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Europe's Civic University Alliance

Catalogue of Joint Bachelor's & Master Programmes awarded by CIVIS

CIVIS2: Deliverable 9.1

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.

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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	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	
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)
ART-W	Master in Palaeolithic Archaeology
CBL	Challenge-Based Learning
CIMIE	CIVIS Joint Master in International Education
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
EAIE	European Association for International Education
EDL	European Degree Label
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EMDM	Erasmus Mundus Design Measures
EMJM	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master
EUI	European Universities Initiative
EUROSUD	European Master in South European Studies
HAHE	Hellenic Authority for Higher Education
IIMAAI	International Integrative Master in Applied AI
NAT4DD	Drug Discovery from Natural Products to Formulations and Applications
SMARTT	Screening, Mapping, Analyzing, Recommending, Transferring and Transforming Higher Education international programmes

Executive Summary

Deliverable 9.1 presents the **development, implementation, accreditation, emerging impact, and future perspectives of CIVIS Joint Programmes at Bachelor's and Master's level leading to the award of Joint and/or Multiple degrees**, established within the CIVIS Alliance under Work Package 9 (WP9). It provides a consolidated overview of the CIVIS joint education portfolio and analyses the governance, quality assurance, pedagogical innovation, mobility, and institutional cooperation underpinning the Alliance's joint degree strategy.

The report demonstrates that CIVIS has made significant progress in moving from the **experimental cooperation that characterised the initial phase of the Alliance towards a more structured and increasingly institutionalised model of joint programme development under CIVIS 2**. The educational portfolio has expanded considerably, comprising **2 Bachelor's and 11 Master's programmes** at different stages of maturity, from newly approved initiatives to fully operational programmes with enrolled student cohorts. This diversification reflects the growing capacity of the Alliance to develop and manage transnational degree provision across different disciplinary fields and institutional contexts.

The analysis highlights that CIVIS has progressively established **common governance and management mechanisms** for joint programme development, including shared selection procedures, consortium agreements, Programme Boards, structured quality assurance processes, and coordinated mobility arrangements. While programmes differ substantially in disciplinary scope, scale, and stage of implementation, they increasingly operate within a shared Alliance framework that supports institutional cooperation while preserving academic diversity.

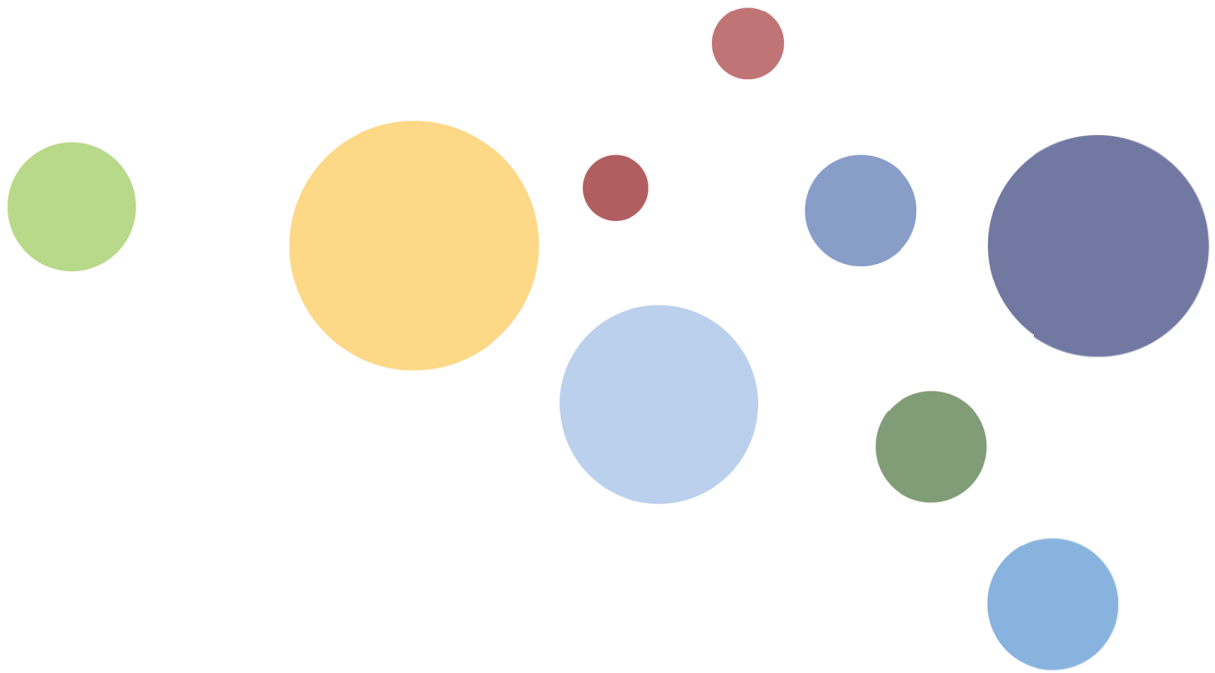
Accreditation remains one of the most complex dimensions of joint programme implementation. The analysis of selected case studies demonstrates a progressive movement towards the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes as a common strategic reference point. At the same time, differences in national regulatory frameworks and institutional accreditation practices continue to require flexible, hybrid, and transitional pathways. The CIVIS experience shows that early planning, appropriate governance structures, dedicated resources, and sustained coordination are important enabling conditions for further convergence.

The report also provides **initial evidence of the emerging educational and institutional impact** of CIVIS Joint Programmes. Although many programmes are still in their early stages and systematic longitudinal evidence is not yet available, current evidence indicates that they provide students with highly international, interdisciplinary, and research-oriented learning environments. They also foster new forms of academic collaboration, co-teaching, mobility, curriculum co-design, and institutional learning across partner universities. At institutional level, participation in joint programmes contributes to the development of governance capacity and to closer integration of education, research, and innovation.

Across the analysis, several **cross-cutting challenges** emerge, including long-term financial sustainability, accreditation complexity, administrative coordination, mobility and funding constraints, staff continuity, and the development and interoperability of digital learning environments. These challenges are largely structural rather than temporary, reflecting the complexity of operating genuinely transnational programmes across diverse national higher education systems. Addressing them requires continued institutional commitment, stronger Alliance-level coordination, diversified funding strategies, and sustained support for quality assurance, mobility, digital infrastructure, and programme governance.

Overall, the deliverable shows that **CIVIS has moved beyond the development of individual joint programmes towards an increasingly integrated educational ecosystem**. The Alliance has accumulated significant experience and institutional capacity in programme design, governance, accreditation, quality assurance, mobility, pedagogical innovation, and inter-university cooperation. While important challenges remain, the foundations for the further consolidation and expansion of high-quality European joint programmes are increasingly in place.

The experience documented in this deliverable therefore provides **valuable evidence and transferable practices for the further development of European joint degrees**, while contributing to the broader objectives of the European Universities Initiative and the European Education Area. The next phase will require not only continued programme development, but also the **consolidation, sustainability, quality enhancement, and scaling-up of the existing joint education portfolio**.



1

Introduction – CIVIS and the European Context –
Rationale of the Deliverable

Introduction

This Deliverable presents the results and progress achieved in the development of CIVIS Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, in line with the objectives and tasks of WPg, "Accredited Shared Undergraduate (BA) and Graduate (MA) Educational Offer." It first situates the work of CIVIS and WPg within the broader European higher education policy context and then presents the approaches and strategies followed for the development of joint programmes, together with an overview of the individual Bachelor's and Master's programmes. The Deliverable subsequently examines accreditation processes, the impact of the shared educational offer, and the challenges, deviations, and measures taken during implementation. It concludes by drawing together the main lessons learned and strategic recommendations arising from the CIVIS experience.

1.1. CIVIS Joint Programmes within the European context

The strengthening of structured cooperation among higher education institutions is a strategic priority of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In this context, the European Commission launched the European Universities Initiative (EUI) to foster deeper and more sustainable transnational cooperation among higher education institutions across Europe, with a view to enhancing the quality, competitiveness, and inclusiveness in European higher education systems. The initiative is described by the European Commission as an EU action supporting alliances of higher education institutions "from all across Europe, for the benefit of their students, staff and society" (European Commission, <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative/about>).

As of 2025, **65 European Universities alliances** have been established, involving **more than 570 higher education institutions**. These alliances represent an important development in transnational cooperation in European higher education, with increasing integration across education, research, and innovation. The development of joint educational offers, particularly joint programmes and degrees, represents a core dimension of their activities.

Recent policy developments reinforce this trajectory. The **Blueprint for a European Degree** (European Commission, 2024) and the **Council Recommendation on the European Degree Label** (Council of the European Union, 2025), to which the SMARTT (Screening, Mapping, Analyzing, Recommending, Transferring and Transforming Higher Education international programmes) project actively contributed, establish a framework to support the development, recognition, and quality assurance of joint degrees. These initiatives contribute to a more integrated and competitive EHEA.

CIVIS is among the **first** European Universities alliances established **under the 2019 EUI call**. It brings together **11 European universities and 6 associate partner universities**, forming a transcontinental alliance focused on academic cooperation, interdisciplinarity, and societal engagement.

The first implementation phase, **CIVIS 1 (2019–2022)**, focused on establishing the alliance, developing its governance structures, and launching its core initiatives in education, research, and mobility. Building on these achievements, the alliance entered its second implementation and consolidation phase, **CIVIS 2 (2022–2026)**, with the aim of deepening institutional integration and expanding collaborative activities across the alliance.

Among its key priorities, **CIVIS 2** sought to foster new forms of academic collaboration leading to joint educational provision. In particular, activities under **Stream 3** focused on strengthening joint educational offerings, supporting the development of new shared programmes and activities, promoting innovative pedagogies, and advancing the alignment of educational provision across partner institutions.

Within this context, the CIVIS **Work Package 9 (WPg)** has been responsible for supporting the development, implementation, accreditation and long-term sustainability of all CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes. As part of this work, within WPg, CIVIS has developed a comprehensive catalogue of all CIVIS joint programmes leading to the award of joint and/or multiple degrees, providing a structured framework for

documenting, consolidating, and increasing the visibility of these shared educational offerings. This catalogue also establishes a foundation for further development and expansion of the joint programme provision in future phases of the CIVIS alliance.

1.2. Rationale and objectives of the Deliverable

This deliverable provides a comprehensive catalogue of CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Beyond serving as an inventory, it documents key aspects of the programmes' development, including their pedagogical rationales, implementation processes, achievements, and challenges, drawing on information provided by programme coordinators and other relevant stakeholders.

The deliverable also supports a broader reflection on the development of joint programme within the EUI. In particular, it addresses key challenges identified at European level, including the complexity of accreditation procedures, long-term sustainability, and administrative coordination (European Commission, 2025). In this context, it showcases CIVIS practices, such as innovative pedagogies and digital learning environments, as examples of how the CIVIS alliance sought to address these challenges and strengthen the quality and sustainability of its shared educational provision.

The deliverable directly contributes to the objectives of CIVIS under WP9, which are to:

1. Develop a dynamic portfolio of joint Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes
2. Implement internal quality assurance in line with the ESG standards for quality assurance in the EHEA
3. Facilitate the accreditation processes for the CIVIS joint European degree programmes
4. Integrate innovative pedagogies and digital tools in the CIVIS joint European degree programmes
5. Strengthen the involvement of local and global associated partners in the CIVIS joint European degree programmes
6. Ensure the long-term sustainability of the CIVIS joint European degree programmes

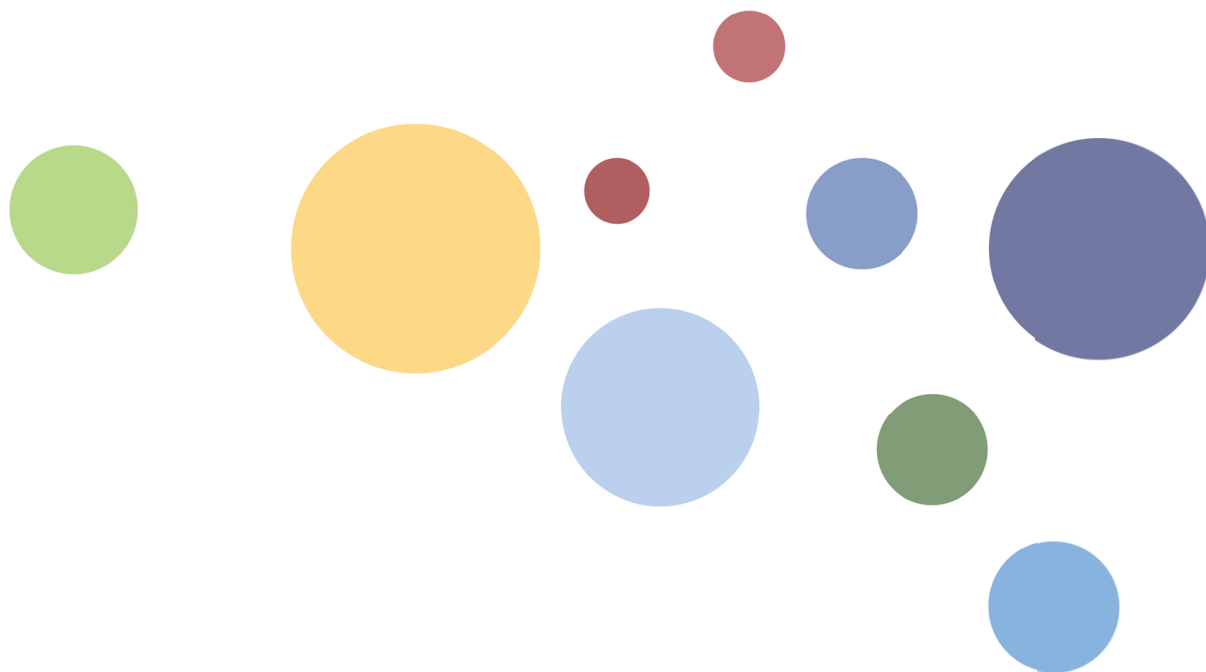
To achieve these objectives, CIVIS under CIVIS, via WP9, focused on three complementary tasks:

- **T9.1** focuses on the development, implementation, quality assurance, and accreditation of CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. It includes administrative support for degree certification and awarding, engagement with national accreditation authorities, the integration of innovative pedagogies, the involvement of associated partners, and capacity building for staff across the CIVIS alliance.
- **T9.2** addresses the long-term sustainability of the CIVIS joint degree programmes through support for complementary EU funding applications, impact assessment, curriculum integration, and the engagement of local and global associated partners.
- **T9.3** focuses on the implementation of innovative teaching and learning approaches and the use of the CIVIS Digital Campus, where possible, as part of the CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes.

1.3. Structure of the Deliverable

This Deliverable is structured into the following seven chapters.

Chapter 1 briefly introduces the European policy context and the rationale for the Deliverable. **Chapter 2** outlines the evolution of the joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level, leading to the award of joint and/or multiple degrees development within CIVIS in relation to European higher education policy developments. **Chapter 3** provides a systematic overview of CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes, organised chronologically according to their approval date. **Chapter 4** focuses on accreditation processes and presents three case studies illustrating key challenges and practices. **Chapter 5** analyses the impact of the joint programmes on students, academic staff, and institutions. **Chapter 6** examines implementation challenges, deviations, and corresponding mitigation measures. Finally, **Chapter 7** presents the main conclusions and strategic recommendations.



