

CIVIS at Hassan II University of Casablanca (UH2C), Morocco

1st African-European CIVIS Forum for Research and Education

Facing common challenges and shaping joint solutions

Wednesday, 25 March

Opening session

Plenary

Location: Auditorium - 25/03/2026, 09:30 10:30 (CET)

Welcome speech

Prof. Houssine Azeddoug, President of Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Prof. Stefan Lang, CIVIS Secretary General, University of Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)

Prof. Estelle Doudet, CIVIS Research Council Chair, University of Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)

Prof. Mustapha Lkhider, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Local Organising Committee – Organisational information

Emeritus Professor Abdelmajid Bouziane, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

University 4.0: Bridging the global skills gap

Rapid technological changes driven by Industry 4.0 are fundamentally reshaping the global job market. Despite these shifts, many higher education institutions remain anchored in the "factory approach" of the University 1.0 and 2.0 eras, producing graduates whose profiles are increasingly misaligned with contemporary job requirements. This presentation identifies the critical skills gap that must be addressed to facilitate the transition to University 4.0, specifically focusing on competencies such as complex problem-solving, cognitive flexibility, and meta-learning. Particularly, a portion of the talk is devoted to the humanities—a sector with high enrolment that particularly suffers from entrenched teacher-centered narrative traditions, a digital pedagogy gap, infrastructure disparities, and curricular rigidity. The presentation concludes by suggesting strategic transformations, including the redefinition of the educator's role, the adoption of open innovation models, and the implementation of "neoskilling" as a survival imperative in the digital age.

Building on PolyCIVIS Insights: Enhancing African-European Cooperation in Research and Evidence-Based Policy

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 25/03/2026, 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)

Session chair : **Sebastian Seiffert**, Université Libre de Bruxelles, (Belgium)

Collective contribution

Prof. Malte Brosig - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Dr. Olfa Ammar - University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Sarah Hassnaoui - Aix-Marseille University, Marseille (France)

Dr. Noor Jehan Gulamussen - Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Addressing the challenges of implementing Integrated water resources management. A Comparative analysis of EU and AU strategies and the link with SDGs

Following the signature of Memoranda of Understanding between the European and African CIVIS partners in 2022, PolyCIVIS became the first major externally funded project that allowed to advance intercontinental cooperation, starting in October 2023. As the current funding phase of PolyCIVIS will approach its conclusion, the CIVIS Forum provides a timely opportunity to reflect on the achievements, challenges, and future prospects of the project. Although PolyCIVIS was initially conceived independently from CIVIS Hubs, several of its research questions closely align with current Hub priorities, as referenced in the call. The PolyCIVIS mid-term conference in April 2025 culminated in the Dakar Communiqué, which offers policy recommendations on climate and energy issues, and highlights asymmetric climate vulnerabilities (Hub 1). Additionally, a policy paper published by colleagues from Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in autumn 2025 examines sustainable water management in both rural and urban settings from African and European perspectives (Hub4).

Questions for the audience

- Which aspects of the PolyCIVIS implementation have been particularly successful?
- Which aspects developed below expectations and why?
- What preliminary insights have emerged from the edited volume process - the first peer-reviewed publication jointly developed by African and European CIVIS partners?
- How has the project refined the analytical understanding of the notion of polycrisis, applied it to case studies, and succeeded in conveying its insights to policy-making?
- What strategies are being explored to ensure the network's long-term sustainability? How could these strategies be applied by CIVIS Alliance to further strengthen its collaboration with African universities?

Challenging the complexities of informal elderly care. Towards African-European collaborative aging research and education

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 25/03/2026, 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Fiorenza Deriu, Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)

Individual contributions

Prof. Sana Benbelli - Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)
Rethinking Aging Studies in Morocco: Towards a Situated, Non-Extractive Epistemology of Care

Research on aging in Morocco remains limited and largely shaped by theoretical and methodological frameworks from the Global North. This paper seeks to lay the foundations for a situated epistemology of aging studies, attentive to local contexts and the lived experiences of older adults. It draws on feminist and postcolonial approaches, promoting a non-extractive methodology that foregrounds care, reciprocity, and emotional engagement as central components of the research process. Based on preliminary ethnographic fieldwork in Casablanca, the study examines how aging, dependence, and care are experienced and negotiated within families and community networks. The field is approached not merely as a site of observation, but as a relational space of shared learning, where emotions, vulnerability, and everyday rhythms become epistemic resources. This methodological approach thus proposes a care-centred epistemology, grounded in reciprocity, ethical presence, and attention to the temporalities of aging. It challenges extractive practices and redefines knowledge production as a collaborative process, attentive to both social realities and the co-construction of meaning. By integrating care, emotional engagement, and situated learning, this work contributes to the development of an aging studies framework that is locally grounded, socially just, and epistemically decolonial. It invites reflection on how research can be conducted ethically and politically, ensuring that both knowledge and relationships are mutually reinforcing, rather than extractive.

Dr. Mone Spindler - University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)
Reviving critical gerontology: A transdisciplinary intergenerational experiment on elderly care in Germany

Dr. Esselina Fuel - Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)
Reimagining aging in Mozambique: care, dignity and public health

With improvements in life expectancy in Mozambique, the elderly population faces significant structural vulnerabilities, primarily shaped by colonial and historical legacies as well as social inequalities, making aging a pressing public health challenge. Despite existing social protection and elder care policies, gaps persist between political discourse and actual care practices, overburdening the elderly with disease and functional limitations, compounded by challenges such as

poverty, fragile family networks, and scarcity of specialized services. This study critically examines aging as a social, ethical, and political issue, emphasizing care and dignity as central pillars of health responses. Through post-colonial and decolonial perspectives, it explores how care practices and public inclusion policies for older people continue to reflect colonial legacies, while new local forms of intergenerational support emerge. Three areas are addressed: (1) advances in national policies for elder protection and health; (2) community and family care practices strategies to address dependency and exclusion; and (3) the development of care epistemologies that value local knowledge and reciprocity as pillars for knowledge production in health. The reflection proposes to rethink aging not only as a demographic phenomenon but as a field for ethical action and innovation in public health. Valuing care, dignity, and social belonging of older adults is fundamental to promoting more inclusive collective health, sensitive to cultural realities, and committed to social justice.

Samantha Barkley - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Reimagining Informal Older Persons' Care in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Informal care for older persons in South Africa exists within a complex landscape shaped by colonial and apartheid legacies. Approximately 44% of older persons live in poverty, and systemic inequalities persist along lines of race, gender, and geography. Older Black women face disproportionate challenges, including economic dependence, inadequate healthcare access, and various forms of violence from pension-related exploitation to culturally-specific abuses such as witchcraft accusations. This contribution examines how regulatory frameworks governing informal (community-based) care can either empower or undermine the dignity of older persons. Traditional institutionalised care models centred on individual autonomy fail to reflect the reality of multigenerational households, where older women occupy dual roles as both care recipients and primary caregivers/economic providers. Moreover, institutionalised care remains inaccessible to most South Africans, making community-based care not merely an alternative but an essential framework for elder care in the global south, particularly South Africa. Using a post-colonial analytical lens and doctrinal legal analysis, I critically examine how the South African Older Persons Act 13 of 2006 which prioritises community-based care over institutionalisation addresses the challenges and potentials of informal care. Implementation gaps reveal tensions between rights-based ideals and lived realities, particularly regarding culturally-specific forms of abuse, economic exploitation of pension grants, and the unrecognised care labour of older women in multigenerational households. I argue that older persons' care must balance protection with participation, centring older persons as rights-holders rather than passive recipients. This research responds to the panel's call for situated methodologies by examining how South Africa's constitutional framework, that explicitly prohibits age discrimination yet lacks dedicated provisions for older persons', shapes informal care relationships. This analysis provides a foundation for cross-context dialogue on how African nations might develop legal frameworks that honour both rights-based protections and familial care traditions.

Collective contribution

Dr. Mone Spindler - University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Prof. Sana Benbelli, Université Hassan II de Casablanca, (Morocco)

PhD. Esselina Fuel, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, (Mozambique)

Samantha Barkley, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, (South Africa)

Aging is often referred to as a societal challenge to be tackled. Historically, aging research and related concepts for dealing with aging have been dominated by the United States and Europe. In the Global South, postcolonial legacies, structural economic inequalities, and specific forms of family-based solidarity shape how old age is lived, perceived, and cared for—often in contrast to dominant Northern models. The participation of the Global South in aging research has increased over the past decades.

However, African-European collaboration is needed to explore the complexities of the discourses, political-economic structures and experiences of aging in these different contexts in order to open possibilities of liveable, positive futures of aging. In our panel discussion we bring together researchers from different academic disciplines (biology, public health, law, sociology, ethics) dealing with aging from Morocco, South Africa, Mozambique and Germany with stakeholders (municipal officials, community leaders, care givers and social workers) from Casablanca.

As a starting point for our collaboration in ageing research and education we discuss informal elderly care in familial settings. We invite the stakeholders to bring a concrete case from their everyday practice (e.g. a story, a concept, a problem) which they want to explore with us. The panel offers room for critical, cross-cultural reflection and empowerment. Building upon post- colonial perspectives on ageing we discuss the questions mentioned below and thereby raise cross- cutting issues of social inequality, gender and migration. In addition to the panel discussion, we are aiming to do a study visit, in which we visit one/two NGOs in Casablanca who work in the field of informal elderly care. We learn about their activities and perspectives and discuss in order to facilitate mutual learning, empowerment and network building.

Questions for the audience:

- What are the challenges and potentials and difficulties of informal care for the elderly?
- Which concepts of good care underlie our critical analyses?
- How can we place the elderly at the centre of a debate between researchers, stakeholders, and those concerned?
- How can we adopt and develop situated methods of research on ageing, based on a post-colonial approach?

Overcoming racism in healthcare: a European and African perspective on how to improve medical training

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 3: Salle Touria Chaoui - 25/03/2026, 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Emilia Noormahomed, Edoardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Collective contribution

Dr. Brenda Bogaert, Dr. Kristina Würth, Kevin Dzi - University of Lausanne and Lausanne University Hospital, Lausanne (Switzerland)

Dr. B. Ajayi Oluwakemi - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Dr. John Barugahare - Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Dr. Beatrice Akala - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Our panel corresponds to Hub 2 – Society, Culture, Heritage and explores how medical education systems can foster more inclusive, multilingual, and societies. With its focus on healthcare, it also furthers Hub 3. In the context of increasing social and cultural diversification in global societies, one of the most important issues that educators need to address today is racism in health care. However, this subject is usually ignored or under-discussed. Combating this injustice requires a variety of perspectives - especially from different contexts and countries. As a first step, a moderated discussion was organized in September 2025 in Hannover, Germany, with 28 participants from around Europe on racism in biomedicine. Strategies identified for medical education included having dedicated peer support, building awareness of racism in medical history, incorporating lived experience, and targeted faculty recruitment to ensure greater diversity. This second panel discussion, planned in Casablanca with CIVIS partners at the University of the Witwatersrand and Makerere University, will widen the topic to the global audience of CIVIS partners from Africa. It will provide an opportunity to enlarge this debate, to better understand critical pedagogies that may be mobilised both in specific contexts/countries and worldwide (such as Ubuntu philosophies which emphasize our shared humanity and interdependence) to overcome racism in healthcare and society as a large.

The structure of panel discussion will be as follows: Presentation of results from European workshop - University of Lausanne. Insights on anti-racist initiatives from the University of the Witwatersrand and Makerere University

Questions for the audience

- What is our role as educators?
- What are anti-racist initiatives in your universities?
- How can we improve education to work toward more just, equitable societies?
- How can we overcome barriers to anti-racism work?

Rethinking Aging: Scientific Evidence, Public Perception, and Cultural Practices

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 25/03/2026, 14:00 - 15:30 (CET)

Session chair: Dr. Mounir Kheirallah, University Hassan II of Casablanca, (Morocco)

Individual contributions

Prof. Cristina Nombela -Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Neuropsychology in Motion: Exercise, Brain Stimulation and Cognitive Health in Aging

The aging process is accompanied by a decline in cognitive and motor functions, often intensified by frailty and reduced physical activity. In response to this challenge, the project Hago Ejercicio investigates the effects of a combined intervention—physical exercise and transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS)—on cognitive health in older adults. This research adopts a multimodal approach, integrating neuropsychological evaluation, motor performance analysis, and electrophysiological monitoring through EEG. The intervention is designed to promote neuroplasticity and functional recovery in aging populations. Preliminary results show promising effects on executive functions, attention, and motor coordination. Notably, EEG analyses reveal a significant increase in spectral coherence in participants receiving active tDCS compared to those in the sham group, suggesting enhanced functional connectivity and cortical synchrony. This proposal for CIVIS aims to present the translational potential of combining behavioral and neuromodulatory strategies to support healthy aging. It also highlights the importance of individualized response profiles and the integration of neuroscience into public health and geriatric care. The project reflects a commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and the application of neuropsychological research to real-world contexts.

Elvira Andújar Castillo -Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Facilitating Dialogue and Inclusion: Connecting Scientific and Cultural Perspectives on Aging

As moderator of the discussion panel “Aging Across Perspectives: Biological, Cognitive, and Sociocultural Dimensions,” my role will focus on fostering dialogue among the different contributions. Throughout the session, my key function will be to energize the debate, actively managing the questions and dialogue between the attendees and the speakers. I will foster an inclusive and fluid exchange, promoting connections across perspectives (academic, professional, and cultural) while highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of aging. In addition to moderating the panel, I will lead the interactive workshop “Ageing Corner”, a participatory activity designed to complement the academic discussion. In this space, participants from different ages, disciplines, and cultural backgrounds will share experiences and reflections related to aging, inclusion, and dignity. Through dialogue and reflection, the workshop seeks to humanize scientific

discourse and to bridge research with lived experience, fostering empathy and intergenerational understanding. By connecting structured academic discussion with open, experience-based dialogue, my contribution aims to create a cohesive and meaningful exchange that reinforces the panel's central message: understanding aging requires both scientific rigor and social sensitivity.

