#### EAIE

- The Conference and Exhibition of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) is the largest international higher education conference in Europe, attracting thousands of professionals from around the world. CIVIS has ensured a coordinated presence of the Alliance at this annual event, through participation of CIVIS experts from the alliance's member-universities to meet with colleagues from other European universities and disseminate our alliance's innovative solutions and challenges in dedicated panels and poster sessions as part of the conference programme (See a summary of our participation in EAIE in [2023](#), in Rotterdam, [2024](#), in Toulouse; [2025](#), in Gothenburg and [2026](#), in Glasgow).
- CIVIS booth that each year (2024, 2025, 2026) welcomed hundreds of members, visitors and all curious about European universities alliances and the internationalisation of higher education. Through interactive displays, informal talks and thematic sessions, CIVIS has showed how joint programmes, transdisciplinary education and green mobility, among others, are not just policy goals: they are lived realities. CIVIS also notably won the Best Poster Award in 2024, for the presentation of TRACEE Master conception: "The journey of a joint master's in Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy" and was awarded as well in 2025, with the poster "Puzzling and rewarding: Piecing together a joint Master's programme in a university alliance", which was selected by EAIE participants as one of the top 3 best posters award.

#### Other dissemination opportunities

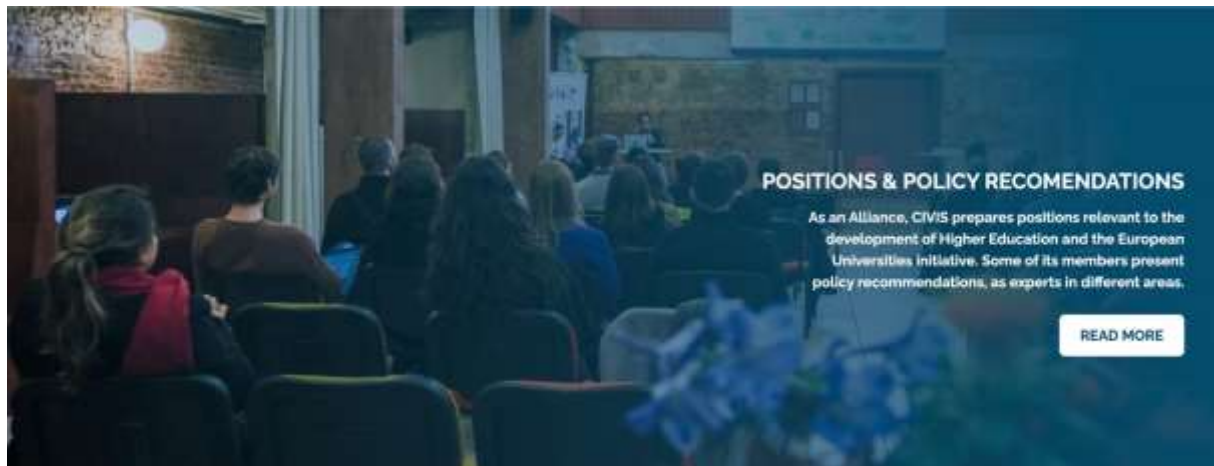
Besides these collective opportunities, CIVIS actors (Heads of Unit, Officers, Work Package leaders, Open Lab coordinators and others) participate in local and international events in which they represent CIVIS, and present its approach to challenge-based education, mobility, civic engagement and more. These varied dissemination activities can be formal and public, or informal and behind closed doors.

CIVIS also actively participates in the FOREU4ALL community of practice, including chairing and co-chairing some of the topical groups and participating in its board.