2

Methodology for developing joint programmes
in CIVIS

Introduction

The development of joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes within CIVIS constitutes a core operational component of CIVIS under WP9 and contributes directly to Objectives 1 and 6, namely the development of an evolving portfolio of joint programmes and the long-term sustainability of CIVIS educational offerings. The methodology underpinning the programme development has been progressively structured through iterative implementation cycles, reflecting both the experimental nature of the EUI and the need for increasingly structured governance and procedures.

As one of the first European Universities alliances to move from conceptual design to the implementation of accredited joint programmes, CIVIS could not rely on an established operational model at the outset. Consequently, programme development followed an incremental, experience-based approach, gradually evolving from exploratory collaboration within the thematic Hubs into a structured, multi-stage governance and approval process. This evolution has led to the establishment of common procedures and decision-making mechanisms shared across the partner universities.

A key methodological development was the introduction of a **structured Incentives distribution workflow** in April 2024. This mechanism serves both as a funding allocation instrument and as a quality assurance mechanism. It ensures compliance with **predefined 'Qualification Criteria'**, including legal and institutional feasibility and the minimum consortium composition requirement of at least three partner universities. In addition, proposals are assessed against **'Merit Criteria'**, including transdisciplinarity, civic engagement, inter-university collaboration, and the involvement of associate partner institutions. Together, these criteria have become central to ensuring the strategic alignment and quality of joint programme development across the alliance.

Overall, the **CIVIS methodology for developing joint programmes at Bachelor and Masters level** is organised around **five** sequential and interrelated **phases**: (i) idea generation and concept development within the thematic Hubs; (ii) internal calls and proposal selection; (iii) multi-level academic/scientific and technical evaluation; (iv) Steering Committee approval; and (v) institutional implementation and accreditation. This phased approach ensures both academic ownership and institutional feasibility while providing a transparent and increasingly consistent framework for the development of joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level across the alliance.

2.1. Building on CIVIS 1 heritage: TRACEE, EUROSUD, ART-W

During the initial phase of CIVIS 2, the development of joint programmes built upon the outputs and collaborative structures established under CIVIS 1. Successful pilot initiatives and existing collaborative programmes were progressively transformed into formal joint or multiple degree programmes, ensuring the continuity and institutionalisation of prior academic cooperation.

The **EUROSUD (Master in South European Studies)** programme represents the transformation of an existing Erasmus Mundus programme, established in 2018, into a CIVIS joint programme. It was redesigned to align with the alliance's academic structure and governance model, involving AMU, UAM, ULB, and SUR and UH2C as associated partner. The programme was formally approved by the Steering Committee on 18 January 2024.

The **ART-W (Master in Palaeolithic Archaeology)** programme evolved from long-standing cooperation between AMU, SUR, and UT. It served as a pilot for research-based teaching and integrated mobility while introducing structured collaboration with Wits, thereby reinforcing the intercontinental dimension of the alliance. The programme was approved on 19 December 2023.

The **TRACEE (Transdisciplinary Studies on Climate, Environment and Energy)** programme emerged from academic collaboration within Hub 1 and represents a large-scale transdisciplinary initiative coordinated by Stockholm University. It involves all 11 CIVIS member universities and includes a first semester of 30 ECTS, co-created and co-taught by all European CIVIS partner universities together with UH2C as associate partner institution. Although approved by the Steering Committee during CIVIS 1 (25 August 2022), its implementation revealed significant coordination and administrative complexities arising from the size of the consortium, the diversity of national regulatory frameworks, and the pedagogical challenges associated with delivering a highly co-created and transdisciplinary curriculum. Consequently, the programme was launched in autumn

2025. The experience gained through TRACEE has been instrumental in refining governance procedures for the development and implementation of large-scale joint programmes across the alliance.

Collectively, these heritage-based programmes illustrate the transition from project-based cooperation under CIVIS 1 to institutionalised joint programme structures under CIVIS 2.

2.2. Development of new programmes: HUB-based calls and structured evaluation

The second phase of the methodology development focused on the creation of new joint programmes conceived entirely within the governance framework established under CIVIS 2. This phase introduced **competitive Hub-based calls** for proposals and further strengthened the **structured evaluation and selection** procedures.

In particular, in December 2023, Hub 3 launched an internal competitive call for new educational proposals. Nine proposals were submitted and assessed through a structured evaluation process involving a Technical Committee and Hub-level validation. Following this process, two programme proposals were approved to proceed, the so-called flagship projects:

The first was the **NAT4DD (Drug Discovery from Natural Products to Formulations and Applications)** programme, coordinated by NKUA and co-designed by NKUA, UB, and SUR. From its inception, the programme incorporated UEM, WITS, SFAX, HC2D and MaK as associate partner universities, reinforcing the intercontinental dimension of CIVIS. Following Hub validation and review by the Incentives subgroup, it was approved on 16 May 2024.

The second was the **Multiple Master in Biochemistry**, proposed by AMU, SUR, UB, and UT. The programme was designed to harmonise national curricula within a common European framework. It followed the same structured evaluation pathway and was also approved by the Steering Committee on 16 May 2024.

The inclusion of these two new Master's degree programmes in the CIVIS educational portfolio is indicative of the increasing maturity of the CIVIS methodology, as reflected in shorter development timelines (approximately six months from proposal submission to Steering Committee approval) and closer alignment between academic programme design and governance requirements.

2.3. Extending the methodology to Bachelor's degree programmes: the first educational call

By 2024, CIVIS had initiated five joint or multiple Master's degree programmes, meeting Milestone 9.1. However, the development of Bachelor-level joint programmes required additional methodological adaptation owing to more restrictive national regulatory frameworks.

In June 2024, CIVIS launched its first dedicated educational call for Bachelor's programmes. This call focused exclusively on the development of Bachelor's joint degree programmes, which were not yet represented in the CIVIS educational portfolio, and introduced clearly defined eligibility and evaluation criteria aligned with the objectives of CIVIS under WPg.

A Technical Committee composed of Stream 3 representatives and WPg coordination was established to conduct the eligibility screening and pre-selection prior to academic/scientific evaluation. Two proposals were submitted, of which the Joint Bachelor on Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management, involving UAM, PLUS and SUR, with NKUA and USD as associated partners, was approved by the Steering Committee in February 2025.

This phase marked the first structured implementation of a methodology specifically designed for the development of joint Bachelor's degree programmes within the CIVIS alliance.

2.4. Second educational call and alignment with European Degree Label criteria

In June 2025, CIVIS launched a second educational call aimed at expanding its portfolio of joint Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. The call reflected the alliance's strategic commitment to aligning programme development with the evolving European Higher Education Area (EHEA) policy framework, including the **European Degree Label (EDL)** criteria published in May 2025.

In coordination with the Education Unit, CIVIS through the work of **WP9 integrated the EDL criteria into the design of the call** to promote early alignment with emerging European standards. This approach aimed to enhance the scalability, long-term sustainability, and recognition potential of CIVIS joint programmes, while supporting their possible evolution towards a future European Degree framework.

A Technical Committee conducted the initial eligibility screening, followed by an expert academic/scientific evaluation. As a result, seven programmes, one Bachelor's and six Master's, were approved by the Steering Committee in February 2026. Owing to the remaining implementation period of CIVIS 2, the newly approved programmes are expected to finalise their consortium agreements and curriculum structures by September 2026.

2.5. Evolution of the CIVIS Joint Bachelor's and Master's Programme Portfolio

The evolution of CIVIS joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level reflects the progressive consolidation of governance structures, the standardisation of development procedures, and the expansion of the alliance's educational portfolio.

As shown in **Summary Table 1**, which also indicates the affiliation of each programme with specific Hubs and the participation of associate partner institutions, **this chronological overview illustrates the gradual structuring and maturation of programme development mechanisms within CIVIS**. It also reflects the progression described in the previous sections, from exploratory cooperation to more formalised procedures for proposal selection, evaluation, and approval.

No.	Programme	Degree type	Thematic area	Partners	Associated partners	Approval
1	TRACEE: Climate, Environment and Energy	Joint Master & Multiple Master study tracks	HUB 1	SU coord. , All 11 CIVIS Universities	UH2C	Aug 2022
2	ART-W – Palaeolithic Archaeology	Multiple Master	HUB 2	AMU, SUR, UT	WITS	Dec 2023
3	EUROSUD – South European Studies	Multiple & Double Master study tracks	HUB 2	UAM , AMU, ULB, SUR, UB	UH2C	Jan 2024
4	Biochemistry	Multiple Master	HUB 3	SUR , AMU, UB, UT	none	May 2024
5	NAT4DD	Joint Master	HUB 3	NKUA , UB, SUR	EMU, WITS, USF, UH2C, MAK	May 2024
6	Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management	Joint Bachelor	HUB 4	UAM , PLUS, SUR	NKUA, USF	Feb 2025
7	Empirical Economics and Social Sciences	Joint Bachelor	HUB 2	SUR , UB, UNIL	WITS	Feb 2026
8	Population Health and Policy	Joint Master	HUB 3	UT , UAM, UNIL	none	Feb 2026
9	Advanced Linguistics	Joint Master	HUB 2	NKUA , UAM, UB	none	Feb 2026
10	4CITIES Urban Studies	Joint Master	HUB 4	UAM , NKUA, UB, UoG	none	Feb 2026
11	IIMAAI – International Integrative Master in Applied AI	Joint Master	HUB 5	UNIL , AMU, UT, NKUA, SUR, UAM, ULB, UB, PLUS	none	Feb 2026
12	Public Anthropology, Ethnology and Folklore	Joint Master	HUB 2	UB , UT, NKUA	none	Feb 2026
13	CIMIE – International Education	Joint Master	HUB 5	UB , NKUA, UAM	none	Feb 2026

Table 1: Chronological list of CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's programme development

2.6. Concluding remarks

The CIVIS methodology for joint programme development has progressively evolved **from an exploratory, experience-based approach into a structured, multi-stage governance system**. This evolution reflects the increasing institutionalisation of processes, the strengthening of quality assurance mechanisms, and a closer alignment with developments in European higher education policy, particularly in relation to joint degree recognition and sustainability. Importantly, this evolution has not resulted only in a larger programme portfolio, but also in the **development of a more systematic institutional capacity** to initiate, evaluate, select, and implement joint programmes across the alliance.

Table 1 shows **a clear increase in the number of programmes approved towards the end of the CIVIS 2 phase**, following the introduction of more structured calls and evaluation procedures. While the initial years are characterised by a limited number of pilot initiatives, the 2026 cohort shows a significant scale-up, with **seven** programmes approved within a single cycle. This pattern is consistent with the consolidation of structured procedures and increased institutional capacity for joint programme development.

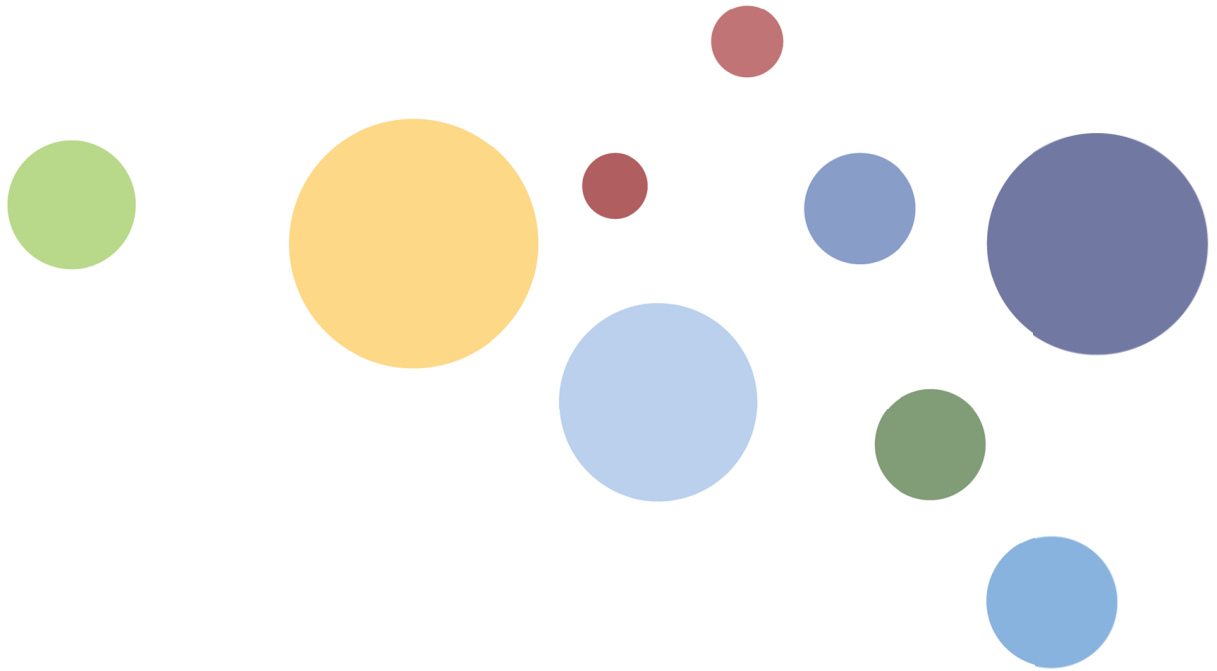
The table also highlights **a shift from a case-by-case programme creation to a portfolio-based approach**. Early programmes appear as individual initiatives closely linked to existing collaborations, whereas later programme approvals are increasingly embedded in coordinated calls and standardised selection processes.

In addition, the distribution of degree programmes across Hubs highlights **the increasingly active role of Hub-level coordination** in supporting joint programme development. While the earliest initiatives were concentrated in a smaller number of Hubs, subsequent calls resulted in programme development across **a broader range of thematic Hubs**.

The later joint degree programmes are also characterised by **more diverse consortia and a broad range of disciplinary areas**. Several programmes explicitly incorporate **interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary** approaches, consistent with the strategic orientation of CIVIS towards **addressing complex societal challenges** through integrated educational offerings, as also highlighted in D3.1. The composition of several consortia also demonstrates **collaboration across institutional and disciplinary areas**, extending programme development beyond narrowly defined thematic domains.

Moreover, the **gradual diversification of the portfolio**, from an initial focus on Master's programmes to the inclusion of Bachelor-level joint degrees, represents an important methodological development, enabling the creation of a more complete educational pathway within CIVIS. **Thematic diversification** (from climate and environment to health, social sciences, artificial intelligence, and education) further confirms **a strategic focus on major societal challenges** and shows alignment with broader European and global research and education priorities. **Associate partner universities** have been involved from the early stages of the portfolio's development and continue to contribute to several programmes, although their level and form of involvement vary according to the thematic focus and organisational structure of each programme.

Finally, the **shorter development timelines** observed in the later calls, particularly following the introduction of structured calls and standardised evaluation procedures, are consistent with **the increasing standardisation of governance and approval processes**. These processes range from Hub-level validation and Technical Committee assessment to expert academic/scientific evaluation and Steering Committee approval. This standardisation reflects **the maturation of CIVIS internal processes** and supports greater transparency, comparability, and quality assurance across the joint programme portfolio.