Collective contribution

Prof. Stephen Ojiambo Wandera, Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Prof. El Habib Ben Lahmar, Université Hassan II, Casablanca (Morocco)

Prof. Cristina Nombela Otero, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain)

Prof. Carla Molina Carrillo, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain)

This discussion panel at the CIVIS meeting offers a multidisciplinary overview of aging, structured around three key perspectives: biological, cognitive, and sociocultural, with a transversal technological contribution.

The goal is to foster dialogue across disciplines and cultures to better understand both healthy and pathological aging, and to address the societal consequences of existing knowledge gaps.

From the biological and public health perspective, Prof. Wandera will explore aging trajectories and health inequalities in African contexts, emphasizing the role of environmental and social determinants.

The cognitive perspective, led by Prof. Nombela, will examine how psychological processes—such as memory, emotion, and reasoning—interact with cultural values and personal histories, influencing vulnerability to misinformation and shaping public understanding of dementia and aging.

Prof. Ben Lahmar will contribute a technological perspective, discussing how AI tools—such as chatbots and Big Data analytics—can support scientific literacy, counter misinformation, and identify sociocultural trends affecting older populations.

The panel is complemented by the interactive workshop “Ageing Corner”, led by PhD students, where participants of different ages and backgrounds will share experiences and reflections on aging, inclusion, and dignity.

Questions for the audience

- What are the current gaps in scientific understanding of healthy vs. pathological aging?
- How does scientific uncertainty contribute to public misconceptions about aging, cognitive decline, and neurodegenerative conditions?
- What strategies can researchers and healthcare professionals use to communicate complex aging science clearly and responsibly to the public?
- How can we distinguish evidence-based practices from unverified “anti-aging” claims circulating online and in media?
- How can interventions—including educational programs and digital tools—promote critical thinking and health literacy regarding aging and care practices?
- How do misconceptions and stereotypes about aging affect mental health, resilience, and autonomy in older adults?

- How can AI-based tools (e.g., chatbots, data analytics) help counter misinformation and support personalized, culturally sensitive guidance for older populations?
- How do cultural norms and social expectations shape the perception and care of older adults in different societies (e.g., Europe vs. Africa)?
- What are the consequences of misinformation and ageism for caregiving practices and societal attitudes toward older people?
- How do media and social networks amplify or counteract myths and stereotypes about aging?
- What lessons can we learn from intercultural comparisons to promote inclusive, respectful, and effective aging practices globally?

Polycrisis and forced displacement across Africa and Europe

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 25/03/2026, 14:00 –15:30 (CET)

Session chair : **Prof. Younes Ben Mouro**, Université Hassan II de Casablanca, (Morocco)

Collective contribution

Dr. Astrid Favella, Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)

Prof. Fiorenza Deriu, Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)

Prof. Emiliane Rubat du Mérac, Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)

Dr. Ruth Aura, Egerton University, Njoro (Kenya)

Dr. John Oti Amoah, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast (Ghana)

Global challenges such as forced displacement and violence against women represent urgent matters calling for academia and policy practitioners' attention. Seizing the opportunity of this forum to table educational actions addressing such polycrisis, education is seen as an avenue to empower individuals and include them in renewed societal contexts. Specifically, cross-border learner mobility engages with discussions upon mechanisms to foster social and economic inclusion avenues for forcibly displaced persons: recognition of foreign degrees and qualifications, the valorisation of non-formal and informal knowledge, and the proactive action by European Universities Alliances, as CIVIS itself, as examples of trans-national organisations, increasingly gaining a voice as stakeholders in the policy-making mechanisms in this sector. Hence, the conceptual tool to analyse such global challenges and highlight joint solutions is the polycrisis lens.

This panel, within Hub 2 contributions considers this polycrisis from several points of view, deeply engaging with the Europe-Africa relationship: the core idea for fostering multicultural societies here proposed, is the valorisation of each and every learner experience and skills gained in the perspective of a multi-age, multi-cultural society.

Contributions aim to nurture the given prompt: "In the context of migration and forced displacement, how can educational systems and institutions foster inclusive, multilingual and multicultural societies?"

Ongoing and concluded research around dynamics characterizing violence against women in refugee camps, educational projects to address and overcome them, skill-certification/qualification recognition between Europe and Africa, risks of violence reification within institutions themselves, and the use of polysolutions lenses as a valuable theoretical tool to frame the theme, will be shared.

Ultimately, the goal of the panel is to serve as a platform to collect experiences, discuss practices and build policy recommendations based on ongoing research, strongly bringing together the legal, sociological and educational oriented perspective.

Questions for the audience

- In a legal perspective, what are the challenges faced by women in refugee camps in Africa? How to overcome them?
- In the context of forced displacement, what are examples of educational projects successfully implemented in refugee camps in Africa to overcome them?
- How can we use the lenses of polycrisis and polysolutions to address such challenges?
- How can polysolutions be introduced for women empowerment, through recognition of prior formal/informal learning, once they migrate to a new country or while they are hosted in refugee camps?
- Aiming at multiculturalism and multilinguism, what are the inner violence risks/obstacles in-built in educational institutions themselves and how to overcome them?

WE4LEAD: a cross-continental endeavour towards gender equality

Panel Discussion

Location : Room 3 : Salle Touria Chaoui - 25/03/2026, 14 :00 - 15 :30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Hafissatou Kane, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Dakar (Senegal)

Collective contribution

Dr. Carmen Fernández-Montraveta - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Prof. Clélia Rossi-Arnaud - Sapienza University of Rome, Rome (Italy)

Dr. Hugnette Abou Mrad - Antonine University, Baabda (Lebanon)

Dr. Camille de Garidel-Thoron - Aix-Marseille University, Marseille (France)

Prof. Halima Ouanada, University of Tunis Manar, (Tunisia)

Persistent issues such as value-driven education and social inequality require responses entrenched in cross-continental collaboration. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Europe and Africa must step up to build partnerships that bridge any existent divides. The WE4LEAD project (March 2023-April 2026), rooted on the Téthys network, brings together nine universities from Europe (Aix-Marseille Université, amU, FR; Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, UAM, ES; Sapienza Università di Roma, SUR, IT), Africa (Université Frères Mentouri Constantine 1, UC1, DZ; Université Constantine 3 Salah Boubdiner, UC3, DZ; Université Tunis el Manar, UTM, TN; Université de Sousse, US, TN), and West Asia (Université Libanaise, UL, LB; Antonine University, UA, LB).

In partnership with the Réseau Francophone des Femmes Responsables dans l'Enseignement Supérieur et la Recherche (RESUFF). Its goal is to transform the governance of Mediterranean HEIs by promoting a culture of gender equality.

Over the past three years, the consortium has collectively advanced by taking a firm political stance and institutionalizing gender equality policies in their universities, through concrete actions such as: collecting gendered data; increasing decision-makers' awareness of the existence and causes of gender inequality; creating a political framework to support gender equality; instituting training widely shown to reduce gender bias in recruitment decisions; and improving awareness of gender-based harassment and how to address it.

Through sustained collaboration and mutual learning, the project has succeeded in implementing policies that promote the full participation of women in university governance.

This Panel will present these advances together with the tools and methodologies developed, while opening a space for dialogue on lessons learned and strategies transferable to other HEIs.

The discussion will focus on how to sustain political commitment, engage decision-makers more effectively, and foster inclusive governance across the Mediterranean region.

Questions for the audience

- How could we sustain political commitment with gender equality?

- Which are your local experiences on fighting against barriers to women promotion?
- How could we foster effective decision-makers engagement in gender equality policies?
- How could we promote inclusive governance across the Mediterranean region?
- How could we broaden the effectiveness of locally-proven solutions?

Experimentation and the making of experiential knowledge

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 25/03/2026, 16:00 - 17:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Hassene Mnif, University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Individual contributions

Dr. Arlindo Mendes Antonio, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Co-producing agricultural knowledge with farmers: participatory experimentation and climate adaptation for resilient rural livelihoods in Mozambique

Prof. Cristina Nombela, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Techniques of brain stimulation for the elderly

Dr. Hamady Gaye, University of Cheick Anta Diop of Dakar, Dakar (Senegal)
Reappropriation of models of transmission and dissemination of knowledge in West African societies of the African Middle Ages

The cultural heritage of West Africa is a blend of Black African, Arab-Muslim, and Judeo-Christian civilizations. This syncretism has always been its source of richness and originality. Moreover, the spread of Islam will have a significant impact on people's lives. This strong influence of Islam has its origins in a long history, "more than ten centuries of spreading Islam..., borrowing its characteristic features from local cultures (Dumont and Kanté, 2012). This mixing of cultures gave rise to stone cities such as Chinguetti (or city of libraries), Wadane, Tichit, and Walata with their "sand universities and desert libraries," as well as university centers such as Sankoré with its mosques featuring the famous Sudano-Sahelian architecture of Negro-Arabic inspiration and its Islamic libraries (Sidi Yahya). Most manuscripts are written in Adjami or Arabic. Adjami, a system of transcribing local African languages using the Arabic alphabet and well established in the education system, has always been a multicultural unifying element for the various West African communities in their quest for knowledge and scholarship, while also preserving endogenous knowledge. An unprecedented intellectual boom, Africa's intellectual golden age (10th-17th centuries)! However, since 2012, West Africa, particularly its Sahel region, has been facing an unprecedented security crisis. This context of insecurity and violence is leading to migration and forced displacement, which also has dramatic consequences for the social balance of traditional societies, endangering both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This poses threats and obstacles to social, religious, and cultural practices, given that in Africa, communities maintain a very close relationship with their environment and territories of cultural expression. Therefore, in the face of this situation of peril to indigenous heritage and knowledge, it will be important to reinstate these dynamics of inclusion and resilient models of knowledge transmission and dissemination within the modern (often-contested) education system.

Dr. David Poveda, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Dr. Noor Gulamussen, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)
Dr. Fanny Sbaraglia, University of Bruxelles, Bruxelles (Belgium)
*The role of traditional authorities in decision making in addressing polycrisis –
Mozambique case study*

This panel explores how experimentation and experience contribute to the co-production of knowledge across European and African contexts. Bringing together researchers engaged in participatory and situated inquiries, it examines how universities, institutions, and communities collaborate across continents to address shared challenges. Experimentation is understood as both a methodological practice and an epistemological stance that shapes collaboration with non-academic actors, the governance of uncertainty, and the ethical and institutional conditions of research. By comparing European and African cases, the panel highlights how distinct cultural and institutional environments foster different yet interconnected modes of knowledge production. The discussion further investigates how experiential and situated knowledge are generated, interpreted, and valued in contrasting contexts. It explores what counts as “data” in participatory research, how embodied and traditional expertise interact with academic standards, and how these encounters stimulate mutual learning and social transformation. Together, these contributions underscore the plural and interdependent nature of experimentation, revealing how Europe–Africa dialogues enrich the making, transmission, and legitimization of experiential knowledge.

Questions for the audience

- How are experiential and situated forms of knowledge generated, interpreted, and valued across different contexts? What counts as “data” in participatory research?
- How do embodied and traditional forms of expertise interact with academic standards and research norms?
- In what ways do these encounters foster mutual learning and drive social transformation?
- How can Europe–Africa dialogues enrich the making, transmission, and legitimization of experiential knowledge, highlighting the plural dimension of experimentation?

Transcultural memories and narratives

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 25/03/2026, 16:00 - 17:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Stefan Helgesson, Stockholm University, Stockholm (Sweden)

Individual contribution

Lecturer Hamady Gaye, Curator of Central Library - University of Cheick Anta Diop of Dakar (Senegal)

Reappropriation of models of transmission and dissemination of knowledge in West African societies of the African Middle Ages

The cultural heritage of West Africa is a blend of Black African, Arab-Muslim, and Judeo-Christian civilizations. This syncretism has always been its source of richness and originality. Moreover, the spread of Islam will have a significant impact on people's lives. This strong influence of Islam has its origins in a long history, "more than ten centuries of spreading Islam..., borrowing its characteristic features from local cultures (Dumont and Kanté, 2012). This mixing of cultures gave rise to stone cities such as Chinguetti (or city of libraries), Wadane, Tichit, and Walata with their "sand universities and desert libraries," as well as university centers such as Sankoré with its mosques featuring the famous Sudano-Sahelian architecture of Negro-Arabic inspiration and its Islamic libraries (Sidi Yahya). Most manuscripts are written in Adjami or Arabic. Adjami, a system of transcribing local African languages using the Arabic alphabet and well established in the education system, has always been a multicultural unifying element for the various West African communities in their quest for knowledge and scholarship, while also preserving endogenous knowledge. An unprecedented intellectual boom, Africa's intellectual golden age (10th-17th centuries)! However, since 2012, West Africa, particularly its Sahel region, has been facing an unprecedented security crisis. This context of insecurity and violence is leading to migration and forced displacement, which also has dramatic consequences for the social balance of traditional societies, endangering both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This poses threats and obstacles to social, religious, and cultural practices, given that in Africa, communities maintain a very close relationship with their environment and territories of cultural expression. Therefore, in the face of this situation of peril to indigenous heritage and knowledge, it will be important to reinstate these dynamics of inclusion and resilient models of knowledge transmission and dissemination within the modern (often-contested) education system.