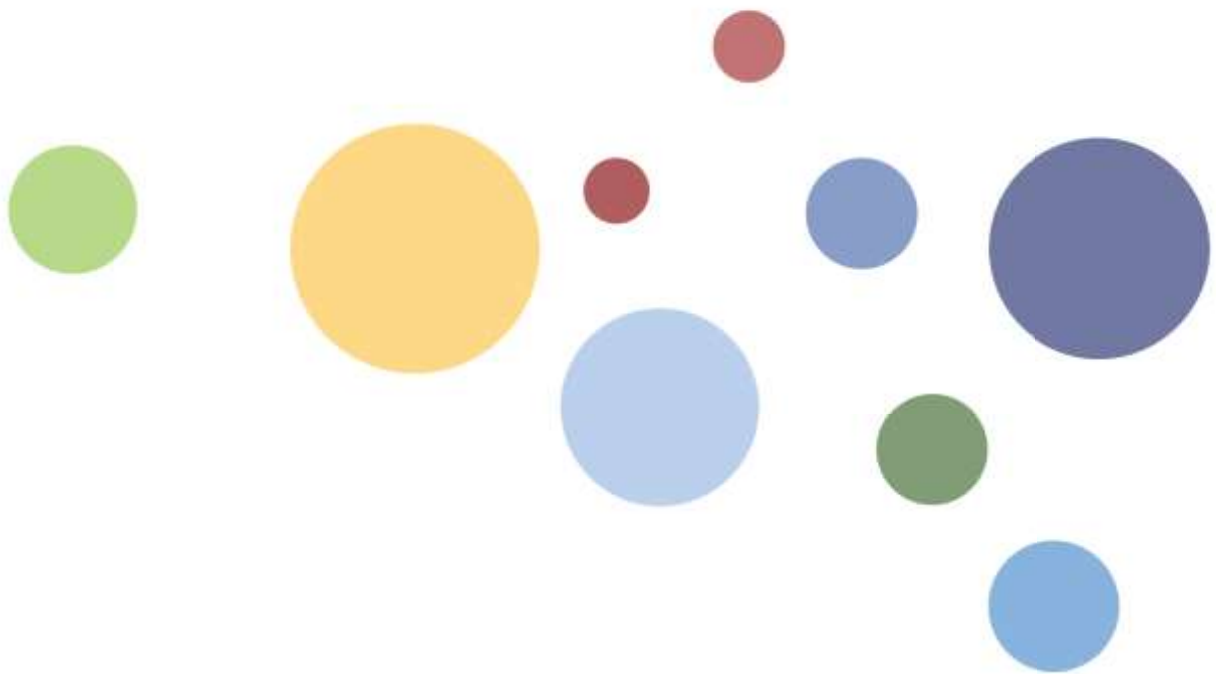
A detailed list of these actions is available in the dedicated section of the EC reporting platform.

### 3.4 Advocacy

To increase visibility and constitute an archive of key advocacy efforts by the Alliance, the design of the new website includes a dedicated section in the "Press Corner" pages. The corresponding documents are included in the Newsroom pages with specific tags ("Policy Recommendations" and "Position Papers") and a specific category ("Opinion").



*The new Position & Policy Recommendations section of the new website.*



# 4

## CONCLUSIONS

In any project of significant breadth, communication strategies and actions are essential. In the case of a university alliance, the role of communication isn't limited to sharing our experience with the world. Communication plays a fundamental role in achieving one of the central goals of the overall project, namely, to create a strong and sustainable community. Failure to achieve this goal would not only impede the project, but it would also structurally defeat its purpose.

The many layers of complexity of a university Alliance of the magnitude of CIVIS translate into layers of complexity in communicating its existence, its aims, and its actions. Fortunately, the Alliance is conceived as a long-term project, which provides a rare commodity in an environment usually marked by fast-paced processes and short-term expectations: a chance to cultivate a robust, learning, and lasting legacy.

CIVIS started as a project 7 years ago. Compared to the age of the member universities, CIVIS is only a blip. But compared to the average duration of most projects undertaken in academic circles, it is a respectable amount of time, all the more given that there is no end in sight and most people involved, knowing the potential of such an endeavour, feel that it's only the beginning.

Working for such an unusually long-term project allows for a level of ambition that can only be considered knowing that we are allowed to be cautious (because we don't fear being too slow) but also daring (because we can afford to make mistakes and learn from them). We can engage in innovative actions and sophisticated experiments, because we know we will find the time and opportunity to proceed, even at a slower pace.

After 7 years of communicating and disseminating CIVIS, the Alliance has come to a point where the teams involved, the skills they show, the tools they use, and the strategy that guides them have reached a level of maturity that makes it one of the very significant assets and achievements of the entire project. The skills and experience accumulated over time don't just serve the Alliance but are shared with the communication teams within the member universities as well as with other alliances.

Yet CIVIS is all too aware that none of this should be taken for granted. Higher education is undergoing a deep transformation, some of it imposed by a fast-changing context. The strength and maturity of CIVIS Alliance, including its communication and dissemination apparatus, will therefore be ultimately assessed by its capacity to adapt and to support its member universities in facing the challenges of our time.