3

Catalogue of CIVIS joint programmes

Introduction

This chapter provides a structured catalogue and analytical synthesis of the CIVIS joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes. Beyond its descriptive function, the catalogue illustrates the progressive institutionalisation of joint programme provision within the Alliance, documenting the evolution from experimental cooperation during CIVIS 1 towards more structured, scalable, and quality-assured programme development under CIVIS 2.

The portfolio reflects the growing capacity of CIVIS to support different models of transnational academic cooperation, while responding to diverse disciplinary fields and national regulatory contexts. It includes programmes at different stages of development and implementation, ranging from fully operational programmes with established student cohorts to newly approved programmes in the initial design and accreditation phase. This diversity provides an important basis for examining the development, maturity, and sustainability of joint programme provision across the Alliance.

The development of joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes contributes directly to the objectives of CIVIS under WP9 and operationalises Task T9.1. At the same time, it reflects broader priorities of the EHEA, particularly in relation to cross-border cooperation, structured student mobility, quality assurance, and the emerging European Degree framework. The catalogue therefore serves not only as an overview of the programmes currently associated with CIVIS, but also as a basis for identifying key patterns and developments in the Alliance's approach to joint degree provision.

3.1. Joint Bachelor's Programmes

The CIVIS Joint Bachelor's portfolio currently comprises **two programmes** at different stages of development. Together, they illustrate the emerging capacity of the Alliance to develop joint undergraduate provision, while also highlighting the additional regulatory and accreditation complexities associated with Bachelor-level cooperation across different national higher education systems.

3.1.1. Joint Bachelor on Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management

The Joint Bachelor on Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management constitutes the most advanced Bachelor-level joint programme currently developed within CIVIS. The programme is coordinated by **UAM** with participation from **PLUS**, **SUR**, and **NKUA**, as well as **Sfax** as associate partners. It has been developed within Hub 4 and was approved by CIVIS in February 2025.

The programme addresses tourism as a multi-dimensional field intersecting economic development, cultural systems, environmental sustainability, and governance structures. Its academic rationale is based on the need to integrate disciplinary approaches that are traditionally separated across management, social sciences, and sustainability studies, thus stressing its transdisciplinary character.

It has been structured as a **three-year** Bachelor's degree, awarding **180 ECTS**, with an integrated mobility pathway across partner institutions. The first year is delivered at UAM and focuses on foundational disciplinary knowledge in tourism studies and management. The second year combines mobility at PLUS with blended learning components that ensure continuity of academic progression across institutions. The third year is hosted by SUR and UAM and includes advanced coursework, applied training components, and a final integrative phase consisting of a summer school and project presentation. The summer school functions as a structured capstone element designed to consolidate learning outcomes and provide a shared academic environment for final project dissemination and internship reflection. The mobility structure is designed to

ensure exposure to different academic environments while maintaining curriculum coherence across institutions.

The programme is currently in the pre-accreditation phase, with work ongoing on curriculum finalisation, accreditation documentation, and alignment with EDL criteria. The main implementation challenge lies in coordinating national accreditation requirements across participating countries, which necessitates early and continuous regulatory engagement.

3.1.2. Joint Bachelor's in Empirical Economics and Social Sciences

The Joint Bachelor's in Empirical Economics and Social Sciences, offering **180** ECTS, is a recently approved programme under CIVIS, having been approved in February 2026, following the 2025 Educational Call. The programme followed the standardised CIVIS governance procedures for joint degree programmes creation, including call-based selection, Hub validation, technical evaluation, and Steering Committee approval.

The programme is designed to provide an integrated academic framework for empirical analysis in economics and social sciences, combining quantitative methodologies, econometrics, and applied social research approaches. Its objective is to reduce fragmentation between disciplinary traditions by establishing a coherent transnational curriculum structure.

Developed under **Hub 2** and **Hub 5**, this programme is coordinated by **SUR**, with participation from **UB**, **Unil**, and the University of the **Witwatersrand** as associate partner. It is currently in the early design and implementation planning phase. Following approval, the programme is required to develop its consortium agreement, curriculum architecture, and accreditation pathway by the end of CIVIS 2.

3.2. Joint Master Programmes

The CIVIS Joint Master's portfolio comprises programmes at different stages of development and implementation. The portfolio includes established programmes with operational student cohorts, programmes undergoing restructuring or accreditation, and newly approved programmes entering the initial implementation phase. This differentiation provides a basis for examining both the consolidation of existing joint provision and the continued expansion of the Alliance's educational offer.

Established and Advanced Joint Master Programmes

3.2.1. TRACEE Master in Climate, Environment and Energy

[TRACEE](#) (Transdisciplinary Studies on Climate, Environment and Energy) is a large-scale Joint Master programme within the CIVIS Alliance, initiated and developed initially within **Hub 1** during CIVIS 1 and further consolidated under CIVIS 2. It is characterised by a highly multi-institutional structure involving eleven European universities and UH2C as associate partner institution. The programme is coordinated by **SU**.

The vision underlying the programme is to enable students with a solid disciplinary background to become transdisciplinary graduates capable of tackling the world's most pressing challenges, including climate change, energy transitions, and environmental crises. The programme adopts a structured transdisciplinary approach integrating natural sciences, social sciences, law and humanities. The educational objective is to support the development of competences required to address complex socio-environmental challenges through integrated analytical frameworks.

The **curriculum** is organized around a first joint semester delivered physically at SU, co-developed and co-taught by academic staff from all the European CIVIS Universities and two associate partner institutions. Semesters 2 and 3 are typically spent at different CIVIS universities. In the fourth semester, students carry out their degree project typically at one of the universities included in their study track. This structure ensures that students study at a minimum of three partner universities, guaranteeing exposure to multiple academic environments and curricular systems. To maintain cohort cohesion beyond the first semester, a non-credit bearing transdisciplinary stream runs throughout the entire duration of the programme and prepares the

students for their thesis. This stream is co-developed and co-delivered by all partner universities.

TRACEE received **Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM)** funding (application score: 100/100) in July 2023, which allowed for two physical meetings in Stockholm in 2024 to further advance programme design. As a direct result of the first EMDM-meeting, a governance model, the Interim Board, was set up. The latter evolved into the Programme Board when a Consortium Agreement was signed in May 2025.

The **governance structure** is based on a Programme Board composed of one academic representative from each degree-awarding institution. During the initial years, the Programme Board has decided to adjoin one administrative representative per degree awarding partner. The Programme Board meets on a regular bi-monthly basis and includes designated Hub representatives as well as student representatives. Decision-making and day-to-day operations are supported by several committees, including the Marketing and Student Recruitment Group, the Teaching and Learning Committee, and the Quality Assurance Committee. If needed the Programme Board can decide on creating new subgroups for a specific task and duration of time. This structure was established in response to the scale and complexity of the consortium and is intended to ensure distributed but coordinated decision-making across institutions with different national regulatory frameworks.

The **Consortium Agreement** was formally signed by all partner institutions in May 2025. The accompanying annexes define the programme structure, governance model, admission and selection criteria, student agreements, degree award procedures, cost-sharing arrangements and data protection provisions.

In terms of external quality assurance and accreditation, TRACEE has undergone the **European Approach framework**. A Self-Evaluation Report was submitted in May 2025, followed by a site visit in September 2025. The programme received conditional **accreditation approval** from NVAO Vlaanderen covering the period 10 December 2025 to 9 December 2028. In parallel, the programme submitted an **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master (EMJM) application** in February 2025, which was evaluated at 82 points (above the threshold of 70 points). A revised application has been submitted in 2026 but unfortunately without success.

The **implementation timeline** reflects an adjusted operational decision to advance programme delivery earlier than initially planned. Although the programme was originally scheduled for a later start, the first cohort commenced in August 2025 with 13 enrolled students. This front-loaded implementation required compressed preparation timelines for recruitment, communication and visa processes. A subsequent intake is planned for autumn 2026, with a cohort of 33 students, given that more study tracks will be launched, and actually achieving a cohort of 17 students.

TRACEE integrates **innovative pedagogical and digital approaches** designed to support transdisciplinary learning, such as Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) and a non-credit bearing, extracurricular transdisciplinary stream that runs throughout the programme to keep the student cohort together and ensure transdisciplinarity. These methods are embedded across the semesters and the study tracks in order to support interaction between students with different disciplinary backgrounds. From a pedagogical perspective, the programme places emphasis on the ability of students to engage across disciplinary "languages" and conceptual frameworks. **Teaching approaches** include explicit reflection exercises on disciplinary terminology and communication styles, including structured activities designed to translate scientific concepts for non-specialist audiences. These methods are intended to support reflexive learning and improve the accessibility of complex scientific concepts. It is too early to evaluate how well TRACEE has achieved its mission, but the first cohort of students is already an exceptionally engaged group.

Digital infrastructure is central to programme implementation. The **CIVIS Moodle platform** functions as the main coordination and learning environment, hosting teaching materials, transdisciplinary workshop series, student services information and communication tools. It also supports structured interaction across study tracks through dedicated virtual spaces.

Staff collaboration is organised through interdisciplinary teaching teams, particularly in the first semester, where educators jointly develop and co-deliver course content. The consortium has also initiated plans for staff development workshops aimed at strengthening pedagogical capacity in transdisciplinary teaching.

Overall, TRACEE constitutes a complex, multi-level governance and delivery model combining large-scale institutional coordination, transdisciplinary curriculum design, and digitally supported pedagogical innovation. Within the CIVIS portfolio, it functions as a structurally significant example (a "flagship") of how large consortium-based Joint Master programmes can be operationalised across diverse institutional and regulatory

environments.

More detailed information can be found in the programme's [webpage](#).

3.2.2. EUROSUD Master in South European Studies

EUROSUD (European Master in South European Studies) is a Joint Master programme linked with Hub 2 of the CIVIS Alliance. Originally initiated in **2018** outside the CIVIS framework, the programme was formally recognised as an **EMJM Programme** and has operated under this framework throughout the 2018–2024 funding cycle.

Within CIVIS governance structures, EUROSUD has been identified as a **programme of strategic relevance** in **Hub 2** and has been considered a reference case for the transition of externally funded Erasmus Mundus programmes into alliance-based joint structures. It has also served as an internal case for examining mechanisms for joint programme integration within CIVIS.

The programme is coordinated by **UAM**. Consortium partners include **AMU, ULB, SUR** and **UB**, and **UH2C** as associate partner institution. EUROSUD offers **three distinctive study tracks**, two of them leading to a **double degree** and the other to a **multiple degree** ([Programme overview – CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance](#)).

EUROSUD focuses on the comparative study of Southern Europe, addressing political, social and institutional developments through an interdisciplinary framework combining political science, sociology and regional studies. It is designed to provide students with a multi-country academic trajectory and to strengthen analytical perspectives on Southern European and Mediterranean regional dynamics.

The programme's restructuring reflects a strategic decision to further embed the programme within the CIVIS Alliance framework while ensuring alignment with evolving European funding and accreditation requirements. The programme also applied for Erasmus Mundus funding in 2025 and 2026, however it did not succeed to be funded.

EUROSUD illustrates **a transition within the CIVIS portfolio**, whereby an externally funded Erasmus Mundus programme is progressively integrated into a European Alliance-governed joint programme structure. It therefore constitutes **a restructuring case** through which alignment between legacy European funding schemes and CIVIS governance frameworks is being operationalised.

Further information can be found in the programme's website [International Master EUROSUD South European Studies | UAM](#)

3.2.3. ART-W Master in Palaeolithic Archaeology

ART-W is a Master programme in Palaeolithic Archaeology developed within CIVIS 2 under **Hub 2**. It is coordinated by **UT**, with **SUR** and **AMU** as core academic partners. The programme also includes collaboration with Wits, which enables optional fieldwork in South Africa and strengthens its international research dimension.

ART-W was launched in the 2022–2023 academic year and has reached a consolidated implementation phase, with its fourth cohort admitted in 2025. To date, **25 students** have participated in the programme, including seven from African countries. Nine students have completed their studies and obtained multiple degrees awarded independently by the partner universities, while the remaining students are at different stages of the curriculum.

The programme is structured around **a research-intensive model** combining theoretical coursework, laboratory training, and field-based archaeological practice. It is characterised by a strong empirical orientation, supported by access to excavation sites, laboratory infrastructures, and specialised research

environments across the consortium. Structured **mobility** between partner universities is a core element of the curriculum and ensures exposure to different methodological and disciplinary traditions within Palaeolithic archaeology. **Co-supervision** of Master's theses by academics from at least two partner institutions further strengthens academic coherence and supports comparative research, while respecting national degree requirements within a multiple degree framework.

Governance is ensured through a Programme Commission that meets at least twice per year. This body oversees academic coordination, admissions, programme development, and operational monitoring. A jointly developed module handbook provides structured information on learning outcomes, curriculum content, admission criteria, and institutional contributions. The handbook is updated annually to ensure alignment with evolving academic and research developments across the consortium.

The **Consortium Agreement** was concluded in January 2024 and signed by UT, SUR, and AMU. It defines the legal and operational framework for programme delivery, including governance arrangements, mobility organisation, and degree attribution. In terms of future development, the consortium submitted **EMJM applications** in 2025 and in 2026 to strengthen long-term financial sustainability and international competitiveness, but did not succeed to receive funding. Future priorities include reinforcing field-based training integration, further formalising mobility and co-supervision structures, and enhancing alignment with European funding instruments.

From a CIVIS portfolio perspective, ART-W, unlike larger interdisciplinary and joint Master programmes, is of strategic relevance due to its capacity to demonstrate the feasibility of **sustained collaboration in a highly specialised disciplinary field**. At the same time, it functions as a test case for key CIVIS objectives, including structured mobility, co-supervision practices, and the integration of associate partner institutions into research-intensive training environments. Its inclusion in the CIVIS joint education portfolio is therefore not primarily based on scale, interdisciplinarity, or alignment with European degree jointness criteria, but on its role as a **demonstrator of stable multi-institutional cooperation in a narrowly defined academic domain**. In this sense, ART-W contributes to the diversification of the CIVIS educational offer by complementing larger transdisciplinary programmes with a smaller-scale, discipline-focused cooperation model.

More information can be found on the programme's [website](#).

3.2.4. NAT4DD Master in Drug Development

The Joint Master in "Drug Development: from natural products to formulations and applications" (**NAT4DD**) has been developed within **Hub 3** and is one of the Joint Master programmes approved and incentivised during the CIVIS 2 phase, with implementation oriented towards the admission of the **first cohort in 2027**. It is coordinated by **NKUA**, with **SUR** and **UB** as core academic partners. The programme further integrates **five CIVIS associate member universities** (UEM, Wits, Sfax, UH2C, and Mak), reflecting its intercontinental scope.

NAT4DD is a **120 ECTS, two-year** Master programme covering the full pipeline of drug development based on natural products, from chemical analysis to formulation and application. It is explicitly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3 on health and well-being and is built on a multidisciplinary framework integrating chemistry of natural products, pharmacology, phytotherapy, pharmacokinetics, biopharmaceutics, analytical techniques, spectroscopy, environmental sciences, and pharmaceutical technology.