Prof. Monique Scheer, University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)
Affective Dimensions of Co-Existence in Multicultural Cities

Launched by cultural studies scholar Paul Gilroy in 2004 and taken up by a group of Francophone sociologists and writers ten years later, the concept of 'conviviality' has been fruitful for analyzing histories of living together in difference, not overlooking economic inequity and power asymmetries, but at the same time finding commonalities and cooperations. With its echoes of the premodern Spanish

concept of Convivencia, conviviality is also reminiscent of German conceptions of *Geselligkeit* as the basis of democracy in civil society. From these examples, it is clear that *vivre ensemble* involves various emotional practices, which will be the focus of this talk, based on recent research in 'everyday multiculturalism' in anthropology and cultural studies and linking up with Dorothee Kimmich's talk on 'critical proximities. Only when we take the affective dimension of co-existence into account can we fully understand what kinds of solutions will work well. Challenging the notion that cultural and religious diversity itself presents a problem for social cohesion, causing fragmentation and conflict, the aim of this paper is to promote a new perspective on heterogeneous societies by highlighting the significance of proximity over difference. What needs to come into focus are the relational, affective practices that set the terms of co-existence.

Prof. Dorothee Kimmich, University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)
Similarity and proximity in cultural theory and research on conviviality

We have a right to be different but must also realize that antidemocratic and racist practices flourish under the mantle of the right to diversity and segregation. Samir Amin thus correctly demands that the right to diversity and alterity must be coupled with the 'right to be similar'. Similarity is different from the demand for generic sameness. It is the process towards equality. In this sense pluricultural and heterogeneous societies can be viewed as complex webs and palimpsests of overlapping similarities and a specific form of critical proximity. It is based on solidarity which ignores particularist bondings in order to project a pluricultural society of communication characterized by fuzzy borders and transcended boundaries. We could indeed see the signature of the pluricultural form of life in the affirmation of similarity in diversity (and not unity in diversity) as against the absolutization through homogenization.

This perspective makes clear that similarity-oriented thinking has an inherent ethical aspect and requires perspectives and judgement. To not recognize similarities also often means that they are quite consciously denied. Therefore, similarity-oriented thinking requires not only analytic ability, but also the ability to judge. When similarities are disregarded in favour of differences and oppositions—which often leads to the dominance of a single group—it is not only an epistemological issue but also a political one: If religious and/or racist fanaticism is driving a campaign to divide society into categories of identity and difference, then what is necessary are alliances and thinking in similarities. Similarity, however, is not a cure-all for the problems found within cultural theory and its corresponding political issues. Assimilation and forced proximity can even provoke oppression and cause conflicts. Nevertheless, similarity as a fundamental epistemological category and proximity as action guiding orientation is one of the most important tools of cultural-theoretical reflection.

Collective contribution

Prof. Christine Le Quellec Cottier - University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

Prof. Samira Doudier - Hassan II University of Casablanca (Morocco)

Prof. Coudy Kane - University of Cheick Anta Diop of Dakar (Senegal)

Sub-Saharan literature and its history as an intercultural and integrative relay: creation of an educational resource

The University of Lausanne is hosting the SNSF project "EthoSpatial Configuration: Towards a New Literary History of French-Language Sub-Saharan Africa," led by Prof. Ch. Le Quellec Cottier, with a team in Switzerland and scientific partners in Senegal, Benin, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, South Africa, and France. This is a participatory approach, with joint work to articulate critical, postcolonial, and decolonial reflections in order to develop a transcontinental application relevant to various cultural areas. The project aims to bring together several audiences for cross-cultural transmission in an educational setting: the development of a textbook and a digital platform on Francophone literature in Africa, usable by both Europeans and Africans, in french. In Switzerland (and Europe), this literature, as defined in the research project, is very little known. Studying it allows us to consider different relationships with language and creates social and political bridges through the imagination. Her study also promotes the inclusion of migrant pupils and students. In Africa, the field of sub-Saharan literary history, depending on the region, is approached as such or in connection with Maghreb literature at university. The aim is to modify the usual criteria so as not to reproduce the essentialisms still present in the reading of the century.

Approach:

- Bring together three CIVIS universities and promote long-term scientific and educational exchanges (Lausanne and Dakar already linked for a CIVIS summer school on the question of engagement in literature); Casablanca, host university & specialist in the field: pedagogical and didactic transmission).
- Inclusive reflection, through the involvement of specialists in complementary fields; promoting multiculturalism within a language.
- Sharing values: moving beyond national borders; decoloniality of knowledge and moving away from essentialism through the creation of a corpus.

Questions for the audience

- A common and digital approach: what strategies for teaching this field outside the curriculum (in Europe), favoring non-identity-based approaches everywhere?
- What composition to promote approaches in line with the globalized world?
- Involvement and commitment to promoting the teaching of the humanities: what arguments in a world in crisis?

Transregional sustainable development

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 3: Salle Touria Chaoui - 25/03/2026, 16:00 -17:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Jussi Griebinger, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria) tbc

Individual contributions

Prof. Ali Ben Ahmed - University of Sfax (Tunisia)

Transregional cooperation for climate, environment, and energy: joint African-European pathways toward sustainable development

The climate crisis poses unprecedented environmental and societal challenges that demand transregional and interdisciplinary cooperation. Africa, despite contributing only 3–4% of global CO₂ emissions, is among the regions most affected by climate change, while Europe possesses advanced technological expertise and a commitment to climate neutrality by 2050. This asymmetry highlights the urgency of building equitable African-European partnerships that combine resources, innovation, and local knowledge. This contribution proposes the creation of a Transregional Africa-Europe Renewable Energy and Climate Innovation Platform to co-develop solar, wind, and green hydrogen projects; establish joint research centers on advanced materials and sustainable

technologies; and promote co-supervised PhD programs to strengthen scientific capacity. Such collaboration would not only address Africa's urgent energy gap—where 600 million people still lack electricity access—but also accelerate global decarbonization by deploying Africa's untapped renewable potential. By aligning technological innovation with social inclusivity and capacity-building, African-European cooperation can transform the climate crisis into an opportunity for shared resilience, fairness, and sustainable development.

Dr. Amira Ghorbel - University of Sfax (Tunisia)

Understanding what shapes the ecological footprint in OECD countries?

Our study aims to analyse the determinants of Ecological Footprint on environmental quality in OECD countries with a particular focus on assessing whether institutional quality of governance measured by an index, improves environmental quality to support sustainable development. Using the Method of Moments Quantile Regression (MMQR) for 30 OECD countries over the 1990/2022 period, we show that renewable energy exerts a negative and significant influence on the ecological footprint across the entire distribution. Similarly technological innovation affects negatively and significantly the ecological footprint across all quantiles. Where's natural resource rents are positively associated with the ecological footprint. Urbanization and Human capital are both associated with increased environmental degradation. We show also a validity of the inverted U-shaped Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) pattern observed among OECD nations. The use of renewable energy shows a clear contribution to reducing the

ecological footprint, primarily by lessening fossil fuel reliance and slowing environmental degradation. Technological progress has crucial role in fostering environmental sustainability. OECD countries should adopt a dual strategy of resource management and green investment to mitigate the ecological impact of natural resource rents.

Dr. Bui Hai Thiem - University of Stockholm (Sweden)

Triangular partnerships among universities for promoting research and education on just energy transition: insights from Asia

Triangular partnerships involving Global North institutions providing funding and expertise, alongside South-South collaborations for peer learning offer a robust and practical model for universities to advance research and education on just energy transition. These partnerships emphasize equity, local ownership, and knowledge co-production, aligning with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and frameworks like the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs). Universities can co-develop curricula and training to educate future leaders on JET with emphasis on high-quality, concessional financing and stakeholder engagement to avoid debt traps and social unrest. Asian countries' initiatives like student & staff exchanges, joint degrees, and skill-building workshops which prioritize demand-driven education have been developed to address the issues arising from just energy transition. Triangular models like EU-funded programs link North universities with South consortia for localized content mirrors South-South networks supported by North funding and expertise.

Universities in Transformation Poster pitch

Location: Auditorium - 25/03/2026, 17:30- 19:00 (CET)

Dr. Ute Schwaibold - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)
South Africa-EU Partnerships in Action: Co-Creating Knowledge Across Continents

Dr. Naeema Ahmad Ramadan Hussein El Kout - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)
Circular Economy Approaches to Strengthening Disability and Rehabilitation Systems

Dr Leila Deizy Parruque - Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)
Evaluation of direct fisher-tropsch synthesis from captured CO2 and solar H2

MSc. arch. Ilinca Maican - University of Bucharest, Bucharest (Romania)
Global weaving – a common language across borders

Prof. Adriana Ștefănel - University of Bucharest, Bucharest (Romania)
Universities for Democratic Resilience: Understanding Deliberative Disintegration and Sovereigntist Migration Narratives

Dr. Alessandro Santirocchi - Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)
Climate Conspiracy Theories and Disinformation: Cross-Context Implications for Africa and Europe

Dr. Nadia Cannata & Maia Wellington- Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)
Linguistic Cultures and Communities in Europe Past and Present - Building the Eurotales Museum

Prof. Francesca Manzari and Prof. **Joanny Moulin** - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France)
Translation Service Learning for Future Africa

Prof. Maria Impedovo - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France)
Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Higher Education Practices. The INWELL Framework for Micro-Credential Design

Dr. Nathalie Mangelinck-Noël - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France) -
Durability and optimization of photovoltaic installations Impact of climatic conditions France/Cameroon

Dr. Christèle Aubry - Université de Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)
The CIVIS Open Labs: Collaborative Spaces Connecting Universities and Local Communities

Dr. Bernhard Garn Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)
On the use of Combinatorial Disaster Exercises to advance Disaster Preparedness targeting Stakeholder Engagement

Abstracts

Dr. Ute Schwaibold - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)
South Africa–EU Partnerships in Action: Co-Creating Knowledge Across Continents

This poster session showcases the diversity and impact of current South Africa–Europe collaborative research projects in the School of Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). As an active member of the CIVIS Alliance and a hub for African research excellence, the School of Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences engages with European partners across multiple thematic areas—from climate resilience to biodiversity conservation. The session will showcase these collaborations with concise visual summaries of these joint initiatives, methodologies, and outcomes. By highlighting successes, lessons learned, and future opportunities, this session illustrates how South African and European universities can turn shared challenges into joint solutions.

Dr. Naeema Ahmad Ramadan Hussein El Kout - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)
Circular Economy Approaches to Strengthening Disability and Rehabilitation Systems

Disability affects approximately 16% of South Africa's population, yet access to affordable, appropriate assistive devices remains limited—one in five individuals in need cannot obtain them due to economic and systemic barriers. Concurrently, the country faces an escalating environmental challenge, producing 2.6 million tons of plastic waste annually, with only 16% recycled. This study proposes an integrated framework that addresses both health equity and environmental sustainability by linking disability and rehabilitation policy reform with circular economy innovation. The research aims to develop and validate a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for disability and rehabilitation services, piloted through the design, testing, and policy integration of low-cost assistive devices manufactured from recycled plastics. Using a mixed-methods, multi-phase approach, the study conducts policy gap analyses of the Framework and Strategy for Disability and Rehabilitation (FSDR) and National Health Insurance (NHI), complemented by stakeholder interviews with policymakers, rehabilitation professionals, and disability organizations. Recycled-plastic prototypes (e.g., crutches and walking sticks) are developed and tested for durability under ISO/WHO standards, followed by user-centred evaluations assessing cultural acceptability, usability, and safety. The findings will inform the design of indicators on access, quality, and equity, which will be piloted within provincial health information systems. Through cost–benefit and equity modelling, the project evaluates the feasibility of scaling community-run production hubs operated by persons with disabilities. Expected outcomes include a validated M&E framework integrated into NHI systems, policy recommendations linking sustainability with

disability inclusion, and strengthened accountability mechanisms for assistive device provision. Ultimately, this research demonstrates how circular economy solutions can advance health equity, environmental resilience, and socio-economic empowerment in South Africa's rehabilitation sector, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals on health, inequality reduction, and responsible production. Keywords: Disability policy, circular economy, assistive devices, monitoring and evaluation, South Africa, sustainability, rehabilitation.

Dr Leila Deizy Parruque - Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)
Evaluation of direct fisher-tropsch synthesis from captured CO₂ and solar H₂

Technologies for carbon capture utilization (CCU) have been seeking a lot of interest in the last few days because CO₂ is one of the main greenhouse gases and its emission in large quantities is the root of environmental problems such as acid rains, global warming and climate change. Among the technologies mentioned Fisher-Tropsch synthesis (FTS) is one of the most investigated. This process allows the conversion of syngas (CO and H₂) into liquid fuels cleaner than those obtained by the distillation of petroleum. In addition to synthesis gas, CO₂ can also be used as a raw material. Generally, it is converted by the reverse water gas shift into CO which subsequently goes to FTS, but CO₂ can be directly hydrogenated via FTS in one single step. This project aims to study the feasibility of the direct CO₂-FTS and compare with the commonly indirect process. Two flowsheets will be designed and simulated in the COCO simulator considering captured CO₂ and solar H₂ from water electrolysis as the feedstock. The first process is an indirect route where the feed goes through the RWGS process and the syngas is subsequently converted in the FTS reactor, and the second is a route where CO₂ captured is directly hydrogenated. The parametric studies will be carried out in COCO and the optimisation of the process variables will be carried out in Scilab. With this simulation is expected to analyse operational conditions of the two processes, water removal and its effect, energy requirement and total annual cost. It is hypothesised that the indirect process can be an alternative to the common CO-based process and that direct CO₂ conversion may be possible without in one single step.

MSc. arch. Ilinca Maican - University of Bucharest, Bucharest (Romania)
Global weaving – a common language across borders

This case study presents a synthetic argument in favour of the global exchange of craft knowledge, techniques, and narratives. I argue that crafts are among the cultural manifestations that connect people and are shared, regardless of their global positioning. I illustrate this common ground by focusing on the recurrence of a sign – concentric diamonds, stepped and seemingly straight-edged – in flat weavings around the globe, and mapping the different variations of the signs over the corresponding regions on a world map. The result reveals a path that connects communities and peoples, holding information about past trading routes, colonization, the acceptance of influence, and innovation. Moreover, I explore the possibilities of a common visual base between communities that have not interacted, examining hypotheses ranging from Jung's collective unconscious to

neuroscientific studies of hallucinations and the visual components of migraines. In an era when information and goods travel much faster, farther, and less controlled than before, I argue that craft practitioners, whether individuals or communities, can learn from one another and exchange best practices to help preserve and promote their respective work and traditions. Celebrating the nuances and diversity, as well as the reasons behind the technical choices and the variety of discourse or stories attached to each conjugation of form or colour, helps us remain locally relevant and avoid unconscious uniformity.

Prof. Adriana Ștefănel - University of Bucharest, Bucharest (Romania)
Universities for Democratic Resilience: Understanding Deliberative Disintegration and Sovereigntist Migration Narratives

This poster introduces the concept of deliberative disintegration to capture how digital populism and sovereigntist narratives weaken the foundations of democratic dialogue. In contemporary public spheres, particularly on social media, deliberation is increasingly replaced by emotional, polarizing, and simplistic frames. Instead of fostering mutual understanding, political communication often encourages outrage, mistrust, and withdrawal from democratic engagement. Migration has become a central theme in these sovereigntist narratives, frequently framed as a threat to national sovereignty and cultural identity. Such framings resonate strongly among young people, who are simultaneously the most connected generation and the most exposed to algorithmically amplified extremism. Comparative data from the European Values Survey and the World Values Survey suggest that youths in both Europe and Africa are navigating profound ambivalences: they express high aspirations for participation and mobility, while also showing vulnerability to exclusionary narratives that question the legitimacy of democratic institutions. This tension illustrates how deliberative disintegration is not confined to a single region but reflects global communicative dynamics. Against this backdrop, universities have a crucial responsibility. They are not only sites of higher learning but also engines of democratic resilience. Through collaborative and participatory research, students can be engaged as co-researchers who critically investigate sovereigntist rhetoric, disinformation, and migration-related discourses. Such initiatives provide young people with tools of media literacy, analytical rigor, and civic responsibility, enabling them to resist manipulative narratives and to contribute to inclusive dialogue. By bridging academic inquiry with civic education, universities can act as mediators between research and society. This poster highlights the importance of African-European academic cooperation in addressing deliberative disintegration, encouraging the co-creation of strategies that empower youth, foster cross-regional solidarity, and strengthen democratic practices in the face of sovereigntist extremism.

Dr. Alessandro Santirocchi - Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)
Climate Conspiracy Theories and Disinformation: Cross-Context Implications for Africa and Europe

Climate change misinformation represents a growing global challenge, as conspiracy theories undermine trust in scientific evidence and weaken public support for sustainability policies (Imhoff, 2022). In Europe, such narratives often

take the form of climate denial, claims of scientific manipulation, or accusations of hidden political agendas (Hornsey et al., 2018). In African contexts, these discourses may resonate differently, intersecting with structural issues such as colonial legacies, resource dependency, and skepticism towards Western-led green transitions. Comparative evidence shows that climate-hoax beliefs are present in African countries (e.g., 21.5% in South Africa; 13.9% in Morocco; Stockemer, (2024), within broader ecosystems of climate disinformation documented across the continent (Heffernan, 2024). This panel will examine how conspiracy narratives about climate change emerge, spread, and gain traction in different socio-political environments. It will build on recent psychological research on misinformation susceptibility and political orientation (van der Linden, 2022; Santirocchi et al., 2023), highlighting the role of cognitive biases, emotional responses, and social identity processes. Santirocchi and colleagues (2025, unpublished data) highlight that climate-related conspiracy beliefs mediate the relationship between exposure to online misinformation and support for climate policies, underscoring the central role of conspiratorial worldviews in shaping behavioural outcomes. These findings resonate with evidence on the diffusion of disinformation through social media ecosystems, where algorithmic amplification and echo chambers reinforce conspiratorial thinking and weaken resilience. The panel will also address practical implications: how can communication strategies be adapted to cultural contexts? Which interventions, debunking, prebunking, educational programs, can enhance resilience against climate misinformation? How can Africa–Europe cooperation strengthen shared responses to disinformation, ensuring inclusivity and fairness in climate policies?

Dr. Nadia Cannata & Maia Wellington- Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy)
Linguistic Cultures and Communities in Europe Past and Present - Building the Eurotales Museum

The poster will illustrate the building of EUROTALES, the first university museum dedicated to languages in Europe, since December 2024 officially recognized as part of Sapienza University's Polo Museale. It provides a physical and digital space for documenting and preserving Europe's (and North African) linguistic diversity. One of the project's most innovative aspects is its methodology for data collection, which actively involves students in research-based learning. Through fieldwork, archival studies, and interactive digital templates, students contribute to the three core datasets (TRACES, RESONANCES, MILESTONES), engaging in linguistic and historical research while fostering a deeper awareness of multilingualism as the norm rather than an exception in European history. The data collection is carried out by researchers, visitors and students. By participating in real-world data collection and museum curation, students and the general public gain hands-on experience in linguistic and cultural documentation, reinforcing their understanding of language interaction, societal change, and historical continuity.

Prof. Francesca Manzari and **Prof. Joanny Moulin** - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France)
Translation Service Learning for Future Africa

TRANSLATION SERVICE LEARNING FOR FUTURE AFRICA is a project that aims to establish a Research and Graduate Training Network and an International Translation Agency in Africa, drawing on AMU-ALLSH's Master Translation program and the Association TRANSLATION SERVICE LEARNING FOR FUTURE AFRICA founded by African students of AMU's Master Translation. The initiative pursues two main goals: first, to create a Translation Agency that improves access for less-favored groups—especially women—to health, education, and essential services; and second, to offer service-learning internships to master's students in translation. The core approach centers on organizing an international, interdisciplinary conference at Makerere University (Uganda) to launch a collaborative research and training network and lay the groundwork for the Translation Agency itself. By focusing on complexity theory and Africa's linguistic diversity, the project tackles translation needs across many languages and cultures. Conference findings and project results will be shared in free open-access journals. The project is fundamentally emancipatory, designed to break linguistic barriers for underserved communities using decolonizing, afrocentric, and user-centered methods. Service learning ensures students gain practical experience and contribute to their communities, embodying participatory, collaborative, and community-based research principles. Social innovation stems from connecting academic research with on-the-ground social service, especially by enabling students to use their training to empower others. Expected deliverables include the interdisciplinary conference, publication of its results, international agreements for translation internships, the launch of the Translation Agency, and a project website serving as a collaborative hub for translators, students, researchers, and educators involved in Translation Service Learning for Africa. The project includes a reflection on the best ways and means to use AI to improve and facilitate not only the translation processes, but also the development and research side of the project in order to devise the most efficient methods and modes of operations.

Prof. Maria Impedovo - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France)
Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Higher Education Practices. The INWELL Framework for Micro-Credential Design

The INWELL framework, output of the CIVIS funded seed funding, starts from the premise that academics, in their leading role in training future generations, have a crucial responsibility to respond to contemporary social, economic, and ecological challenges, including those shaped by digital transformation processes (Westa, 2020). Digital transformation enables new forms of international exchange and collaboration, creating opportunities to address global issues in higher education. Against this backdrop, the INWELL framework has been developed to support academics in designing and implementing educational programs that adopt a micro-credential approach in the service of sustainable education. The framework emphasizes sensitivity to the specificities of diverse cultural contexts, aiming to foster awareness and active engagement among academic staff and students on key issues such as affect, inclusion, well-being, and sustainability. By linking instructional design with participatory research methodologies, the INWELL framework provides a dynamic structure for developing innovative teaching practices and transformative curricula. This approach positions academics not only

as transmitters of knowledge but also as change agents capable of advancing sustainability within and beyond higher education institutions. The integration of micro-credentials into academic programs offers flexibility and adaptability, responding to varied learner needs and institutional contexts while safeguarding quality and coherence. At the same time, it allows for the recognition of learning outcomes that are relevant across different disciplines and international settings. Through its adaptability, the framework supports the creation of a sustainable educational network within CIVIS and similar alliances, ensuring that curricula remain responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. In conclusion, the INWELL framework contributes to rethinking the academic role in higher education, promoting inclusive and context-sensitive pathways that align with the broader goals of sustainability, digital transformation, and global collaboration.

Dr. Nathalie Mangelinck-Noël - Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille (France)

Durability and optimization of photovoltaic installations Impact of climatic conditions France/Cameroon

Cameroon electricity supply relies largely on its exceptional hydroelectric potential. However, the household electrification rate remains low (65.4% nationally), particularly in areas far from urban centres. There is a need to develop local electricity supply systems that can provide electricity to isolated sites or take over in the event of a power grid outage. Photovoltaic (PV) solar energy is a particularly suitable solution in Cameroon and for isolated sites in general. In Cameroon, solar potential is considerable (about 5 kWh/m² per day) favouring the development of PV micro-power plants. However, PV solar panels are designed according to standards adapted to temperate climates rather than tropical climates. The conditions of Cameroon do not correspond to these standards (high air temperature, humidity, wind, sand...) and lead to underperformance, or even degradation of elements of the PV system impacting its sustainability and reliability. The scientific objectives of our project are firstly to characterize the impact of the climate of Cameroon compared to the French climate on the performance, reliability and durability of PV installations. Secondly, we aim at proposing solutions or recommendations based as much as possible on low-tech and low-cost technologies for all elements of the chain: materials for solar cells, cell technologies, robustness of electronic devices, electricity management and on-site monitoring devices. Transversally, training of researchers, engineers and technicians is another major objective. Our participation to the 1st African-European CIVIS Forum is motivated by several objectives: • Share the objectives of this project presently in its seminal state. • Beneficiate from the experience of participants to the forum. • Meet other interested partners as this subject is in essence not limited to both countries. As our project is a new initiative, we would like to share it with a poster presentation during the forum; video poster is considered.

Dr. Christèle Aubry - Université de Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)
The CIVIS Open Labs: Collaborative Spaces Connecting Universities and Local Communities

The CIVIS Open Labs are key instruments within the CIVIS European University Alliance. These dynamic structures, whether physical, virtual, or hybrid, are embedded in each member university and designed to foster collaborative projects that address societal challenges. More than just incubators, these spaces foster the development of initiatives in collaboration with citizens, local communities, and stakeholders through inclusive, participatory processes. Each CIVIS university hosts its own Open Lab, adapted to its local context, but a shared mission united each CIVIS Open Lab: connecting academia with society with projects that go beyond disciplinary and institutional boundaries. The Open Labs facilitate co-creation between researchers, students, citizens, public institutions, and private organizations, promoting inclusive knowledge production and sustainable impact. This poster presents the concept and objectives of the CIVIS Open Labs, their operating models, their methods (Participatory sciences, Service-learning, and Design Thinking) and examples of ongoing projects that illustrate their diversity and impact. It also highlights the added value of the CIVIS network, which enables cross-border collaboration and mutual learning among universities. By creating spaces for experimentation and dialogue, the CIVIS Open Labs contribute to rethinking how European and African universities engage with society and how knowledge can be co-created to respond to complex global challenges. This poster invites participants to discover how Open Labs operate within CIVIS and how they can join this dynamic ecosystem.

Dr. Bernhard Garn - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)
On the use of Combinatorial Disaster Exercises to advance Disaster Preparedness targeting Stakeholder Engagement

The aftermath of the corona pandemic has led to the strengthening of the perspective that in order to be able to deal with disasters in the future a holistic all-of-society approach is needed. In our research, we focus on transdisciplinary disaster research that bridges discrete mathematics, computer science, and disaster risk reduction. We build upon combinatorial and algorithmic methods for modeling, analyzing, and preparing for natural and human-made disasters in the context of accelerating global impact of climate change. By integrating combinatorial testing and principles from design of experiments, we have developed a framework for automated disaster scenario generation. This framework produces optimized, resource-efficient, and diverse training and simulation scenarios derived from both real and hypothetical disaster events. The resulting models enable emergency services and policymakers to test response strategies, assess vulnerabilities, and enhance operational preparedness through a structured and quantitative approach. Complementing our research, we have actively engaged in scientific outreach and policy dialogue, such as the PH-US-UNCTAD "Science, Technology, and Innovation for Disaster Risk Reduction" Workshop (Manila, 2024). Through collaboration with Austrian and international stakeholders, we promoted evidence-based governance, education, and cross-

sectoral knowledge exchange on disaster and climate risk challenges. The proposed poster will highlight these activities and will be accompanied with a physical boardgame illustrating the different impacts a disaster can have for an interactive element during the presentation. We are proud to contribute towards transforming scientific knowledge into integrated, cooperative, and innovative solutions for global resilience with the aim to link mathematical rigor, digital technologies, and societal preparedness toward sustainable disaster risk reduction.