The programme is structured around **blended and flexible pedagogical formats**, including lectures, laboratory training, integration weeks, workshops, winter and summer schools, seminars, internships, and open laboratory environments, aiming to provide students with knowledge, skills and competences through diverse learning experiences. A strong emphasis is placed on experiential learning and access to advanced research infrastructures across partner institutions. The programme also integrates Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) approaches and digital learning environments to enable structured cross-border collaboration. Through shared digital platforms and synchronous and asynchronous interaction, students jointly analyse natural products, interpret pharmacological data, and co-develop formulation strategies.

A defining feature of NAT4DD is also its **research-intensive and internationally oriented training model**.

Students benefit from supervision by academic staff across multiple institutions and disciplines, as well as from interaction with external experts from CIVIS and non-CIVIS universities, research organisations, and industry partners. This structure is designed to strengthen both scientific competences and transferable skills, enhancing employability in academic and industrial contexts.

Implementation and governance structures are already at an advanced stage. The **Consortium Agreement** has been finalised, accreditation-related contracts have been established, and course integration across institutions is ongoing. Staff mobility activities have already been implemented, while national accreditation processes are active in Greece, Italy, and Romania. Cooperation with a German accreditation agency has also been initiated within the framework of the European Approach. From a sustainability perspective, NAT4DD relies on **a diversified funding model** including tuition fees, institutional contributions, public funding, research grants, donations, and potential sponsorships. The consortium is also preparing applications for **Erasmus Mundus funding schemes** to strengthen long-term financial stability and international visibility.

The programme foresees admission of its first cohort in October 2026, with **a maximum intake of 20 students per year**. Selection is based on academic merit, research experience, interviews conducted by the steering committee, and additional criteria such as internships, mobility experience, publications, and recommendation letters.

From a CIVIS portfolio perspective, NAT4DD is positioned as **a structurally complex and research-intensive Joint Master** that demonstrates the Alliance's capacity to operate **across multiple disciplines and geographical regions**. Its added value lies in the integration of a broad European–African academic network combined with external academic, research, and industrial partners. In this respect, it functions as a high-intensity cooperation model linking education, research, and innovation ecosystems. Overall, NAT4DD illustrates the CIVIS capacity to develop complex, multi-actor Joint Master programmes at the interface of science, health, and innovation. It complements more discipline-focused or structurally simpler programmes by providing a high-complexity model of intersectoral and intercontinental cooperation within the CIVIS educational portfolio.

3.2.5. Master in Biochemistry

The CIVIS Master Programme in Biochemistry is developed within **Hub 3**, based on the structured interconnection of existing Master-level curricula in biochemistry across different CIVIS partner universities. It is coordinated by **SUR**, with **AMU**, **UB**, and **UT** as partner institutions.

Biochemistry is a rapidly evolving scientific field with strong relevance across health, environmental, and industrial domains. It is characterised by increasing methodological specialisation and a sustained demand for advanced theoretical and experimental training. Within this context, the programme responds to a structural need to **pool complementary expertise across institutions** in order to enhance advanced training opportunities in subfields that cannot always be comprehensively covered within a single university setting.

From its design stage, the programme has been conceived as **a Multiple Master Degree** rather than a fully integrated joint curriculum. It builds on established disciplinary strengths in biochemistry across the consortium and reflects a strategic choice within CIVIS to connect existing national Master programmes into a coordinated European-level training offer, without replacing or homogenising local degree structures. In this respect, the programme is positioned as an articulation mechanism between national academic traditions rather than as a fully harmonised transnational curriculum.

Unlike larger interdisciplinary CIVIS Joint Masters, this programme operates through a modular and distributed structure. Its core pedagogical mechanism is **a structured mobility scheme** corresponding to a **30 ECTS** component in the second year of study. This allows students to access specialised courses, laboratory infrastructures, and research environments across partner universities, thereby complementing their home institution training. The model reinforces disciplinary depth while ensuring academic complementarity between participating institutions, without requiring full curricular integration.

From a governance perspective, implementation is ensured through **inter-university coordination** involving academic leads from all partner institutions. Work is currently focused on the development and consolidation of consortium arrangements, harmonised syllabi, programme handbooks, and quality assurance procedures. These elements are expected to be progressively finalised during the CIVIS 2 implementation period.

alongside the alignment of institutional and national accreditation pathways.

From a CIVIS portfolio perspective, the inclusion of the Master in Biochemistry programme reflects **a deliberate strategic choice** to complement the fully integrated joint Masters with more flexible cooperation models. Its relevance lies in its capacity to **demonstrate how structured academic collaboration can be achieved in a highly specialised scientific discipline** while respecting already strong national curricular frameworks. In this sense, this programme contributes to the diversification of the CIVIS educational portfolio by illustrating that advanced scientific training can be strengthened through structured networks, thereby reinforcing the potential and flexibility of the Alliance's overall educational offering.

The following section presents **the Joint Master programmes that have been newly approved by the CIVIS governance in February 2026, following the 2025 Call for Educational Activities and the subsequent evaluation and selection process**. These programmes are currently in the early implementation phase, with consortium agreements under development or in preparation, and are expected to become operational within the framework of CIVIS 2.1. Collectively, they reflect the most recent expansion of the CIVIS educational portfolio and illustrate the Alliance's strategic orientation towards consolidating thematic diversity, strengthening interdisciplinary capacity, and reinforcing its engagement with both societal challenges and emerging scientific and methodological fields.

Newly Approved Joint Master Programmes

3.2.6. Master in Population Health and Policy

The European Joint Master in Population Health and Policy is coordinated by **UT**, with **UAM** and **UniL** as partner institutions. The programme addresses population health challenges through an integrated analytical framework combining epidemiology, health economics, and health policy analysis, with a focus on multi-level governance of health systems in Europe.

The curriculum is designed to equip students with the capacity to analyse complex health determinants and to contribute to evidence-informed policy development in national and European contexts. It reflects a structured alignment between public health science and policy-oriented training within a comparative European perspective.

From a CIVIS portfolio perspective, the programme consolidates existing strengths in health-related disciplines and contributes to the development of policy-relevant educational pathways in a field of increasing strategic importance for European societies.

3.2.7. Master in Advanced Linguistics

The Master in Advanced Linguistics is coordinated by **NKUA**, with **UAM** and **UB** as partner institutions. The programme integrates theoretical linguistics, diachronic analysis, and computational methodologies, reflecting the convergence between traditional linguistic scholarship and data-driven language research.

It aims to provide advanced training in language structure, historical linguistics, and computational modelling, enabling students to operate across both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. Particular emphasis is placed on methodological integration between humanities-based linguistic traditions and emerging computational approaches.

Within the CIVIS framework, the programme reinforces the integration of digital methodologies into humanities disciplines and contributes to the strengthening of advanced linguistic research training across the Alliance.

3.2.8. 4CITIES - Master in Urban Studies

The CIVIS-4CITIES Joint Master in Urban Studies is coordinated by **UAM**, with **NKUA** and **UB** and **UoG** as

partner institutions. The programme focuses on the analysis of contemporary urban transformation processes through interdisciplinary approaches combining urban studies, geography, sociology, and environmental perspectives.

The curriculum addresses key challenges related to spatial inequality, sustainability transitions, and urban governance, with a comparative European and global outlook. It is designed to provide students with analytical tools for understanding complex urban systems and policy interventions in diverse metropolitan contexts.

From a CIVIS educational portfolio perspective, the programme strengthens the Alliance's engagement with urban studies as a policy-relevant field and contributes to the development of applied interdisciplinary training addressing territorial and societal transformation.

3.2.9. IIMAAI – International Integrative Master Programme in Applied AI

The International Integrative Master in Applied AI (IIMAAI) is coordinated by **UniL**, with a consortium including **AMU, UT, NKUA, SUR, UAM, ULB, UB, and PLUS**.

The programme addresses artificial intelligence as a rapidly evolving interdisciplinary field, integrating computational methods, data science, and domain-specific applications. It is structured to provide both methodological foundations and applied competencies across scientific, technological, and societal domains.

Within CIVIS, the programme represents a high-intensity collaboration model in a strategically important technological field, reinforcing the Alliance's capacity to operate in advanced digital and data-driven educational environments.

3.2.10. Master in Public Anthropology, Ethnology and Folklore

The Master in Public Anthropology, Ethnology and Folklore (Research and Practice with, in and for Society) programme is coordinated by **UB**, with **UT** and **NKUA** as partner institutions. It focuses on public anthropology and applied ethnographic research, combining theoretical frameworks with field-based and socially engaged methodologies.

The curriculum emphasises the role of anthropology in addressing contemporary societal transformations, cultural diversity, and community-based knowledge production. It promotes a strong link between academic research and societal engagement.

Within the CIVIS framework, the programme reinforces the role of socially engaged humanities and contributes to strengthening applied social science training with a clear societal orientation.

3.2.11. CIMIE – Master in International Education

The CIVIS Joint Master in International Education (CIMIE) is coordinated by **UB**, with **NKUA** and **UAM** as partner institutions. It is the first and so far only joint educational degree in the field of education within the CIVIS Alliance. The programme focuses on comparative and international education systems, addressing policy development, institutional governance, and educational transformation in a global context.

It is designed to prepare education professionals and stakeholders capable of analysing, designing and managing internationalisation processes in education, with particular attention to higher education systems and to national and international policy, practice, and research frameworks.

Within CIVIS, the programme contributes to strengthening professional expertise in education policy, sustainability, pedagogical innovation, and institutional internationalisation. It reinforces the Alliance's strategic engagement with education as a key societal domain and as a driver of systemic transformation across European higher education systems.

3.3 Concluding remarks on key development in the CIVIS portfolio

The CIVIS joint programme portfolio at Bachelor and Master level as a whole demonstrates a clear transition from pilot-driven experimentation towards **a more consolidated and structured model of European inter-university cooperation**. The programmes presented in this chapter are no longer isolated initiatives, but increasingly form part of a portfolio that is shaped by common procedures for programme development, selection, governance, quality assurance, mobility, and accreditation. This marks an important shift in the role of CIVIS, from facilitating individual instances of academic cooperation towards establishing a more systematic framework for the development and sustainability of joint educational provision.

A first key feature of the portfolio is the **differentiation of programme maturity and development pathways**. The portfolio now encompasses programmes at different stages of their lifecycle, ranging from fully operational programmes with established student cohorts, through programmes undergoing restructuring or further consolidation, to newly approved programmes entering the design and accreditation phase. This diversity is not simply a reflection of different starting points; it indicates the emergence of **an ongoing portfolio-management approach in which programmes can be developed, reviewed, reconfigured, and further strengthened over time**.

A second development concerns the relationship between **standardisation and flexibility**. CIVIS is progressively establishing common processes and governance expectations for joint programme development, while allowing substantial variation in disciplinary focus, curricular architecture, mobility arrangements, degree-award models, and levels of institutional integration. This combination is particularly important in a context in which participating universities operate within different national regulatory and accreditation frameworks. The experience of the portfolio suggests that European joint provision requires a sufficiently common institutional framework to ensure coherence and quality, while retaining enough flexibility to accommodate disciplinary and national specificities.

At the same time, the portfolio shows **a growing range of models of jointness**. Fully integrated joint programmes coexist with multiple- and double-degree arrangements and with more modular forms of structured cooperation. Rather than indicating a single pathway towards European joint degrees, this diversity reflects different levels of curricular integration and different approaches to mobility, governance, and degree awarding. It also provides CIVIS with an opportunity to assess which models are most sustainable and scalable under different disciplinary and regulatory conditions.

Furthermore, the development of **Bachelor's programmes** represents an important new frontier. Compared with Master's-level cooperation, undergraduate joint provision remains more complex because of differences in national legislation, programme duration, accreditation requirements, and institutional degree structures. The emerging Bachelor's portfolio therefore represents not only an expansion of CIVIS educational provision, but also an important test of the Alliance's capacity to achieve deeper European curricular integration at undergraduate level.

A further key development is that **associate member institutions are increasingly becoming active contributors rather than peripheral actors**. Across the portfolio, they are involved in programme design, student mobility, and consortium governance. However, their level of involvement is not yet uniform: in some programmes (such as NAT4DD and TRACEE) they are fully engaged in co-design and implementation, while in others their role is more focused or limited to specific thematic contributions. This shows both clear progress in building intercontinental partnerships and an ongoing challenge in ensuring consistent shared ownership across all programmes.

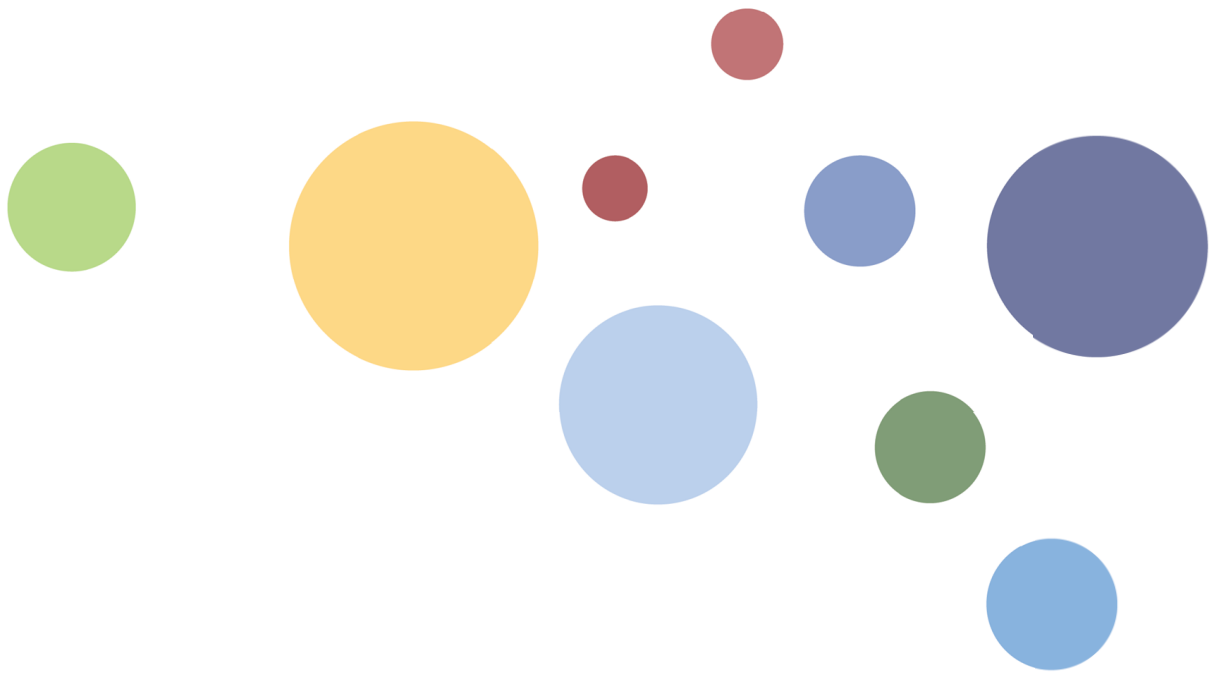
At the same time, the catalogue shows that **the range of disciplines has significantly broadened**. While early initiatives were concentrated in particular fields, the current portfolio encompasses environmental and climate studies, archaeology, health, drug development, biochemistry, artificial intelligence, linguistics, urban studies, anthropology, social sciences, and education. **This expansion strengthens the capacity of CIVIS to respond to a wide range of societal and scientific challenges**. It also creates a strategic challenge: as the portfolio grows more diverse, maintaining a recognisable CIVIS identity and ensuring coherence with the Alliance's

broader educational priorities becomes increasingly important.