African-European teaching collaboration and instructional design

Tandem talks

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 26/03/2026, 09:00- 10:30 (CET)

Session chair: Dr Christine Rubas, University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Collective contribution

Dr. Dinesh Balliah, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Prof. Jane Duncan, University of Glasgow, Glasgow (Scotland)

Prof. Bridgette Wessels, University of Glasgow, Glasgow (Scotland)

Reflections on an African/ European research and journalism-led teaching collaboration on equitable and just digital societies

This proposal is for a joint tandem talk to be provided by three members of the CIVIS micro programme, Equitable and Just digital society: developing interdisciplinary skills and knowledge. The talk will focus on the experiences of delivering research and journalism-led teaching as part of a new CIVIS micro-programme, focussed on empowering students to develop critical knowledge and practical skills to become interactional experts in research for an equitable and just digital society. The micro-programme was co-taught for the first time in the 2024/5 academic year by leading experts from various European and one African University (Wits University). The micro-programme included workshops on power and justice in the digital age from an international perspective. These examined how digital technologies are being used in the exercise of state and private power internationally, the relationships between digital surveillance and social inequalities, and the role of public agency, including journalistic agency, in ensuring accountability. They also focussed on strategies for students to become interactional experts on issues relating to surveillance, data privacy and social justice journalism, and looked at ways in which research projects can be designed to maximise potential for knowledge exchange and impact. The workshops also provided a research team being hosted by the University of Glasgow, on public oversight of digital surveillance for intelligence purposes in southern Africa, with an opportunity to integrate research findings into the teaching. Researchers from Angola and Zimbabwe presented on challenges relating to public oversight of digital surveillance in both countries. The workshops provided opportunities for the researchers and students to think together about how to shape more just and equitable digital societies in countries still weighed down by authoritarian legacies, while facing new forms of digital inequality and authoritarianism. This presentation will reflect on the experiences of this European/ African collaboration in the micro-programme.

Prof. Ikbel Charfi, University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Prof. Sonda Kammoun, University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Inclusive approach to instructional design for sustainable development: The Case of Federated Projects at ISAMS-USF

In the evolving landscape of higher education, innovation increasingly relies on emerging strategies, methods, and tools that are centered on pedagogical design rooted in an inclusive and open approach (Potvin, M. 2014). This involves all stakeholders, engaging the instructor, the student, the socioeconomic partner, and sometimes an international partner in the same educational project, in order to achieve better scientific outreach and equity in educational opportunities. This approach fosters inclusive education and opens up opportunities for students with limited resources by providing them access to information and advanced technology (David Alis, 2005) ... while maintaining openness to local and global contexts. In this context, most federated projects at the Sfax University, particularly those involving ISAMS, are committed to including students in a project-based learning system focused on professional integration, by fostering linkages with the socioeconomic world (P. Cordazzo, 2013) on the one hand and international partnerships on the other (Hsin-I Lee · 2025). Sustainability in higher education (A. Barthes, 2025) refers precisely to this dual integration of technology transfers into curricula and to mobilizing holistic actions from the classroom level. In this scientific contribution, the aim is not only to share an experience of open pedagogical design adopted in projects such as MUSAE, EPE, and PALETT-A, but also to address the major issue of student competency development. The internationalization of higher education hinges precisely on the following questions: To what extent can we meet the demands of an exponentially growing market and establish an international position? How can we bridge the gap between the rudimentary knowledge offered by the university system and the technological apex that pervades today's world? Can international projects facilitate mediation between graduates and their professional integration environment, and if so, how? Such open questions can deepen research at the intersection of technology an

Joint African-European studies and viewpoints on epidemiology

Tandem talks

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 26/03/2026, 09:00 - 10:30 (CET)

Session chair: Dr. Brenda Bogaert, University of Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)

Individual contributions

Prof. Susanna Guerra, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Molecular and immunological mechanisms of monkeypox virus in African strains:

Mozambique–Europe collaboration to strengthen diagnostic and research capacity

This Mozambique–Europe collaboration connects virology and parasitology research from Dr. Susana Guerra and Dr. María Irisarri at the Faculty of Medicine, Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM), with the applied needs of Mozambique's health system. It strengthens the Biotechnology Center at Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM) and builds local scientific capacity through collaboration with Prof. Emilia Virginia Noormahomed and Dr. Lucilda de De Araújo, PhD, DVM, an expert in zoonotic diseases and molecular diagnosis. My contribution focuses specifically on monkeypox virus (MPXV), addressing its surveillance, molecular characterization, and diagnostic implementation in Mozambique. MPXV is an emerging zoonotic virus with major public health relevance. The project aims to characterize the genetic diversity and virus-host interaction mechanisms of African MPXV strains. Key objectives include sequencing local strains to detect mutations affecting virulence and transmissibility, assessing viral replication and antiviral susceptibility in cell models, and studying immune responses using in vitro systems and patient samples. Standardized molecular diagnostic protocols will be implemented at UEM, with training for local researchers. The methodology includes clinical sample collection in Mozambiquean hospitals under approved ethical protocols, genomic sequencing and bioinformatics at UEM, and virology studies in partner labs at UAM. Capacity-building activities involve workshops (on-site and virtual) and short-term research stays for UEM students and staff. Expected outcomes include a genomic repository of MPXV strains circulating in Mozambique, implementation of validated diagnostic protocols, joint publications in international journals, and the training of early-career Mozambiquean scientists. The project aims to establish a sustainable Mozambique–Europe research network for MPXV. Potential funders include the Wellcome Trust, Horizon Europe, NIH Fogarty International Center, and Africa CDC. This initiative strengthens local infrastructure and human capital, linking advanced research with public health needs to ensure long-term self-sufficiency in MPXV surveillance across Southern Africa.

Prof. Emilia Noormahomed & Dr. Lucinda De Araujo, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Towards a joint African–European project on MPX, enteric parasites and molecular epidemiology

Emerging and re-emerging infections, such as monkeypox (MPX) and enteric parasitic diseases, represent urgent challenges for both Africa and Europe, particularly among immunocompromised populations. While MPX has recently gained international attention due to outbreaks beyond endemic regions, intestinal parasites continue to cause significant morbidity, especially in low-resource settings. Despite their biological differences, MPX and enteric parasites share common determinants, including poverty, population mobility, and limited access to healthcare. Understanding these pathogens requires molecular epidemiology approaches to track transmission, characterize genetic diversity, and explore potential links with nutritional and immune status. This proposal seeks to establish a joint African–European research initiative with three main objectives: 1. Molecular epidemiology: Genomic and subtype characterization of MPX and enteric parasites in African and European populations, with a focus on immunocompromised individuals. 2. Comparative research: Investigating similarities and differences in the transmission dynamics of viral and parasitic pathogens under conditions of vulnerability. 3. Capacity building: Facilitating the exchange of expertise between African institutions (field epidemiology, surveillance, community health) and European partners (molecular tools, sequencing, bioinformatics). By linking complementary expertise, this initiative aims to create new collaborative networks and establish a platform for joint funding applications. Ultimately, the project will enhance understanding of high-impact pathogens at the Africa–Europe interface and promote sustainable research and educational collaborations.

Dr. Pierre Kamtsap, University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Uncovering Hidden Vectors: Molecular Evidence of Non-damnosum Black Flies as Potential Onchocerciasis and Other Pathogen Transmitters.

Despite the long-standing focus on *Simulium damnosum* complex as the primary vector of onchocerciasis in sub-Saharan Africa, emerging evidence suggests that other black fly species may also contribute to disease transmission. This tandem talk presents a joint African-European investigation into the overlooked biodiversity of non-damnosum *Simulium* species in Cameroon, applying both classical morphology and molecular tools to redefine our understanding of potential vectors. We collected over 1,100 black fly pupae across 13 ecologically diverse locations in Cameroon. Using nuclear ITS2 and mitochondrial Cox1 gene sequencing, we identified 19 species—including two previously undescribed taxa and the first molecular confirmation of *Simulium vorax* and *Simulium dentulosum* in Cameroon. Phylogenetic analysis revealed high intra- and inter-specific diversity and pointed to strong geographical clustering, especially for *S. cervicornutum* and *S. katangae*, which may harbor cryptic species. Notably, *S. vorax*—a confirmed vector in the DRC—was found in northern Cameroon, reinforcing its potential vectorial role. This study demonstrates the critical need to go beyond morphology-based identifications in vector surveillance, particularly in areas targeted for onchocerciasis elimination. Our findings highlight the risk of underestimating the contribution of non-damnosum black flies to pathogen transmission and call for broader molecular screening and ecological monitoring. Through the lens of African-European research cooperation, this work exemplifies

how combining field entomology with molecular biology can provide actionable insights for vector control programs. It also underlines the importance of capacity-building, data sharing, and genomic infrastructure across continents to support health equity and disease elimination.

Prof. Eduardo Estrada, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Smart Sampling for Better Science: Cutting-edge Strategies for Designing and Analyzing Longitudinal Panel Data

Building trust in science and effectively combating health misinformation requires robust evidence on how attitudes and behaviors evolve over time. Longitudinal panel studies, which repeatedly collect data from the same individuals across multiple time points, are essential for understanding these dynamics, particularly in areas such as vaccine confidence, nutrition beliefs, and acceptance of evidence-based medicine. However, designing these studies poses critical challenges: when and how often should data be collected to capture meaningful change without overburdening participants or resources? This presentation introduces innovative sampling strategies and statistical modeling approaches that enhance the quality and interpretability of longitudinal research. We evaluate the performance of continuous-time Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Models (CT-RI-CLPM) using a Monte Carlo simulation based on previous empirical studies. Our findings demonstrate that thoughtful decisions about measurement intervals and sampling schedules can significantly improve model accuracy—often more than simply increasing sample size or the number of measurement waves. We introduce a novel type of sampling design: the Short-and-Long Lags schedule (SHALL), which combines frequent and infrequent measurements. Based on our findings, we offer actionable recommendations and open-source tools for researchers planning studies on psychological, educational, and health-related variables. By improving study design, we enable more reliable insights into how such phenomena change over time, while ensuring efficient use of research resources and reducing unnecessary costs. These advances create fertile ground for international collaboration. At this Forum, we aim to explore partnerships with African colleagues to co-develop shared protocols, coordinate joint data collection, and implement harmonized analytic frameworks. Such collaborations can accelerate African-European efforts to understand and counter health misinformation and other health-related psychological challenges, fostering impactful and sustainable scientific exchange.

Decolonising university museum collections

Tandem talks

Location : Room 3 : Salle Touria Chaoui - 26/03/2026, 09 :00 - 10 :30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Thalia Dragona, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)

Collective contribution

Dr. Anna Leshchenko - University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Dr. Annika Vosseler - University of Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Dr. Dorothy Sebbowa Kyagaba - Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Prof. Maia Wellington - Sapienza University of Rome, Rome (Italy)

University museums across Europe play an increasingly visible role in debates around colonial legacies, cultural restitution and ethical curatorship. Yet many of these institutions are staffed by academics rather than trained museum professionals, often lacking the curatorial expertise, resources, and frameworks needed to undertake provenance research and decolonial work in a sustainable way.

In this tandem talk, Dorothy Kyagaba (Uganda) and Annika Vosseler (Germany) reflect on the beginnings of a joint African-European initiative to co-develop practical guidelines for university-based curators. Rooted in the April 2025 Think Tank meeting in Tübingen and Stuttgart and supported by the CIVIS Alliance, this collaboration brings together scholars and practitioners from universities and museums in Uganda, Germany, and France. The project's starting point is the ethnological collection of the University of Tübingen - a site of shared inquiry into colonial entanglements, institutional blind spots, and the potential of co-curated knowledge.

This presentation offers an early-stage reflection on emerging African-European relations within the project, addressing both the frictions and the potential of joint problem-solving

It outlines a draft model for sustainable, scalable, and digitally inclusive provenance work in university museums - with the goal of supporting other institutions facing similar challenges across the CIVIS network and beyond

Questions for the audience

- What kinds of responsibility are needed between African and European institutions to transform heritage practices?
- How can universities become laboratories for just and inclusive provenance research that transcends academic hierarchies?

CIVIS Research Council face-to-face meeting
Workshop

Location: Room 4: Salle Habous - 26/03/2026, 09:00 - 10:30 (CET)

Toward equitable and transformative science partnerships: Which role for CIVIS?

Plenary

Location: Auditorium - 26/03/2026, 11:00 – 12:30 (CET)

Roundtable discussion

Dr. Samia Chasi, Head of the Internationalisation and Strategic Partnerships Office, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Prof. Mustapha Lkhider, Vice-President for Research and Partnerships, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Mary Ryan, International Research Development Manager, University of Glasgow, Glasgow (Scotland)

Prof. Fabio Sciarrino, Vice-Rector for Competitive Strategies for International Research, Sapienza University of Rome, Roma (Italy) tbc

Moderator: Christian Möllmann, CIVIS Global Partnerships Officer

On the significance of the Africa Charter for Transformative Research Collaborations

Prof. Isabella Aboderin, Director of the Perivoli Africa Research Institute - PARC, University of Bristol (United Kingdom)

CIVIS signs the Africa Charter: A look back and ahead

Prof. Estelle Doudet, Chair of the CIVIS Research Council, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

Signing ceremony

Prof. Stefan Lang, CIVIS Secretary General, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg (Austria)

Considering persistent socio-economic and power asymmetries within global scientific production, 'building equitable partnerships in an unequal world' (Zebulon Vilakazi) was the shared commitment underpinning African-European cooperation in CIVIS from the very beginning. But the concrete meaning of this principle remained rather implicit so far, its application to joint activities rather ad-hoc and intuitive.