A further observation concerns the growing importance of **governance capacity as a condition for programme sustainability**. The experience of the more advanced programmes shows that successful joint provision requires sustained coordination across academic, administrative, quality assurance, and accreditation structures. Programme Boards, consortium agreements, shared documentation, coordinated mobility arrangements, and common quality processes provide the infrastructure necessary for such cooperation. At the same time, increasing procedural complexity creates a potential risk of administrative burden. An important challenge for the next phase of CIVIS will therefore be to achieve the appropriate balance between accountability and efficiency, ensuring that governance structures enable rather than constrain academic innovation.

Finally, the portfolio shows **a clear shift in the role of CIVIS, from mainly initiating individual programmes to designing and managing an overall system**. The emphasis is increasingly shifting from the creation of individual programmes to the development of an ecosystem in which programmes can be initiated through strategic calls, evaluated against common criteria, supported during implementation, monitored through shared quality mechanisms, and further developed in response to institutional and European priorities. This represents an important step in the institutionalisation of joint education within the Alliance.

The next stage will therefore be less about simply increasing the number of programmes and more about **strengthening their quality, sustainability, integration, and European added value**. The experience accumulated across the existing portfolio provides CIVIS with an increasingly substantial basis for identifying effective models of jointness, addressing regulatory and governance barriers, and developing a sustainable architecture for European joint degrees and other forms of shared educational provision.



4

Accreditation

Introduction

This chapter examines the accreditation dimension of CIVIS joint programmes, focusing on the procedures, challenges, and emerging practices associated with quality assurance in a multi-institutional and multi-level regulatory environment. It draws on three selected CIVIS Master's programmes — **TRACEE, EUROSUD, and NAT4DD** — which illustrate different accreditation trajectories, ranging from the implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes to transitional and hybrid arrangements involving national and European procedures.

The case studies are followed by a synthesis of **lessons learned and transferable practices**, focusing on recurrent challenges, governance arrangements, accreditation strategies, and the evolving role of European quality assurance frameworks. Together, they illustrate how CIVIS is developing a coordinated yet flexible approach to accreditation and quality assurance for European joint degrees.

4.1. Case studies: TRACEE, NAT4DD, EUROSUD

The three case studies have been selected because they represent distinct accreditation trajectories within the CIVIS joint programme portfolio. TRACEE illustrates an advanced implementation of the European Approach; NAT4DD represents an integrated approach in which European quality assurance requirements were considered from the programme design stage; and EUROSUD illustrates a transitional case in which existing national arrangements are being reconsidered in the context of broader programme restructuring.

4.1.1. TRACEE – Master in Climate, Environment, Energy Education

TRACEE represents the most advanced and structurally complex accreditation case within CIVIS. The programme operates across eleven European universities and two associate partner institutions, requiring a multi-layered accreditation architecture combining institutional, national, and European-level procedures.

In its initial intake, TRACEE relied on national accreditation procedures across participating institutions. Subsequently, the consortium progressively moved towards the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes for later implementation cycles. External evaluation is conducted through the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), an EQAR-registered agency with established experience in European Approach procedures.

Internally, TRACEE has developed a structured quality assurance system, including semester-based evaluations at partner institutions, consolidated annual QA reporting, and multi-stakeholder feedback mechanisms involving students, academic staff, alumni, and external partners. These processes are coordinated through a dedicated Quality Assurance Committee ensuring coherence between programme delivery and strategic objectives.

The model also integrates broader stakeholder engagement, including NGOs and industry actors, reinforcing the programme's transdisciplinary orientation. Overall, TRACEE illustrates an advanced and operationalised accreditation framework for large-scale joint programmes under the European Approach.

4.2.2. EUROSUD – Master in South European Studies

EUROSUD illustrates a transitional accreditation trajectory characterised by institutional restructuring. The programme currently operates under multiple national accreditation frameworks corresponding to its

constituent universities, with each partner ensuring compliance with national quality assurance requirements.

In parallel, the consortium has adopted the European Approach as a guiding reference for future integration into a fully joint accreditation model. However, this transition remains dependent on broader governance and funding developments, including potential Erasmus Mundus funding outcomes and ongoing restructuring of the consortium.

EUROSUD thus operates through a dual logic: consolidation of existing national accreditations in the short term, combined with a planned transition towards European Approach-based accreditation in the medium term. The programme illustrates the importance of sequencing in accreditation reform where governance, funding, and regulatory alignment must evolve in parallel.

4.2.3. NAT4DD – Master in Drug Development

NAT4DD represents an integrated accreditation model in which European and national quality assurance processes are embedded from the programme design phase. The approach is coordinated by NKUA, which ensures overall alignment of accreditation requirements across participating institutions.

In particular, the programme follows the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes as implemented within the Greek system by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). The accreditation dossier had been prepared for submission by the end of 2025 to the German EQAR-registered quality assurance agency AQAS, and in June 2026 the agency's visit to the coordinating partner took place. The accreditation agency's report is expected by September 2026.

In parallel, consultations with the CIVIS Education Unit have supported alignment with European Approach requirements and consistency of procedures across partner institutions. The programme is also exploring national-level support mechanisms to facilitate the accreditation process. Current efforts focus on harmonising institutional quality assurance procedures within the consortium in order to ensure procedural coherence between national accreditation systems and the European-level evaluation framework.

4.2. Lessons learned, transferable practices and concluding synthesis

The three case studies demonstrate that accreditation is a critical dimension of the development and sustainability of CIVIS joint programmes, but also one of the areas in which the diversity of European higher education systems becomes most visible. Although the programmes share a common European orientation, they operate within different national regulatory and quality assurance environments and therefore follow different accreditation trajectories. At the same time, their experience reveals a number of common lessons and emerging practices that are relevant for the further development of joint programmes within CIVIS and potentially transferable to other European University Alliances.

A first key lesson is the importance of **integrating accreditation considerations from the earliest stages of programme development**. The experience of NAT4DD illustrates the benefits of considering quality assurance requirements alongside curriculum design, consortium arrangements, governance structures, and implementation planning. Early alignment can reduce the need for subsequent adaptations and support a shared understanding among partners of programme standards, responsibilities, and quality expectations. By contrast, the experience of EUROSUD demonstrates the additional complexity that may arise when accreditation arrangements need to evolve alongside substantial changes in programme structure, governance, and partnership arrangements.

A second lesson concerns the need for **programme-specific accreditation strategies**. The three cases demonstrate that there is no single pathway that can be applied uniformly across the CIVIS portfolio. TRACEE illustrates the potential of the European Approach for a large-scale and highly integrated joint programme. NAT4DD demonstrates how European quality assurance requirements can be incorporated into programme

development from an early stage and coordinated with national procedures. EUROSUD, by contrast, illustrates the need for a more gradual approach when an established programme is undergoing structural transformation. The CIVIS experience therefore suggests that accreditation strategies need to be proportionate to the programme's level of integration, consortium structure, degree-awarding arrangements, and national regulatory context.

A third cross-cutting finding is the importance of **strong and clearly structured consortium governance**. Accreditation cannot be treated as the responsibility of the coordinating institution alone. It requires sustained cooperation among academic leaders, administrative staff, quality assurance units, institutional management, and, where appropriate, students and external stakeholders. Clear allocation of responsibilities, regular coordination, shared documentation, and common decision-making procedures are particularly important in large and geographically dispersed consortia. The experience of TRACEE demonstrates how dedicated programme-level governance and quality assurance structures can provide the organisational capacity required to manage complex accreditation processes.

At the same time, the case studies highlight the need to **balance procedural robustness with administrative efficiency**. Joint programme accreditation inevitably requires substantial coordination, as several institutions must agree on curricula, learning outcomes, admission procedures, quality assurance arrangements, mobility, and degree-awarding mechanisms. However, the accumulation of institutional and national procedures can also generate significant administrative burden. An important challenge for CIVIS is therefore to identify where common procedures add genuine European value and where processes can be streamlined without compromising quality, transparency, or accountability.

A fourth important observation concerns the **progressive emergence of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes as a strategic reference point**. The European Approach offers an important framework for supporting the development of genuinely European joint programmes and for reducing unnecessary duplication of quality assurance procedures. Its practical implementation, however, remains dependent on national regulatory frameworks, the recognition of European-level procedures, and the institutional readiness of participating universities. The CIVIS experience therefore suggests that the European Approach should be viewed both as an accreditation instrument and as a broader framework for the progressive Europeanisation of quality assurance.

In this context, **hybrid and phased accreditation arrangements** may provide a pragmatic pathway during the current transition period. Such arrangements should not necessarily be interpreted as shortcomings or incomplete European integration. Rather, they can enable programmes and institutions to move progressively towards greater alignment with European quality assurance principles while continuing to meet existing national requirements. EUROSUD provides a particularly relevant example of the importance of sequencing accreditation developments alongside wider programme and governance restructuring.

Another transferable practice concerns the value of **early institutional coordination and dedicated support**. Accreditation through European procedures requires specialised expertise, substantial coordination time, and administrative capacity. The experience of CIVIS demonstrates the importance of providing programmes with both institutional and Alliance-level support, particularly when they undertake unfamiliar or complex European accreditation procedures. The targeted CIVIS support for accreditation under the European Approach has therefore played an enabling role by allowing selected programmes to pursue more integrated European quality assurance pathways and by strengthening institutional experience with such procedures.

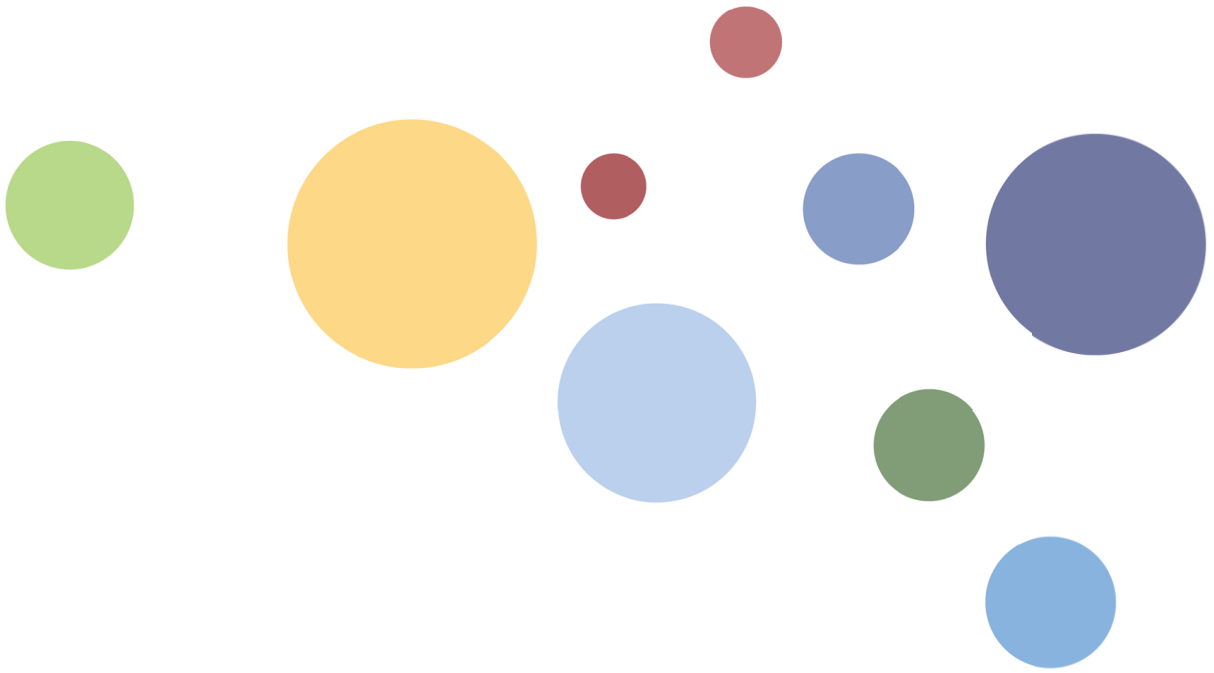
The case studies also point to the importance of **building quality assurance into programme governance rather than treating it as a separate compliance exercise**. Where quality assurance mechanisms are connected to programme management, curriculum review, student feedback, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement, accreditation can become part of an ongoing quality culture. This is particularly important for joint programmes, where quality depends not only on individual institutional provision but also on the coherence of the overall student experience across partner universities.

Taken together, these experiences indicate that CIVIS is gradually developing **an Alliance-level capacity for supporting and coordinating accreditation**. This capacity goes beyond assisting individual programmes. It includes the accumulation and sharing of institutional knowledge, the identification of appropriate accreditation pathways, the coordination of expertise, and the development of common understandings of quality assurance for European joint provision. Such capacity becomes increasingly important as the CIVIS joint

programme portfolio expands in both size and diversity.

Overall, the CIVIS experience suggests that accreditation should be understood not as a single administrative endpoint, but as **an iterative process of alignment between programme design, consortium governance, institutional quality assurance, national regulation, and European frameworks**. Successful accreditation depends on early planning, appropriate governance, strong coordination, sufficient resources, and the ability to adapt to different regulatory contexts. The three cases demonstrate that progress towards European joint accreditation can follow different pathways, while still contributing to a common strategic direction.

The experience accumulated through TRACEE, NAT4DD, EUROSUD, and the wider CIVIS portfolio provides a valuable basis for the next phase of joint programme development. The strategic priority should therefore be not simply to increase the number of accredited programmes, but to **strengthen their quality, sustainability, efficiency, European added value, and capacity for continuous improvement**. In this respect, accreditation is increasingly becoming part of the institutional architecture of CIVIS joint education: not merely a requirement to be fulfilled, but a strategic mechanism for strengthening the credibility, coherence, and long-term sustainability of European joint degrees.



5

Impact of Joint Bachelor's and Master's
programmes

Introduction

This chapter examines the emerging impact of CIVIS Joint Bachelor's and Master's Programmes across three main dimensions: (i) students, (ii) academic staff and institutions, and (iii) contribution to European policy objectives. It is important to note that the available input remains partial, as many programmes are still in their design or early implementation phases, and systematic monitoring data are not yet fully available. The analysis therefore combines limited quantitative evidence with qualitative insights drawn from programme reports, institutional feedback, and early student experiences.

Against this background, the chapter provides an initial **evidence-based assessment of the emerging impact of CIVIS Joint Programmes**, while recognising the limitations of the current evidence base and the need for longer-term monitoring as programmes mature and additional cohorts graduate.