The CIVIS Forum marks a step towards a more reflexive and systematic approach in fostering equity in and by our African-European partnership. With the signing of the Africa Charter for Transformative Research Collaborations, our alliance will join

an ambitious community of practice striving to change the role of Africa in knowledge production.

What are the main issues for equitable science partnerships? What could and should be the role of CIVIS in addressing those – in our own collaborations as well as in the research eco-systems of our home continents? How can the Africa Charter support such an effort? These questions will be addressed by the roundtable discussants and in the plenary.

All participants are invited to consult the Africa Charter:

<https://parc.bristol.ac.uk/africa-charter/>

Climate change and other challenges - building convergence through collaboration

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 26/03/2026, 14:00 - 15:30 (CET)

Session chair: Dr. Ute Schwaibold - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Individual contributions

Prof. Ismail Kone, University Peleforo Gon Coulibaly de Korogho (Ivory Coast)
Bridging African and European Approaches for Climate Finance Transparency and Sustainable Land Management

This contribution explores innovative pathways for strengthening African-European collaboration on climate finance transparency and sustainable land management. Drawing from Côte d'Ivoire's experience in implementing its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and revising its National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the presentation highlights lessons learned in designing Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems for climate finance. The Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT) in Côte d'Ivoire provides a case study of how practical methodologies—such as the Rio Marker system—can improve the tracking and accountability of climate-related funding. Beyond finance, the session addresses the intersection between sustainable land use, soil management, and resilience to climate change. Building on field experiences in northern Côte d'Ivoire, where farmers face soil degradation and climate-related losses, the contribution emphasizes the importance of integrating local knowledge with international frameworks. The discussion seeks to identify joint African-European solutions to climate and environmental challenges through capacity building, data transparency, and inclusive policy processes. By linking financial transparency with sustainable land management, this contribution demonstrates how cross-regional collaboration can support climate-resilient agricultural systems, sustainable cities, and effective adaptation strategies.

Ayda Farhati, University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)
Research dynamics and innovations in the circular economy of Li-ion batteries for electric vehicles

This study investigates circular economy strategies for lithium-ion batteries (LIBs) in electric vehicles (EVs), focusing on recycling and second-life applications. Combining bibliometric and patent analyses from 2015 to 2024, it examines both scientific trends and technological innovations. Bibliometric data from Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect reveal growing attention to sustainability frameworks, while patent data from Lens.org highlight engineering-driven advances in battery design, thermal management, and materials recovery. Cooccurrence mapping identifies emerging innovation clusters. By bridging academic insights and industrial practices, this study reveals a growing

convergence that informs sustainable battery lifecycle management and supports energy transition goals through reduced dependence on critical raw materials and enhanced resilience in electric mobility systems.

Dr. Célia das Elviras Ludovina Dgedge Melo, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Bioenergy in Mozambique: Potential of Sorghum and Castor Seeds for Sustainable Biofuels

Mozambique's energy sector relies heavily on bioenergy, particularly biomass, which dominates household energy consumption and contributes to environmental challenges like deforestation. This paper examines the current use of bioenergies, focusing on fuelwood, charcoal, bagasse, and residues, and analyzes associated greenhouse gas emissions. It identifies fuelwood as the primary bioenergy form and carbon dioxide (CO₂) as the gas with the highest direct emissions, though methane (CH₄) contributes significantly to CO₂-equivalent impacts. Correlations between bioenergy production/consumption and emissions highlight the need for sustainable practices. The potential of sorghum for ethanol and castor seeds for biodiesel is explored as alternatives, with projections indicating scalable production if yields are optimized. Drawing on FAO STAT data from 2011–2021, this study projects commodity outputs and biofuel yields, emphasizing their role in Mozambique's energy transition. Policies and technological advancements could enhance sustainability, reduce emissions, and support rural development, aligning with global renewable goals.

Questions for the audience

- How can we respond to the environmental and societal challenges posed by the climate crisis through transregional and interdisciplinary cooperation, between the Global North and the Global South?
- What lessons can be drawn from Côte d'Ivoire's NDC and NAP processes for cross-regional policy implementation?
- How can sustainable land use and soil management practices be scaled through African-European partnerships?
- What challenges do you see in scaling up sustainable management of EV batteries in your region or field?
- What are the main challenges in transitioning from traditional biomass like fuelwood and charcoal to sustainable biofuels such as ethanol from sorghum in Mozambique?
- What environmental and social benefits could arise from integrating castor seed biodiesel into Mozambique's energy transition strategy?
- How do correlations between bioenergy consumption and emissions highlight the need for sustainable practices in rural areas?
- What technological advancements, like efficient stoves or improved conversion efficiencies, are essential for making biofuels from sorghum and castor more viable?
- In what ways can Mozambique leverage its abundant land and water resources to become a leader in biofuel production in Africa?

Added-value collaboration between academic research&local stakeholders

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 26/03/2026, 14:00 - 15:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Stefan Lang, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)

Collective contribution

Dr. Lobna Boudaya - University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Mr. Zaahid Khan - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

PhD Khady Diallo - Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels (Belgium)

Mr. Djibril Mangane - Enda ECOPOP, Dakar (Senegal),

Dr. Lorenz Wendt - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)

Mr. Thierry De Coster - Ucoopia NGO / Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels (Belgium)

This panel proposes to analyse the specific contribution on of partnerships between African and European universities and civil society organizations (CSOs), including Ucoopia to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) within the framework of the climate, environment, and energy nexus. Coastal ecosystems, particularly mangroves and seagrass meadows, represent critical socio-ecological systems increasingly exposed to anthropogenic and climatic pressures. Universities generate robust analytical frameworks—ecological inventories, socio-ecological resilience assessments, climate impact modelling, and social science research—while CSOs/NGOs ensure the translation of such knowledge into practice, simultaneously providing empirical data and feedback that in turn stimulate new scientific questions.

This science–society interface constitutes research–action–transformation continuum, enabling the production of contextualized knowledge, testing its applicability, and informing public policies. Particular attention will be given to the importance of designing and financing projects in the areas of mitigation (emission reduction and carbon sink protection), adaptation (local capacity-building, economic and energy diversification), and compensation (loss and damage) when impacts are irreversible. By convening scholars and practitioners from environmental sciences, climate and geosciences, economics, law, public health (One Health), and education, the panel will illustrate the conditions under which Africa–Europe collaboration can foster transdisciplinary knowledge production, contribute to the energy transition, and strengthen both climate resilience and environmental governance.

Questions for the audience

- How can collaboration between universities and civil society organisations (CSOs) be strengthened to translate scientific research into concrete actions for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in Southern Mediterranean countries?

- Which participatory approaches and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) tools can best support co-management of coastal resources while integrating local knowledge and nature-based solutions?
- How can Africa–Europe cooperation enhance knowledge transfer, capacity building, and the establishment of sustainable governance models that balance conservation, development, and the blue economy?

Teaching complexity Through Real-World and Collaborative pedagogies Panel Discussion

Location: Room 3: Salle Touria Chaoui - 26/03/2026, 14:00 - 15:30 (CET)

Session chair : Prof. Maria Impedovo, Aix-Marseille University, Marseille (France)

Individual contributions

Dr. Anthony Tibaingana - Makere University, Kampala (Uganda)
EATIA Simulation games to teach polycrises

Prof. Gudrun Zagel - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)
Teaching complexity through Bruno Latour's compass: comparing applications in STEM and public policy education

Dr. Fanny SBARAGLIA & Dr. Denis TERWAGNE, Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels (Belgium)
Teaching complexity Through Real-World and Collaborative pedagogies

Prof. Fadma Ait Mous & Prof. Youness Ben Mouro - Université Hassan II de Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)
Teaching the complexity of migration in Morocco: Collaborative and experiential pedagogies in social challenges

Migration in Morocco embodies intricate social, cultural, and economic dynamics, from trans-Saharan routes to Mediterranean crossings and diasporic returns. This presentation explores innovative pedagogies for teaching these complexities in higher education, focusing on collaborative and experiential methods. Drawing on socio-anthropological frameworks, we examine classroom practices where students co-design projects with migrants, engage in fieldwork simulations, and participate in cross-cultural dialogues. These approaches foster critical thinking, empathy, and practical skills to address real-world social challenges like integration, identity, and policy gaps. By bridging theory and lived experience, such pedagogies empower future scholars and policymakers to navigate migration's multifaceted realities.

Collective proposal

This panel invites academics and practitioners across the CIVIS alliance to explore how higher education can better address the challenge of teaching complexity in a world marked by intertwined social, environmental, and political crises. It focuses on real-world, collaborative cases that allow students to engage directly with authentic societal, professional, and research problems through experiential, challenge-based, and partnership-oriented learning.

By connecting universities, public institutions, NGOs, and private organizations, such approaches create spaces for experimentation and mutual learning while confronting key barriers such as institutional rigidity, coordination with external stakeholders, and the evaluation of complex learning outcomes. Drawing on

experiences from CIVIS universities in Europe and Africa, the panel highlights how different cultural and institutional contexts shape ways of understanding and teaching complexity. It invites reflections on how educators can design learning environments that embrace uncertainty, foster interdisciplinary dialogue, and cultivate critical and ethical engagement with the challenges of the “polycrisis.” Ultimately, the session seeks to envision the university as a laboratory for collective experimentation, where the co-production of knowledge equips learners to navigate and transform complex realities.

Questions for the audience

- How can universities design learning environments that genuinely embrace uncertainty and complexity while remaining feasible within existing academic structures?
- In what ways can collaboration between universities, public institutions, NGOs, and private actors foster mutual learning and shared responsibility in addressing societal challenges?
- What pedagogical and ethical frameworks are needed to help students critically and creatively engage with the “polycrisis” and act as transformative agents in complex systems?

Heritage for the future: promoting best practices for preservation and promotion

Tandem talks

Location : Room 1 : Salle Fatema Mernissi - 26/03/2026, 16:00 –17:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Dorothee Kimmich, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Tübingen (Germany)

Individual contribution

Prof. Omar Lamghibchi - Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Innovative Approaches to Heritage Management: African-European University Collaboration for Sustainable Cultural Preservation

Heritage management is a central tool for preserving cultural identity while fostering sustainable development and social cohesion in increasingly multicultural societies. This contribution examines collaborative strategies between African and European universities for innovative and inclusive heritage management, integrating research, education, and community engagement. Drawing on case studies from Morocco and European partner institutions, the study highlights joint projects that combine historical research, participatory heritage programs, and pedagogical innovations. Digital documentation, adaptive management strategies, and community involvement are emphasized as mechanisms to strengthen local identity, encourage intercultural understanding, and promote inclusive decision-making in heritage governance. The contribution also addresses key challenges in cross-continental collaboration, including disparities in resources, policy differences, and the integration of modern technology with traditional knowledge systems. It proposes a framework for sustainable African-European heritage management partnerships that aligns research excellence with social impact, emphasizing participatory methods, knowledge exchange, and long-term capacity building. By examining these initiatives, the study demonstrates how universities can serve as proactive agents in heritage preservation, linking academic research with practical community outcomes. It underscores the potential of cross-regional collaboration to develop transferable models for inclusive heritage management, fostering dialogue between diverse communities while preserving local and global cultural heritage. Discussion points include: strategies to design inclusive heritage programs, methods to integrate community participation and digital tools, and approaches to measure the social and cultural impact of heritage initiatives on local communities.

Prof. Maria Soto - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

'From Shared Heritage to Shared Futures: African- European Cooperation in Archaeology and Education in Eastern Morocco'

Since 2006, the project “Evolution of Human Settlement Pattern Dynamics during the Quaternary in Eastern Morocco: Ain Beni Mathar – Guefaït (Jerada Province)” has exemplified Africa–Europe collaboration through sustained research

partnerships between Moroccan and Spanish institutions. The project integrates scientific investigation with societal engagement, addressing shared challenges of heritage preservation, education, and sustainable local development. Beyond its scientific goals of reconstructing settlement dynamics and paleoenvironmental contexts that contribute to a broader understanding of human adaptation across continents, the project has placed strong emphasis on community engagement, heritage valorization, and educational cooperation. This project highlights the initiatives connected to these social and educational dimensions. Local communities have actively participated in field surveys and excavations, contributing to the discovery, preservation, and promotion of their own heritage; public visits to archaeological sites and the University Museum of Archaeology and Heritage at Mohamed I University of Oujda have strengthened the sense of cultural ownership and awareness; and parallel activities include training sessions for teachers and the progressive creation of local interpretation centers in such as the recently created in Oujda, aimed at fostering cultural tourism and sustainable employment opportunities for youth, reinforcing transcontinental academic exchange and capacity building in archaeological research. By combining scientific excellence with inclusive societal engagement, this initiative illustrates how joint Africa–Europe cooperation can generate sustainable impact — transforming the study of the past into a shared resource for present and a tool for building inclusive and sustainable futures.