5.1. Impact on students

The impact of CIVIS Joint Programmes on students must be interpreted in relation to their uneven stage of maturity. While some programmes are fully operational with multiple cohorts, others are only recently launched or still under development. This limits comparability but allows for early identification of emerging patterns.

Across implemented programmes, a consistent feature is **the creation of highly internationalised and mobility-intensive learning environments**. Students are exposed to multiple institutional contexts, diverse disciplinary traditions, and different teaching and assessment cultures. This contributes to the development of both disciplinary expertise and transversal competences such as adaptability, intercultural communication, and collaborative problem-solving.

The **ART-W Master in Palaeolithic Archaeology** illustrates a mature impact profile. With several cohorts completed since 2022–2023, the programme shows sustained international demand and strong academic selectivity. So far 26 students have been enrolled in the four cohorts, while nine have already graduated and nine more are expected to graduate in the 2026–27 academic year. Early evidence of impact includes student participation in international conferences and integration into research environments. Qualitative feedback (e.g. University of Tübingen student testimonies) consistently highlights high academic intensity and the added value of exposure to different archaeological traditions and research infrastructures ([Information for Students | University of Tübingen](#)). Overall, ART-W demonstrates how disciplinary joint programmes can achieve strong research-oriented training outcomes through structured mobility and co-supervision.

By contrast, the **TRACEE Master in Climate, Environment and Energy** illustrates an emerging, innovation-driven impact model. The first cohort in 2025–26 comprised 15 students, and an additional 33 students are to be enrolled in 2026–27. As a recently launched programme, its impact is primarily pedagogical and process-oriented. The use of Challenge-Based Learning and structured transdisciplinary training creates learning environments where students work directly on complex sustainability challenges. Early observations suggest increased capacity for collaborative work across disciplines and stronger awareness of the policy relevance of scientific knowledge. The active participation of TRACEE students with presentations in the 2026 Global CIVIS Days indicates commitment and engagement of students beyond their studies, as well as their willingness to contribute to Alliance-level discussions. However, as the programme is still in its early phases, its long-term impact on careers and learning outcomes cannot yet be assessed.

Across cases, three preliminary impact patterns can be identified: **high mobility intensity**, with students studying across multiple institutions; **strong interdisciplinarity**, particularly in environmental, health, and social science fields; and **early research integration**, especially in programmes with structured co-supervision and fieldwork. At the same time, the evidence base remains fragmented. There is currently limited longitudinal data on graduate trajectories, employability outcomes, and comparative learning gains. This represents a key area for future system-level monitoring.

5.2. Impact for academics and institutions: collaboration, innovation, transformation

At institutional level, CIVIS Joint Programmes are already generating visible changes in academic organisation, teaching practices, and inter-university collaboration.

A first key impact concerns the **emergence of distributed teaching ecosystems**. Across programmes, teaching is no longer confined to single institutions but shared across consortia. In the **ART-W** Master programme, for example, academic staff are distributed across UT, SUR, and AMU, combining permanent faculty, affiliated researchers, and temporary teaching staff. Similarly, **NAT4DD** mobilises large academic teams across pharmacy, pharmacology, and related disciplines in Greece, Romania, and Italy. These configurations illustrate how joint programmes function as structured mechanisms for pooling academic expertise across institutions.

A second impact relates to **curriculum co-creation and pedagogical convergence**. In **EUROSUD**, joint teaching of core modules such as *Social Challenges in Southern Europe* and *Democracy and Government in Southern Europe* has fostered sustained collaboration between academic staff across institutions. This contributes not only to curriculum integration but also to gradual alignment of teaching approaches, assessment cultures, and academic expectations.

A third dimension is **institutional learning and regulatory adaptation**. **TRACEE**, in particular, has acted as a catalyst for institutional capacity-building in joint programme governance. The use of the European Approach for Quality Assurance has required participating universities to adapt internal procedures, align administrative practices, and coordinate across different national regulatory systems. In doing so, the programme has also contributed to strengthening institutional expertise in managing large-scale transnational programmes.

In addition, participation in CIVIS joint programmes has generated **external institutional effects**, including visibility in national higher education debates, capacity-building within coordinating institutions, and dissemination of experience across national networks. For example, coordination experience from **TRACEE** at SU has been shared in national forums, contributing to broader discussions on legal and organisational frameworks for joint programmes.

Overall, the institutional impact is characterised by a dual effect: increased coordination costs on the one hand, and strengthened academic integration and innovation capacity on the other. This reflects a structural shift towards more networked and interdependent models of higher education provision.

5.3. Contribution to European policy and the European Education Area

Although still in an early stage of consolidation, CIVIS joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level, leading to the award of joint and/or multiple degrees, already contribute meaningfully to key objectives of the EEA and related policy developments in European higher education. Similarly, CIVIS built an expertise and actively contributed to EDL development through the SMARTT project, the results of which were disseminated at events like the conference of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) or at FOREU4ALL.

First, the programmes operationalise core EEA principles, particularly **mobility, transnational cooperation, and integrated quality assurance**. Structured mobility pathways requiring studies across multiple institutions directly support the European objectives of increased learning mobility and curriculum interoperability.

Second, several programmes function as **experimental implementation sites for emerging European policy instruments**, including discussions around the EDL and the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. **TRACEE** and **NAT4DD**, in particular, provide concrete test cases for how European-level accreditation frameworks can be applied in complex, multi-institutional settings.

Third, CIVIS acts as an **implementation environment for European policy translation**, where policy objectives are operationalised through curriculum design, governance structures, and digital learning infrastructures. This includes the integration of associate partner institutions, the development of co-supervision models, and the

use of blended and digital learning platforms.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the evidence base for systemic policy impact remains limited. Most programmes are still in early implementation phases, and robust evaluation of long-term effects, particularly on graduate mobility, employability, and institutional reform, will require additional cohorts and longitudinal monitoring.

5.4. A concluding synthesis

The emerging evidence indicates that CIVIS Joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes are beginning to generate impact across three interconnected levels: **student learning and development, institutional collaboration and transformation, and the implementation of European higher education objectives**. Although the evidence remains uneven and the majority of programmes are still at an early stage of implementation, the available experience points to a number of significant developments.

At the **student level**, joint programmes create learning environments characterised by sustained international exposure, structured mobility, interaction with different academic and disciplinary cultures, and, in several cases, strong integration of research and practice. These conditions can support the development of disciplinary expertise alongside transversal competences such as intercultural communication, adaptability, collaboration, and the capacity to work across disciplinary boundaries. However, evidence on longer-term outcomes remains limited. Graduate trajectories, employability, learning gains, and the longer-term effects of international and transdisciplinary learning will require systematic monitoring across successive cohorts.

At the **academic and institutional level**, the programmes are contributing to a gradual transformation of how universities collaborate in the design and delivery of education. Joint curriculum development, distributed teaching teams, co-supervision, shared quality assurance arrangements, and mobility structures require institutions to develop new forms of coordination and shared responsibility. This creates additional administrative and organisational demands, but it also generates institutional learning and strengthens capacity to operate within complex transnational educational environments. In this respect, joint programmes function not only as educational offerings but also as **vehicles for institutional innovation and deeper European integration**.

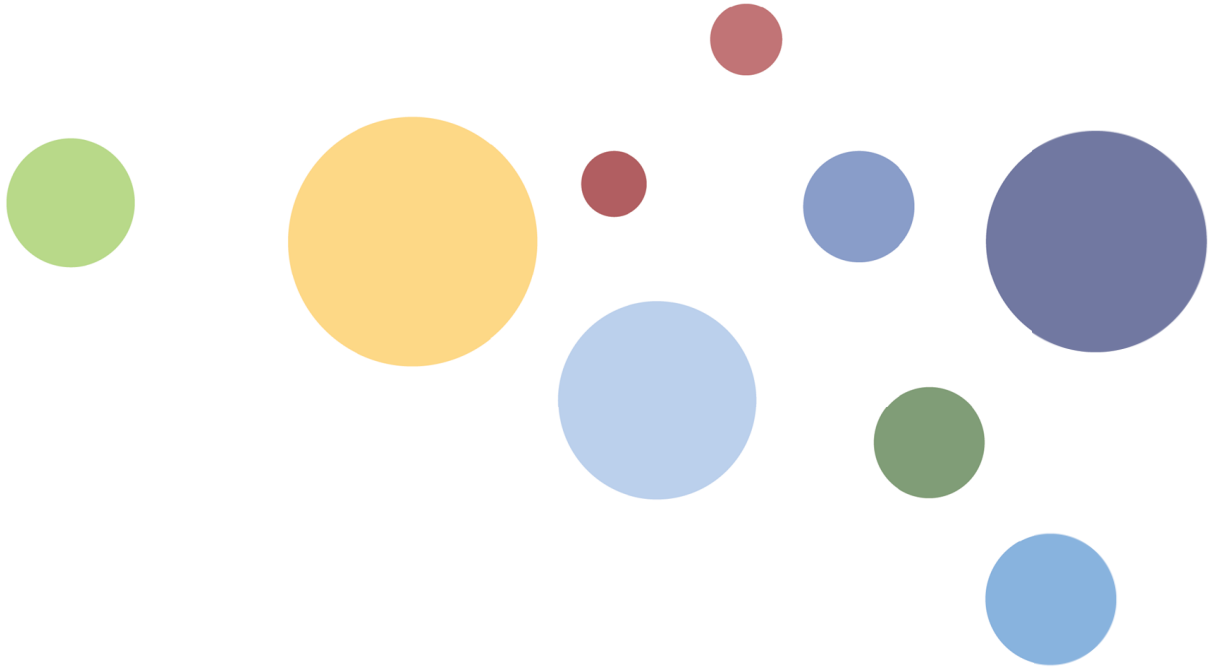
At the **European policy level**, CIVIS Joint Programmes provide concrete environments in which the objectives of the European Education Area and the broader European Universities Initiative can be translated into institutional practice. Through structured mobility, transnational curriculum development, European-level quality assurance, and experimentation with emerging instruments such as the EDL, the programmes provide practical experience of what deeper integration in European higher education requires. CIVIS has also contributed to policy-level discussions through its engagement in initiatives such as SMARTT and through the dissemination of its experience in European higher education networks and events.

At the same time, the analysis highlights important **structural constraints**. National regulatory differences, accreditation requirements, administrative workload, uneven institutional capacities, and the complexity of multi-institutional governance continue to affect the scale and pace of development. These constraints are particularly significant for Bachelor's programmes and for large consortia involving multiple countries and associate partners. They also mean that impact cannot yet be assessed solely through conventional quantitative indicators.

The current evidence should therefore be interpreted as **early evidence of systemic change rather than as a definitive assessment of impact**. CIVIS is gradually developing the conditions under which impact can be generated and measured: programmes are becoming more structured, governance arrangements more mature, mobility more systematically embedded, and monitoring practices progressively more coordinated across the Alliance.

In this perspective, the significance of CIVIS Joint Programmes lies not only in the number of programmes established or students enrolled, but also in their contribution to **building the institutional capacity for deeper European cooperation in higher education**. They provide practical spaces for testing new forms of curriculum integration, governance, quality assurance, mobility, and inter-institutional collaboration.

The full impact of this development will become visible only over time, as additional cohorts graduate, longitudinal monitoring becomes possible, and European policy and regulatory frameworks continue to evolve. A **longer-term perspective—extending over several cohorts and potentially up to a decade from the launch of the first programmes—will therefore be necessary** to determine the extent to which CIVIS Joint Programmes contribute to lasting changes in student outcomes, institutional practices, and the European higher education landscape.



6

Challenges, deviations and measures taken

Introduction

This chapter discusses the main challenges encountered in the development and implementation of CIVIS Joint Programmes, together with the measures adopted to address them. It is based on contributions from multiple stakeholders, including programme coordinators, administrative and academic teams, the CIVIS Education Unit, quality assurance officers, digital infrastructure representatives, students, and national accreditation stakeholders.

Rather than treating challenges as isolated operational issues, the analysis highlights their structural nature. Many of these challenges are closely linked to the multi-level governance model of CIVIS, the heterogeneity of national HE systems, and the ambition to develop fully transnational joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level. The chapter also identifies the main measures taken by the Alliance and synthesises key lessons learned and emerging policy-oriented recommendations.

6.1. Sustainability challenges

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of CIVIS joint programmes remains one of the most critical structural challenges. At present, programmes rely on **a combination of tuition-based income (where applicable), institutional co-funding, and competitive external funding sources, most notably Erasmus Mundus support**. While this mixed model provides initial viability, it also introduces a degree of financial uncertainty, particularly in the transition from development phases to fully consolidated program structures.

Erasmus Mundus funding has become an important strategic opportunity for several programmes. Three programmes submitted applications in 2025 and are preparing resubmissions in 2026, while additional applications, notably NAT4DD, are under preparation. WP9 has supported this process through targeted capacity-building activities, including training on Erasmus Mundus applications and consortium coordination. However, the Erasmus Mundus funding proposals submitted in 2026 were not successful. While programmes may resubmit in subsequent calls, the highly competitive nature of the scheme underlines the need to **avoid reliance on a single external funding instrument and to pursue a diversified portfolio of funding sources**. Erasmus Mundus should therefore be considered an important component of sustainability strategies, rather than a stand-alone solution for the long-term financial sustainability of CIVIS Joint Programmes.

More broadly, reliance on time-limited CIVIS funding, including CIVIS2 resources, as well as on competitive external funding also creates structural vulnerability. While CIVIS funding has been an important enabler for the development and consolidation of Joint Programmes, it cannot by itself guarantee their long-term financial sustainability. National and institutional funding sources remain essential, particularly for mobility, fieldwork, and support to associate partner institutions, but these resources are often fragmented and unpredictable. This reinforces the **need for more systematic financial planning, diversification of funding sources, and the development of contingency-based sustainability strategies**.

Beyond financial aspects, **structural sustainability**, or the long-term success of CIVIS joint programmes, greatly depends on their integration into the regular academic and administrative structures of the partner universities. This includes not only formal institutional embedding, but also **institutional ownership, visibility and a clear CIVIS identity** once programmes are fully established. The CIVIS monitoring framework plays an important role in tracking this process, particularly progress in areas such as admissions, quality assurance, and mobility management. Embedding programmes within institutional systems is essential to reduce reliance on temporary project structures and ensure their continuity beyond external funding.

Finally, **continuity of academic staff and stable governance structures** are also critical factors of long-term sustainability of joint programmes. Staff turnover remains a potential risk, reinforcing the need for clearer institutional roles, appropriate workload allocation, and long-term commitment from partner universities.

6.2. Accreditation barriers

Accreditation continues to be one of the most persistent structural challenges for CIVIS Joint Programmes. As analysed in the previous chapter, this is largely due to the coexistence of diverse national regulatory frameworks and differing institutional accreditation cultures.

This issue is also addressed in the report on MS9.2, which advocates for a stronger and more systematic adoption of the **European Approach** for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. In parallel, and in collaboration with the CIVIS Quality Officer, an Expert Group on Quality Assurance has been established, bringing together quality officers from partner universities to support coordination and knowledge exchange.

Despite ongoing progress, accreditation remains characterised by **hybrid solutions**. While several programmes are now aligned with the European Approach through engagement with EQAR-registered agencies, others still depend primarily on national accreditation procedures. The 2025 Educational Call, which encourages the use of the European Approach, signals a clear strategic direction, but **full convergence remains a longer-term objective** rather than an immediate reality.

Finally, CIVIS has also introduced targeted **financial incentives** to support and facilitate accreditation through EQAR-registered agencies, which has already enabled three Master's programmes (TRACEE, EUROSUD and NAT4DD) to follow the European Approach pathway more effectively.

6.3. Mobility and administrative coordination issues

Student and staff mobility is a defining feature of CIVIS joint programmes but also a recurring operational challenge. Even with Erasmus+ support mechanisms, **funding gaps persist**, particularly in relation to travel costs, accommodation, and research-related mobility for thesis work. These challenges are particularly relevant for programmes involving **associate partner universities, including institutions outside Europe**, where limited access to funding and existing mobility schemes can **limit equal participation** in programme activities. As a result, current approaches to the involvement of associate partners often focus on co-teaching, related staff mobility, and student exchanges linked to CIVIS programmes. **The further opening of mobility schemes under appropriate conditions, together with more flexible visa arrangements for academic exchanges, could contribute significantly to more equitable participation of associate partners in CIVIS Joint Programmes.**

Administrative coordination across multiple universities further increases complexity, particularly in relation to admissions, visa processes, financial transfers, and timing of academic calendars. While joint governance structures mitigate some of these difficulties, they also require significant administrative capacity and sustained coordination efforts.

These constraints underline the **need for better financial and administrative models and processes** as well as **stronger Alliance-level support mechanisms** to ensure equal access and effective programme implementation.

6.4. Digital campus implementation challenges

The CIVIS Digital Campus is a key element for enabling innovative teaching and learning, but **its implementation is still uneven and evolving**. The reason behind it is that needs and priorities emerge as joint programmes are being implemented and new ones are being developed. Important **progress** has already been made in setting up governance structures, including the role of the Innovative Pedagogies Officer (IPO), the Expert Groups on Innovation in Pedagogy, and a series of dedicated capacity-building workshops supporting experimentation in teaching.

A range of digital platforms are already operational and support the **full lifecycle of alliance activities**, including project calls, student mobility, collaborative teaching, communication, and data management. The

CIVIS Moodle platform provides a central infrastructure for course delivery, collaboration, and resource sharing. It supports blended learning and cross-institutional teaching. However, its potential is not yet fully realised in all programmes.

Key challenges include uneven uptake across institutions, increasing interoperability needs as new joint programmes being developed, differences in digital teaching practices, and the need to better align digital tools with specific pedagogical objectives. At present, **innovation is sometimes implemented in a fragmented way** rather than being fully embedded in programme design.

As programmes mature, stronger monitoring, evaluation, and exchange of good practices will be essential. This also requires a shared understanding of **what “pedagogical innovation” means in a transnational joint programme context (Santamaria, 2024).**

6.5. Lessons learned and policy recommendations (a synthesis)

Across all dimensions analysed, several overarching lessons can be identified.

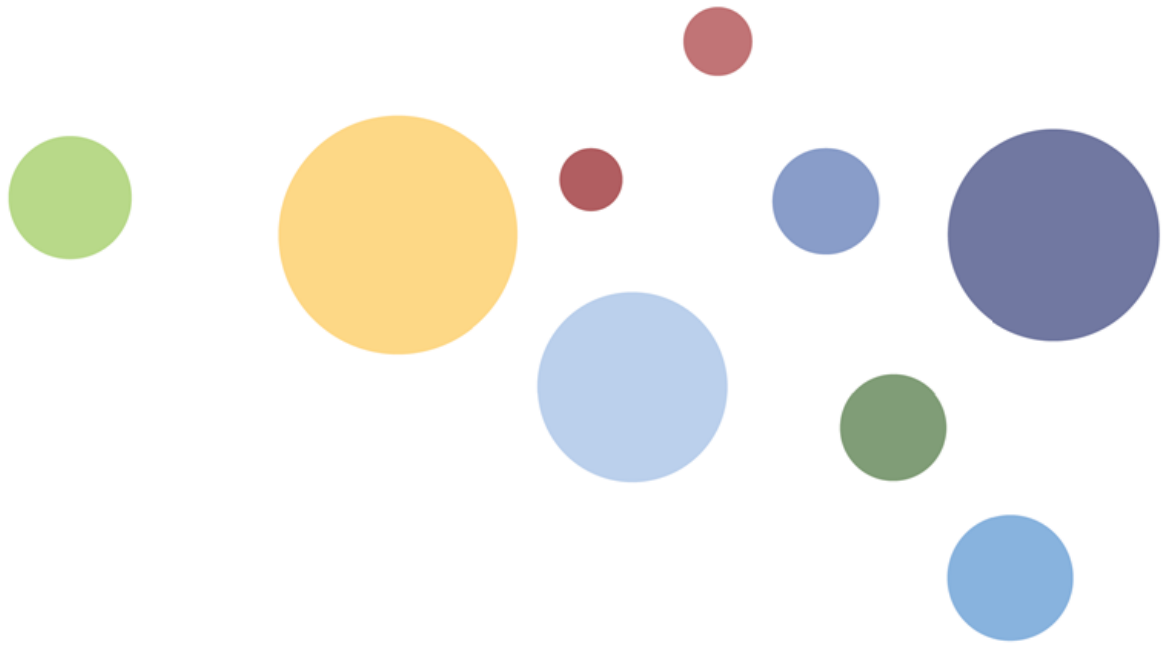
First, **many of the challenges are structural rather than temporary**. Funding uncertainty, regulatory diversity, and administrative complexity are inherent to multi-university and multi-level governance systems. As such, they cannot be fully resolved through short-term fixes but require long-term institutional adaptation, clearer role distribution, and stronger coordination mechanisms at Alliance level.

Second, **CIVIS is gradually moving towards greater alignment with European-level instruments**, particularly in quality assurance and accreditation. The increasing use of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, engagement with EQAR-registered agencies, and convergence of internal procedures all indicate a clear trajectory towards more harmonised European standards. However, implementation remains uneven due to **national constraints and varying institutional readiness**.

Third, **sustainability depends less on individual funding instruments and more on the degree of institutional embedding**. Programmes that are integrated into formal curricula, supported by internal governance structures, and recognised by administrative systems are more likely to persist beyond external funding cycles. Without such embedding, even well-designed programmes remain vulnerable to external shocks (see also D8.1, pp. 42-43).

Finally, CIVIS is increasingly functioning as a testing environment for European higher education cooperation. Through its joint programmes, the Alliance is experimenting with new models of transnational education that combine multiple legal systems, pedagogical approaches, and digital infrastructures. **The challenges encountered are therefore not only operational constraints but also sources of institutional learning with relevance beyond CIVIS.**

Overall, while significant progress has been achieved, further consolidation of CIVIS Joint Programmes will require continued investment in governance capacity, financial sustainability, coordination of accreditation systems, and the development of robust digital infrastructure and continuous emphasis on pedagogical innovation, through developing teaching skills of the entire academic community that are suited to a changing world.



7

Conclusions

Deliverable 9.1 demonstrates that the **CIVIS Alliance has made substantial progress in developing a coherent portfolio of joint Bachelor's and Master's programmes awarding Joint and/or Multiple degrees**, moving from isolated collaborative initiatives towards a more structured and strategic approach to transnational education. Although the programmes differ considerably in terms of disciplinary focus, implementation stage, governance arrangements and accreditation pathways, they collectively illustrate the gradual institutionalisation of joint programme provision within the Alliance.

A central finding of the analysis is that CIVIS has established **a diversified educational portfolio spanning different levels of programme maturity and disciplinary fields**. Alongside well-established Master's programmes, the Alliance is supporting newly approved Bachelor's and Master's programmes that are progressing through common development procedures. This demonstrates that joint programme development is no longer based solely on individual institutional initiatives but increasingly follows shared Alliance mechanisms for programme design, evaluation, implementation and monitoring.

The analysis also shows that **governance has become a defining feature of CIVIS joint education**. Across the portfolio, common governance elements, including consortium agreements, Programme Boards, structured quality assurance procedures, and coordinated mobility arrangements, are becoming increasingly embedded. At the same time, the experience of the programmes demonstrates that governance models need to remain proportionate to programme scale, disciplinary characteristics, and the depth of institutional integration. The progressive development of shared governance practices nevertheless represents an important step towards a more coherent framework for transnational cooperation across the Alliance.

At the same time, D9.1 confirms that **joint programme development remains intrinsically complex**. Differences in national legislation, accreditation requirements, funding arrangements, academic calendars, and administrative procedures continue to create significant challenges. These should not be understood merely as temporary implementation difficulties, but as manifestations of the structural reality of delivering genuinely transnational programmes within a European higher education landscape that remains only partially harmonised.

Accreditation emerges as one of the clearest examples of this complexity. The increasing use of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EAQA) demonstrates a common strategic direction across CIVIS, but implementation remains uneven because national regulatory frameworks continue to differ. The experience of programmes such as TRACEE, NAT4DD and EUROSUD nevertheless illustrates that **gradual convergence towards European accreditation models is feasible when supported by strong governance, early planning, and sustained institutional coordination**. At the same time, hybrid and transitional approaches remain necessary in contexts where national regulatory requirements continue to constrain full convergence.

The analysis also identifies **important educational and institutional benefits**. CIVIS Joint Programmes provide students with international, interdisciplinary, and research-oriented learning environments, while fostering new forms of academic collaboration, co-teaching, mobility, curriculum co-design, and institutional learning. Although systematic evidence on long-term graduate outcomes remains limited, the available evidence already points to meaningful contributions to educational innovation and closer cooperation among partner universities.

Beyond their immediate educational objectives, **CIVIS Joint Programmes function as practical laboratories for the implementation of the European Universities Initiative and the evolving European Education Area**. They translate European policy ambitions concerning mobility, joint degrees, quality assurance, digital education, and transnational cooperation into concrete institutional and educational practices. In doing so, CIVIS generates experience and knowledge that can inform wider developments in European higher education, while also demonstrating the practical opportunities and constraints involved in implementing these ambitions.

A further overarching finding concerns **sustainability**. The long-term viability of CIVIS Joint Programmes cannot depend on any single funding instrument. While CIVIS funding and competitive schemes such as Erasmus Mundus can provide important development and consolidation opportunities, sustainable provision ultimately depends on **institutional embedding, diversified funding strategies, stable governance and administrative support, and sustained commitment from participating universities**. Continued investment in accreditation, quality assurance, digital infrastructure, mobility support, and collaborative governance will

therefore remain essential as programmes move from development and early implementation towards consolidation.

Overall, the evidence presented throughout this deliverable indicates that **CIVIS has moved beyond experimentation with individual joint programmes towards the development of an increasingly integrated educational ecosystem.** The Alliance has accumulated significant experience in programme design, governance, accreditation, mobility, digital and pedagogical innovation, and inter-institutional cooperation. Although important structural challenges remain, the foundations for the continued expansion and consolidation of high-quality European joint programmes are now in place.

The next phase for CIVIS is therefore not simply to **develop more joint programmes**, but to **consolidate what has been learned, strengthen the sustainability and quality of the existing portfolio, and further develop the Alliance-level conditions that enable joint programmes to operate effectively at scale.** In this sense, the experience documented in D9.1 represents both an important achievement of the Alliance and a foundation for the further development of a durable model of European transnational higher education

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II. Internal

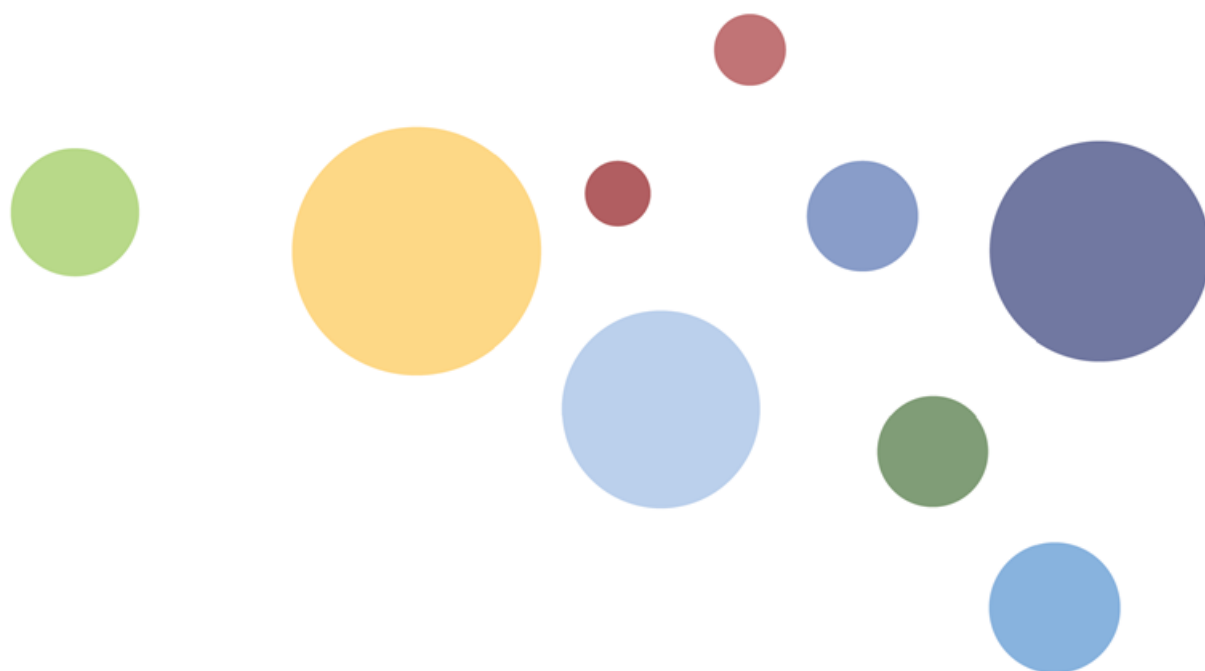
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Annex 1: Structure of the programmes

1. Master's Programme in Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy, TRACEE

Study track number and name	Awarding universities	Degree type	Degree Title
ST1: Environmental Humanities and Law	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	PLUS	Joint	Master in Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy
	UB		
ST2: Environmental Social Sciences	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	UofG	Multiple	International Masters in Environmental Social Science
	UB	Multiple	Master in Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Socio-ecological Transformations
ST3: Energy and matter <i>Start autumn 2026</i>	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	UAM	Multiple (Local 60 ECTS)*	Master in Energy and Fuels for the Future
	UB	Multiple	Master in Nature-centred Approach to Sustainability
ST4: Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology <i>Start autumn 2026</i>	SU	Joint	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	UT		Master of Science Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy
	UB		
ST5: Environmental Geoscience	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	UofG	Multiple	International Masters in Environmental GeoScience
	AMU	Multiple	Master Sciences de la Terre et des planètes, environnement
ST6: Climate Change Science <i>Start autumn 2026</i>	SU	Joint	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	NKUA		Master of Science Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy
	UT		
ST7: Environmental Risk and Mitigation	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	UNIL	Multiple	Master of Science (MSc) in Environmental Science
	SUR	Multiple	Master of Science in Sciences and Teaching of NatureNatural Systems
ST8: Transdisciplinary Approaches to Climate Change	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	PLUS	Joint	Master in Transdisciplinary Studies of Climate, Environment and Energy
	ULB		
ST9: Global Change Biology	SU	Multiple	Master of Science in Transdisciplinary Environmental Science
	SUR	Multiple	Master of Science in Sciences and Teaching of NatureNatural Systems
	AMU	Multiple	Master Biodiversity, Ecology and Biodiversité, Ecologie et Evolution