Collective contribution

Prof. Daniel Augusta Zacarias- Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Dr Bárbara Polo Martín - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Heritage for the Future: Promoting best practices for heritage preservation and promotion

Africa holds a rich and diverse cultural heritage, ranging from monuments and sacred landscapes to living traditions. Yet these assets face increasing threats from urbanization, climate change, conflict, and limited public awareness. In many contexts, heritage is undervalued or excluded from development agendas, leading to erosion of identity and weakening of social cohesion. The Heritage for the Future project responds to these challenges by promoting sustainable, community-led strategies for heritage preservation, with a pilot focus on Mozambique. It positions heritage not only as a legacy to be safeguarded, but as a driver of education, social resilience, and inclusive development. The project is rooted in collaboration between CIVIS universities and African partners, integrating expertise in conservation, digital heritage, citizen science, and participatory governance. Key activities include participatory mapping of cultural sites and practices, capacity-building workshops in Maputo and Madrid, educational initiatives embedding heritage in curricula, the creation of a digital heritage archive, and international exchanges between African and European researchers. These activities actively engage youth and women, reinforcing cultural identity while building local capacity.

The expected outcomes are strengthened community stewardship, greater visibility of Mozambiquean heritage, enhanced intercultural dialogue, and

pathways for sustainable tourism that respect cultural values. By integrating heritage into digital platforms and educational practices, the initiative will foster equitable access to knowledge, while also building local digital literacy capacities. Beyond the immediate implementation, it aims to establish a transcontinental research group, maintain shared digital platforms, and foster long-term collaboration under EU–Africa frameworks. By connecting local knowledge with international expertise, the project offers a replicable model for community-based heritage preservation. It contributes to CIVIS objectives by addressing global societal challenges, promoting interdisciplinary cooperation, and creating inclusive, durable solutions.

Questions for the audience

- How can community-led approaches ensure both authenticity and sustainability in heritage preservation? What role should digital tools play in protecting intangible cultural heritage (e.g., oral traditions, rituals)?
- How can African–European partnerships best balance knowledge exchange, avoiding asymmetries of power?
- In what ways can heritage initiatives contribute to broader goals such as youth engagement and social cohesion?

Language beyond learning

Tandem talks

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 26/03/2026, 16:00 - 17:30 (CET)

Session chair : Prof. Nabila Louriz, Université Hassan II de Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Individual contribution

Dr. Elena Pérez Hernandez, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
EducamosContigo: A Digital Accompaniment Model for Developing Transversal Competences and Promoting Social Equity in Higher Education

EducamosContigo is an innovative telematic educational programme that combines formal, non-formal, and informal learning to foster transversal competences among university students, while offering online academic accompaniment to adolescents in vulnerable situations. Grounded in Kolb's experiential learning theory (1985, 2015), Engeström's activity theory (2001), and Navarro and Tudge's neoecological approach (2023), the programme promotes reflective practice, teamwork, and ethical engagement through guided supervision by education professionals. Each semester, more than 140 students from different disciplines dedicate three hours per week to activities integrating telematic accompaniment, online training, and online group supervision. Preliminary evaluations of EducamosContigo indicate that participation in this university-led telematic accompaniment programme fosters the development of transversal competences such as collaboration, team work, and listening skills, while contributing to social inclusion through digital support for vulnerable adolescents. Recent analyses of students' learning portfolios (Cajavilca, Cerrillo, & Pérez-Hernández, 2025) provide empirical evidence of critical digital literacy as a key driver of personalised learning within the programme. The study identified an internalisation of critical reflection on issues such as digital divide the social impact of ICT, and misinformation, underscoring how EducamosContigo promotes a progressive and situated understanding of students' own learning practices. These findings align with earlier research highlighting the programme's pedagogical innovation and its role in strengthening professional competences in real contexts (Muñoz Teno et al., 2024). Given the shared educational challenges across Europe and Africa, particularly regarding the digital divide and youth inclusion, EducamosContigo offers a transferable model for equitable digital education. Its design could be adapted for intercontinental collaboration among higher education institutions to strengthen their training capacities and social contribution.

Collective contribution

Prof. Maria Iakovou- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, (Greece)

Prof. Thalia Dragona - National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, (Greece)

Dr. Resty Naiga - Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Since 2015, Greece has served as the main entry point for displaced populations fleeing war, violence, persecution, and destitution. National social inclusion policies

towards refugees and migrants have oscillated between discourses of assimilation and exclusion, reflecting broader social tensions. Similar discourses on social inclusion as well as monoculturalism versus multiculturalism have long characterized attitudes towards the only officially recognized Muslim minority in northeastern Greece. Uganda, on the other hand, is the world's third-largest refugee-hosting country, currently sheltering over 1.7 million refugees in need for a refugee self-reliance model having far-reaching implications for social cohesion among refugee and local communities due to rising conflicts over water and land. In both Greece and Uganda, language constitutes a central barrier to inclusion, mediating relations between the populations in question and local communities and often determining the degree of participation and belonging.

Across both contexts, there is a growing need to design, implement, and evaluate interventions that integrate language into real-life social practices, thereby enhancing participants' capacity to navigate complex sociopolitical realities. This tandem talk positions language as a social practice intertwined with identity, agency and participation rather than as a mere communication tool. Drawing on principles of Collaborative Action Research, case studies from Greece and Uganda, involving refugees, migrants and ethnic minorities explores how participatory, research-informed interventions can transcend linguistic barriers to foster inclusion and empowerment. They illustrate how embedding language learning in authentic, community-oriented contexts enhances knowledge co-construction, intercultural understanding and critical consciousness. A methodological framework is presented redefining language as a catalyst for social change and transformation under conditions of displacement, conflict and exclusion. This work further demonstrates how participatory approaches can effectively bridge academic theory and social practice.

Dr. Aránzazu Gil Casadomet- Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Dr. Hafissatou Kane, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Dakar (Senegal)
Cognitive and Applied Linguistic Research Group

In recent decades, it has generally been observed that the field of linguistics has grown rapidly in terms of the number of papers published every year, the topics examined, and the emergence of new theories, approaches, methodologies, and perspectives, as a result of its increasing intersections with other disciplines and the real world (Yan and Zhang, 2023). The same authors identified the most frequently explored topics through corpus analysis and manual checking, divided into multilingualism, language teaching and learning, psychopathology, cognitive linguistics, methods and tools. Topics such as bilingualism/multilingualism, translanguaging, language / writing development, models, emotions, foreign language enjoyment (FLE), cognition, and anxiety are among the most frequently explored. However, it is commonly observed that linguistic research at the University of Dakar, and more generally, at the other Senegalese universities, has not investigated many areas. Therefore, the present project aims to introduce new fields of linguistics to help fill a gap in the current linguistic curriculum, encourage research-led teaching and enhance the faculty's innovation and international visibility. To this end, we propose establishing a research group called the "Research Group on Cognitive and Applied Linguistics", organised around three

themes: (1) cognitive and psycholinguistic approaches, (2) corpus and digital linguistics; and (3) multilingualism and second language acquisition. The project's primarily objective is to gradually integrate teaching by proposing special topics or optional modules (Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics or Corpus Methods for Linguistics), incorporating components of these fields into existing courses, and supervising student projects. The project also plans to build internal and external alliances. The group will collaborate with colleagues in related fields to demonstrate how cognitive or corpus methods can complement their work. It will also seek external partnerships, primarily with CIVIS university members, research groups, and networks, to organise joint workshops and short-term exchanges, involving students and young researchers.

Equity and Inclusion in African–European Knowledge Partnerships

Tandem talks

Location: Room 3 : Salle Touria Chaoui - 26/03/2026, 16 :00 – 17 :30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Manuel Guilherme Júnior, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Dr. Ute Schwaibold - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Prof. Jussi Griebinger - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)

Prof. Gudrun Zagel - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Salzburg (Austria)

Prof. Yazidhi Bamutaze- Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Equity and Inclusion in African–European Knowledge Partnerships

This tandem talk series brings together researchers from African and European CIVIS partner universities to reflect on how equity and inclusion can be deepened within Africa–Europe knowledge partnerships. Drawing on their experiences from various cross-continental collaborations, the speakers examine what it means to engage in genuinely reciprocal and context-sensitive academic cooperation.

The session explores how initiatives in curriculum co-development, participatory and community-based research, digital inclusion, and the integration of local knowledge systems can foster more equitable forms of collaboration. Each contribution offers insights from practical experiences in transregional projects, highlighting both opportunities and tensions in navigating differences in resources, institutional cultures, and epistemic traditions. Together, these reflections aim to articulate principles and practices for co-creating knowledge that is not only globally relevant but locally grounded. By situating inclusion, mutual respect, and epistemic justice at the centre of academic partnership, the session contributes to reimagining how African and European universities can collaborate in more ethical and sustainable ways.

Dr. Zawadi Mageni Mboma- Ifakara Health Institute, Ifakara (Tanzania)

Mary Ryan, University of Glasgow, Glasgow (Scotland)

Learning, unlearning and relearning

Equitable partnership is critical for funders and partners seeking fairer ways of working, with its importance reflected in the high volume of guidance produced by various stakeholders. Most of this guidance tends to be framed around principles of best practice while omitting day-to-day practical elements as well as the trickier question of whose practice is best. Practical barriers to equitable international partnership manifest in many ways, from financial processes, funder regulations, and legal differences to differences in institutional capacity that range from research support to infrastructure. While some barriers are structural and are not

within the power of institutions to change, there are many opportunities for institutions to enhance equity in international collaboration and

therefore, mitigate against some of the structural issues. Through enhanced understanding of the practical barriers to equitable partnership and working collaboratively to identify contextually relevant solutions, institutions can ensure their partnerships are more equitable and resilient.

This presentation will draw on two decades of learning, unlearning and relearning between the University of Glasgow in Scotland and Ifakara Health Institute in Tanzania. The session will highlight how these institutions have worked together to address the messy practicalities of equitable partnership, leading to enhanced connectivity. Attendees will gain insights into how to operationalize equity, particularly in Global South-Global North collaborations and hear about the mutual benefits for institutions that navigate challenges of equitable partnership together.

Preparedness and adaptability in Global Health

Tandem talks

Location: Room 4: Salle Habous - 26/03/2026, 16:00 - 17:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Susanna Guerra, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Individual Contributions

Dr. Naeema Huseein EL Kout Ahmad Ramadan, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Integrating Rehabilitation and Disability Inclusion into Pandemic Preparedness: Towards Equitable Global Health Systems

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed critical inequities in global health preparedness, particularly for persons with disabilities and those requiring ongoing rehabilitation. While international frameworks such as the International Health Regulations (IHR) and Joint External Evaluations (JEE) have advanced surveillance and emergency response, they continue to overlook rehabilitation as an essential health service. This gap perpetuates exclusion and limits recovery capacity, especially in low- and middle-income countries. This tandem presentation by Dr. Naeema Ahmad Ramadan Hussein El Kout (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) and Prof. Antoni Plasència (ISGlobal, University of Barcelona, Spain) explores how disability-inclusive rehabilitation can strengthen pandemic preparedness and response within African and European health systems. Drawing on findings from our joint comparative analysis of international monitoring and evaluation frameworks, we highlight how the absence of rehabilitation indicators undermines resilience and equity during health crises. The talk integrates perspectives from health policy, rehabilitation science, and implementation research to propose a new conceptual model for “Inclusive Pandemic Preparedness.” This model embeds rehabilitation and disability considerations across prevention, response, and recovery phases—aligning with the principles of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through case studies from South Africa and Spain, we demonstrate the potential for cross-regional learning, data-sharing, and co-creation of adaptable policy tools. Our collaboration underscores the CIVIS mission to advance joint solutions for joint challenges through equitable partnerships between Africa and Europe. We will conclude with actionable recommendations, including: Integrating rehabilitation and disability metrics into preparedness assessments; Building interdisciplinary training modules for global health professionals; and establishing an Africa–Europe CIVIS research network on Rehabilitation in Health Emergencies. By bridging policy, science, and practice, this presentation aims to reposition rehabilitation not as a post-crisis afterthought but as a foundational component of resilient, inclusive global health systems.

Collective Contribution

Dr. Sarah Demart, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels (Belgium)

Prof. Ben Bepouka, University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Dr. Dieudonne Tawaba , University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Impact of reduced US funding on the HIV response among refugees, displaced persons, and returnees: what challenges for sustainability and preparedness for future viral epidemics? The case of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

This tandem talk explores new avenues to face the challenge of US fundings withdraw from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is based on a strong collaboration between the infectious and tropical diseases department of the Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) and the Observatory of aids and sexuality from the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB). From an interdisciplinary research protocol joining together medical sciences (UNIKIN) and humanities and social sciences (ULB), our KinPrEP project (2023-25, ARES funding) has explored the missed opportunities of PrEP within migration. Among them the fact that prevention programs are poorly available for refugees, displaced persons, and returnees. The Eastern part of the (DRC) faces chronic instability marked by armed conflict which engenders not only mass displacement but also weaken health structures. Furthermore, HIV prevention's interventions rely heavily on funding from the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and USAID. The announced reduction in this funding jeopardizes the continuity of testing, treatment, and prevention services in humanitarian areas. To mitigate these risks, it is urgent to reflect on approaches enabling us to preserve the gains made in the fight against HIV and strengthen health preparedness in fragile cross-border areas. From our findings, will discuss the possibilities for operationalizing four areas of action: (1) integrate new-generation diagnostic tools (4th generation rapid tests, portable GeneXpert platforms, m-PIMA) to ensure decentralized screening that can be adapted to other viral epidemics; (2) further decentralize care through self-support groups (SSGs); (3) strengthen the community leadership of refugee associations in awareness-raising and monitoring; and (4) diversify funding sources by mobilizing local, private, and humanitarian partners.