	Study track 1: Southern Europe and the Mediterranean	Study track 2: Southern Europe and the European Union	Study track 3: Southern and Southeastern Europe
Mobility destination S1+S2	UAM (Madrid, Spain)		
Transversal Skills Seminar I	Theme: Climate Change: Research and Practice		
Mobility destination S3	AMU (Aix-en-Provence, France)	ULB (Brussels, Belgium)	UB (Bucharest, Romania)
Transversal Skills Seminar II	Theme: Socio-Economic Environment of the southern Mediterranean Region	Theme: Strategic Foresight and Future Studies	Theme: Building Democratic Resilience: Conflicts and Representations in the New Member States
Mobility destination S4	AMU (Aix-en-Provence, France)	SUR (Italy, Rome)	UB (Bucharest, Romania)

2. Master in South European Studies – EUROSUD

3. MA “ART-W” Paleolithic Archaeology

first semester	Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen			30 ECTS		
second semester	Sapienza Università di Roma			30 ECTS		
third semester	Aix Marseille Université			30 ECTS		
fourth semester	Master Thesis					30 ECTS

4. Master degree in Biochemistry (IMSB)

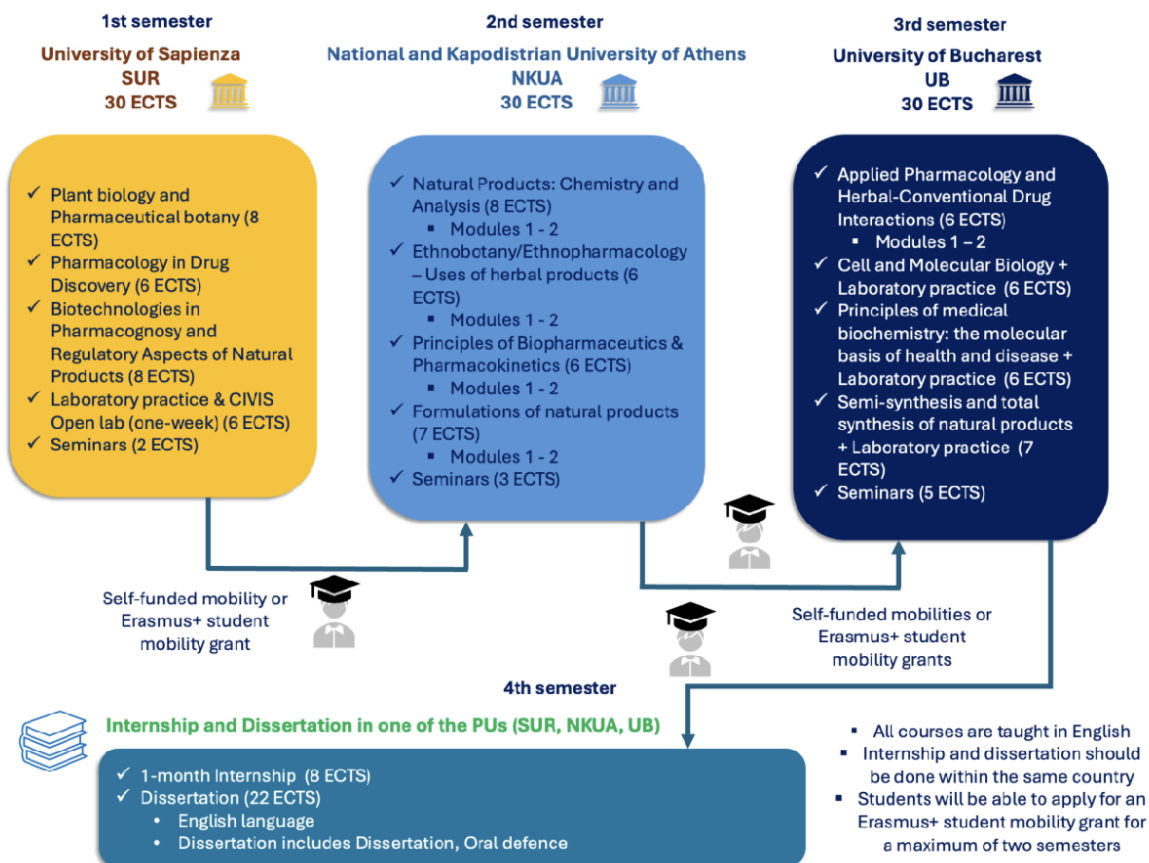
S1+S2	UT (Home University)		
S3	SUR	UB	AMU
S4	Master Thesis in 3rd PU based on availability of labs*		
SP n.	UT1	UT2	UT3

S1+S2	UB (Home University)		
S3	SUR	UT	AMU
S4	Master Thesis in 3rd PU based on availability of labs*		
SP n.	UB1	UB2	UB3

S1+S2	AMU (Home University)		
S3	SUR	UB	UT
S4	Master Thesis in 3rd PU based on availability of labs*		
SP n.	AMU1	AMU2	AMU3

S1+S2	SUR (Home University)		
S3	AMU	UB	UT
S4	Master Thesis in 3rd PU based on availability of labs*		
SP n.	SUR1	SUR2	SUR3

5. Master degree: Drug development: from natural products to formulation and applications - NAT4DD



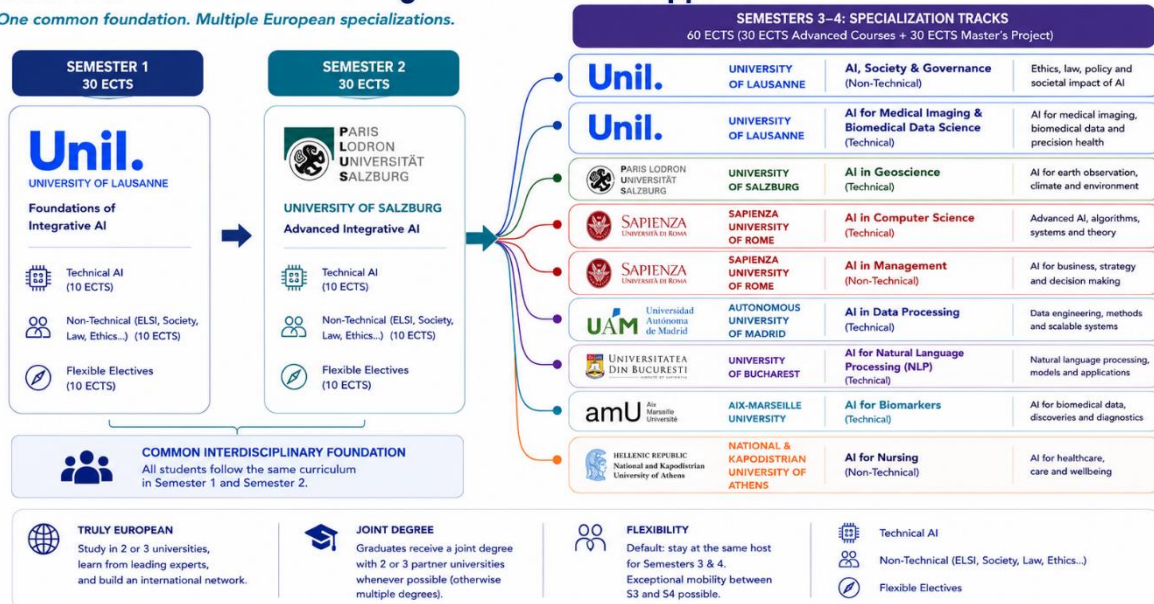
6. Joint Bachelor on Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management (draft)

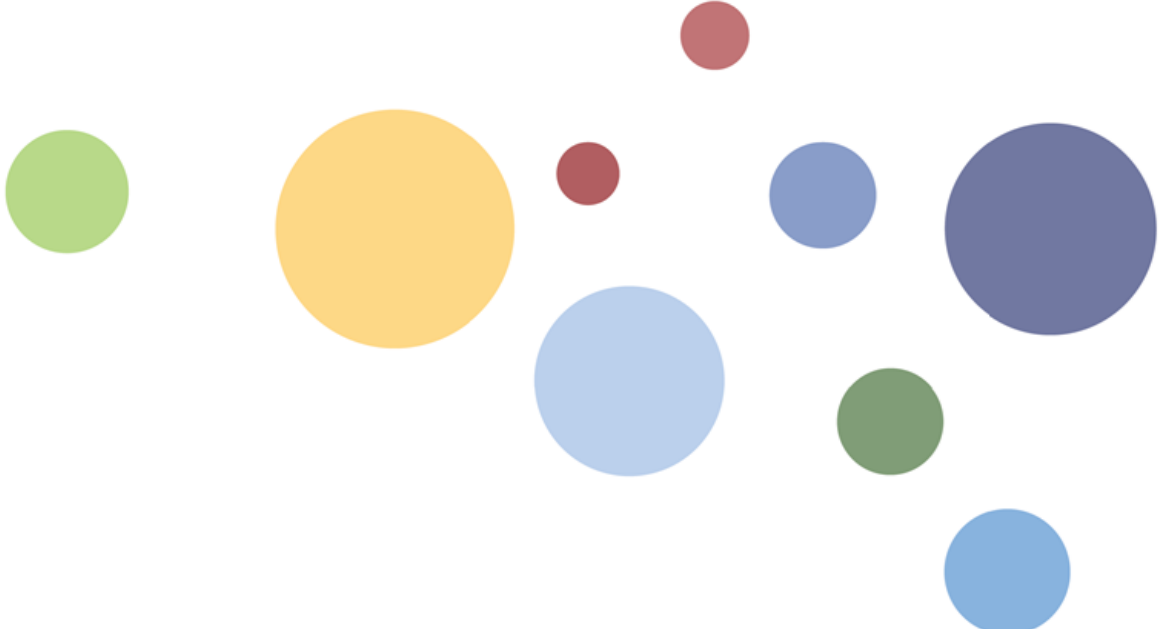
Semester	Host University	ECTS	Delivery Mode
Semester 1	UAM	30	On-site
Semester 2	UAM	30	On-site
Semester 3	PLUS	30	On-site
Semester 4	PLUS	30	Blended/Virtual
Semester 5	SUR	30	On-site
Semester 6	UAM	30	Blended

7. International integrated master programme in Applied AI – IIMAAI

IIMAAI – International Integrative Master in Applied AI

One common foundation. Multiple European specializations.

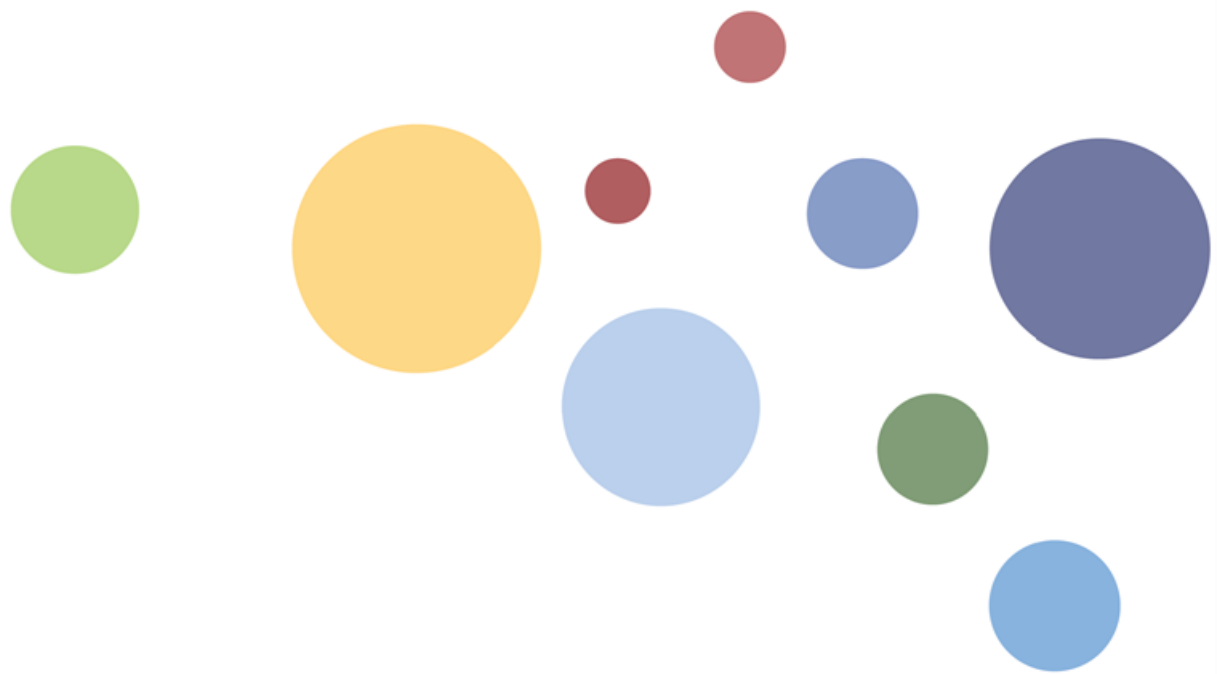


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Annex 2: Educational calls 2024 and 2025

Click on the links:

- [Call for Educational Activities 2024](#)
- [Call for Educational Activities 2025](#)



Annex 3: Partner Universities involvement in Joint Bachelor and Master Programmes

CIVIS Partner Universities in Joint Bachelor and Master Programmes:

No.	Programme	Degree Type	AMU	UB	NKUA	UAM	UNIL	PLUS	UT	ULB	UoG	SU	SUR
1	Climate, Environment and Energy TRACEE	Joint Master/ Multiple Master	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	P
2	ART W – Palaeolithic Archaeology	Multiple Master	P						C				P
3	EUROSUD – South European Studies	Joint Master	P			C				P			P
4	Biochemistry	Multiple Master	P	P					P				C
5	NAT4DD - Drug development: from natural products to formulation and applications	Joint Master		P	C								P
6	Global Destination and Tourism Organisation Management	Joint Bachelor			AP	C		P					P
7	Empirical Economics and Social Sciences	Joint Bachelor		P			P						C
8	Population Health and Policy	Joint Master				P	P		C				
9	Advanced Linguistics	Joint Master		P	C	P						P	
10	4CITIES Urban Studies	Joint Master		P	P	C					P		
11	International Integrative Master Programme in AI (IIMAAI)	Joint Master	P	P	P	P	C	P	P	P			P
12	Public Anthropology, Ethnology and Folklore	Joint Master		C	P				P				
13	CIMIE – International Education	Joint Master		C	P	P							
			5	9	8	8	4	3	6	3	2	2	8

C: Coordinating University
P: Partner University
AP: Associate Partner University