Exploring opportunities and challenges of AI in research and teaching in Europe -Africa Alliance Panel Discussion

Location: Room 1: Salle Fatema Mernissi - 27/03/2026, 09:00 - 10:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Chafik Aloulou, University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)

Individual contributions

Prof. Mohamed Adam Alimi- University of Carthage, Carthage (Tunisia)
SocrAltes: Combining Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence to Foster Meaningful Dialogue

SocrAltes is a project that combines philosophy and artificial intelligence to create spaces for meaningful and ethical dialogue. Inspired by the Socratic method, it uses AI not as a replacement for human interaction, but as a companion that encourages people to reflect on questions of identity, ethics, and human values in a digital setting. The idea grew out of my background as an engineering student working on AI in healthcare and education, and my involvement in the Sophia Philosophy Club, where we explore how philosophy can guide everyday life. By bringing these experiences together, SocrAltes shows how digital tools can do more than provide information—they can nurture critical thinking, intercultural understanding, and ethical awareness. At the CIVIS Forum, I hope to present the concept behind SocrAltes, share early prototypes, and open a discussion with participants on how we can design AI systems that truly support human dialogue. I am also eager to explore how African and European universities can work together to develop inclusive and culturally sensitive AI tools that enrich education and strengthen public trust in technology. This contribution fits within HUB 5: Digital and Technological Change, while also touching on HUB 2: Society, Culture, Heritage, by highlighting the role of AI in fostering dialogue across cultures and communities.

Prof. Adel Alimi- University of Sfax, Sfax (Tunisia)
Building Trustworthy AI for Health: African-European Co-Design of Ethical, Inclusive, and Epidemic-Ready Diagnostic Systems

The THUNDER project—funded under Horizon Europe's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions—embodies a pioneering African-European partnership to co-develop trustworthy, frugal, and context-sensitive AI for healthcare, directly addressing three critical challenges highlighted by the CIVIS Forum. First, by generating privacy-preserving synthetic clinical and omics data through knowledge-guided generative models (e.g., RAG-augmented LLMs fine-tuned on sepsis literature), THUNDER enhances epidemic preparedness in under-resourced and cross-border settings where real patient data is scarce or siloed. Second, to combat health misinformation and rebuild public trust, the project embeds explainability, fairness, and clinical validation into every stage of AI development—ensuring that diagnostic tools are not only accurate but also

interpretable by clinicians and acceptable to diverse communities. Third, THUNDER operationalizes ethical AI co-design through a transcontinental consortium that includes academic institutions (e.g., ENIS in Tunisia, UVSQ in France), hospitals (AP-HP, LMU, FIISC), SMEs (B&AI, REVELIA), and legal experts (University of Vienna). This structure guarantees that AI solutions respect both GDPR and African data sovereignty frameworks while integrating local clinical workflows and cultural contexts. Central to THUNDER's approach is the development of frugal-by-design machine learning models—leveraging techniques like few-shot learning, neural architecture search (NAS), and spiking neural networks (SNNs)—to ensure deployability even in low-infrastructure environments. All outputs are iteratively validated through real-world sepsis use cases, with a focus on corticosteroid sensitivity prediction, biomarker discovery, and equitable patient profiling. By uniting African and European expertise in AI, medicine, ethics, and policy, THUNDER offers a replicable model for joint, equitable, and socially robust innovation—turning the vision of “From Joint Challenges to Joint Solutions” into actionable reality.

Collective Contribution

Prof. Emmanuel Ojo, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Prof. Dimitris Katsianis, Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)

Dr. Ruth Cobos, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Dr. Rose Nakasi, Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda)

Exploring Opportunities and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in Research and Teaching in the Europe– Africa Alliance

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming research and teaching practices across the globe. The Europe– Africa Alliance presents a unique context for exploring how AI can enhance academic collaboration, knowledge exchange, and innovative pedagogical approaches across diverse cultural and institutional landscapes.

This panel discussion aims to examine the opportunities and challenges associated with integrating AI into research and teaching within the Alliance. Key opportunities include fostering cross- continental collaboration, improving data-driven research methodologies, and enhancing personalized learning experiences. However, challenges such as unequal access to AI technologies, ethical considerations, and differences in digital infrastructure must be carefully addressed. By addressing these aspects, the panel seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how AI can be leveraged responsibly and effectively to strengthen research and education partnerships between Europe and Africa, ultimately contributing to sustainable academic development and innovation.

Questions for the audience

- What are examples of AI-enhanced teaching practices that could be scaled across universities in the Alliance?
- How can we address unequal access to AI tools, data, and computational resources across regions?
- In what ways can AI transform research methodologies across disciplines?

- How do we prepare the next generation of scholars for an AI-driven research and teaching environment?

Participatory action research in vulnerable contexts: a trans-continental perspective

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 27/03/2026, 09:00 - 10:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Gudrun Zagel, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, (Austria)

Individual contributions

Dr. Fadma Ait Mouss, Hassan II University of Casablanca, (Morocco)

Dr. Mouni Kheirallah, Hassan II University of Casablanca, (Morocco)

Beyond the 'Vulnerable': Re-shaping Disability Narratives through Emancipatory Research in Moroccan Contexts

This presentation critically interrogates the dominant use of "vulnerability" in policy, development, and academic discourses on disability, arguing that the label obscures structural violence by framing disadvantage as inherent rather than socially produced. Drawing on critical disability studies and an emancipatory research paradigm, the study re-frames disability in Marrakech as a socio-political construct sustained by institutional practices and normative assumptions. Based on 39 narrative interviews, the analysis demonstrates how disablement is systematically manufactured across education, labour, and technology. Inclusive education often reproduces normalization by requiring individuals to adapt to rigid systems; labor markets channel disabled bodies into informality or symbolic public employment; and digital technologies function as a double-edged tool, constrained by stigma and material inequality. The paper concludes that meaningful inclusion requires dismantling the structural "fabric of normality," not merely expanding legal or technical interventions.

Dr. Quiteria Martins Mabasso, - Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique) -

Eduardo Mondlane University main campus: my space.

Maputo is the capital of Mozambique and a fast-growing city. This growth challenges Eduardo Mondlane University, the oldest and largest public higher education institution in Mozambique, to consider the role it plays in the development of the city. The university geographic location puts it at the intersection of urban development, social justice and community. In order to understand the pressing and complex process of urban development and gentrification the university, in collaboration with some CIVIS partners, is conducting a study that aims to examine the complexities the Eduardo Mondlane University campus faces as a boundary between districts in the city of Maputo with very different socio-economic realities. Through interviews including geographical mapping and other collaborative tools, we will examine how adolescents from poorer districts make use of the campus and the tensions and the contradictions it generates in the local community. The project will co-design with participating youth an expressive/artistic intervention in the campus aimed at making visible these practices and appropriations and to start a discussion between the different social groups that in practice inhabit the EMU campus.

Dr. David Poveda- Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)
Arts-based collaborative devices with at-risk youth: An example from an OL Project in Madrid.

This presentation focuses on the methodological opportunities and practical challenges of using sensorial and arts-based collaborative research methods with young people at -social-risk. We draw on the experiences of an ongoing CIVIS Open Lab project in Madrid centered in understanding processes of urban inclusion/exclusion of youth at-social-risk in a heavily gentrified neighbourhood of central Madrid. During several months we have worked with youth in a documentation and intervention process drawing on performative devices, plastic arts, visual methods, walking methodologies and sound scaping techniques. We discuss the uptake and affordances of various techniques and highlight issues of use and implementation that might be relevant to projects across contexts with similar populations.

Dr. Nabila Louriz & Phd Student Fatima Zahra El Balrhi, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)
Heritage languages of Sub-Saharan migrant children in Morocco

Migration within Africa is a widespread phenomenon driven by social, economic, and political factors, with effects that extend across multiple domains, one of which is language development. The increase in Sub-Saharan migration to Morocco leads to new and interesting language contact situation. This research explores the dynamics of heritage language maintenance among migrant children, specifically focusing on South-to-South flow toward Morocco. The study examines how children of Sub-Saharan migrants navigate the intersection of their mother tongues, such as Wolof, Lingala, Kikongo, or Bambara, with Moroccan Arabic as the dominant language. By examining the status of the mother tongue in the diaspora, the research sheds light on how migration acts as a driver for linguistic change. It investigates the factors that support or hinder the transmission of heritage languages across generations, which results in language maintenance or attrition. Understanding these dynamics is crucial, as the maintenance of a heritage language plays a pivotal role in a child's cognitive development and their ability to navigate a complex, multi-layered linguistic identity.

Collective contributions

Dr. Fadma Ait Mous, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Dr. David Poveda, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Dr. Philia Issari, Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou and pyridoula Tsoukala, National and Kapodistrian University of Athenes, Athenes (Greece)

Dr. Viorel Mihăilă, Mălina Voicu and Raluca Dinescu, University of Bucharest, Bucarest (Romania)

Dr. Nabila Louriz, University of Hassan II Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Dr. Martins Mabasso Quitéria, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique)

Participatory Action Research in Vulnerable Contexts: A Trans-Continental Perspective

This roundtable session we showcase ongoing research projects that build on a collaborative and participatory perspective to address the needs of social groups and individuals often categorized as "vulnerable" within existing policies and discussions of social needs. Collaborative projects may work with migrant populations, the elderly, individuals with special needs and/or children, youth and families at-social-risk, among other target populations. The session adopts an intercontinental perspective and gathers work conducted within European and African CIVIS universities.

The goals of the roundtable are threefold:

- Present and discuss the collaborative research infrastructures and resources developed by different research teams within the CIVIS alliance in Europe and Africa.
- Critically examine the collaborative research devices deployed in different contexts, reflexively discussing challenges and opportunities in their implementation under various material conditions.
- Critically discuss "vulnerability" as a socio-political construct and the role of participatory research in re-shaping underlying assumptions in the constellation of labels and concepts that surround "vulnerability."

Questions for the audience

- How to make the Campus friendly for under privileged young people in the surroundings?
- What type of collaborative infrastructures have teams developed across contexts?
- What affordances and challenges emerge when working through these devices with vulnerable populations?
- How the concept of "vulnerability" operationalized (in practice and theory) in your local context?
- What dimensions of the definition of "vulnerability" should be revised?

Decolonising African-European academic partnerships

Panel Discussion

Location : Room 3 : Salle Touria Chaoui - 27/03/2026, 09 :00 - 10 :30 (CET)

Session chair: Dr Dinesh Balliah, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Individual contributions

Dr. Leila Mouhib, Université libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles (Belgium)

Teaching as Resistance: towards an abolitionist and decolonial praxis in university education

In this presentation, I argue that as universities in the Global North remain embedded in structures of racial capitalism, and reproduce colonial hierarchies and whiteness, any attempt to challenge these oppressive structures must be grounded in a decolonial abolitionist praxis. Moving beyond the nonperformative institutional rhetoric of diversity, this praxis is political and radical, anti-racist and decolonial, collective and relational, and directed to transformative practices and abolitionist futurities. It draws on and honors the long history of resistance to the oppressive structures of knowledge, and calls for the dismantling of oppressive academic structures, colonial curriculum and hierarchical pedagogies. Through a focus on curriculum and pedagogy, I explore how teaching can contribute to the development of pockets of resistance inside the neoliberal university and to the broader reimagining of abolitionist futures in higher education. I reflect on some experiences, including curriculum transformation, student engagement practices, and pedagogical experiments in international relations.

Prof. Sara Benbelli, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Decolonising Knowledge through Situated Pedagogies: Fieldwork, Care, and Co-Learning from the South

This contribution presents an experiment in decolonising higher education through situated pedagogies that link teaching, research, and care. Conducted within the Department of Sociology at the Université Hassan II in Casablanca, this approach emerges from collective field experiences developed both in urban and rural Morocco. These immersive pedagogical retreats invite students to co-produce research questions with local actors—women, elders, and youth—thus breaking with extractivist academic logics. The body, emotions, and collective rhythms of daily life become epistemic resources that open new ways of understanding vulnerability, solidarity, and resilience. Drawing on feminist and decolonial epistemologies, this practice challenges Eurocentric hierarchies of expertise and the assumption that knowledge flows from North to South. However, this process also reveals deeper asymmetries within global academia. Access to the field itself—its resources, infrastructures, and legitimacy - is unequally distributed. While researchers from the North circulate with relative ease between continents, many scholars and students from the South face structural barriers to mobility, funding, and recognition. These inequalities not only determine who can move and observe, but also whose knowledge counts, whose experiences are publishable, and who is authorised to “represent” the field. By cultivating reciprocity, embodied learning,

and care-based relationships, these field experiences form what I call communities of learning and repair. They propose an African-centered pedagogy that resists epistemic extraction and invites European partners to rethink collaboration - not as a transfer of expertise, but as a shared, situated process of mutual transformation.

Dr. Ghaliya Nadjat Djelloul, University of Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)
*Institutional Emotional Racework and Structural Racism in the CIVIS Alliance:
Reflections from the BruLau Program*

As the coordinator of a CIVIS Blended Intensive Program (BIP) in gender studies titled *BruLau*, I have observed how CIVIS regulations, forms, and procedures often reproduce structural racism toward African partners—both scholars and students. My contribution to this panel will therefore address the key issues at stake, from the conception to the implementation of the project, and from communication strategies to participant selection processes. It will also reflect on the modes of collaboration and teaching enabled—or limited—by the CIVIS Alliance framework. The aim of this presentation is to shed light on the institutional layers of discrimination that hinder the creation of epistemic justice within international university networks. By analyzing the structural dynamics that shape who participate, how knowledge circulates, and whose standards are legitimized, I seek to contribute to a broader reflection on what a truly *global civic university alliance* might look like—one that does not reproduce historical asymmetries but instead fosters mutual learning and equitable knowledge production, through the acknowledgment and critical engagement with emotional racework within institutional spaces

Prof. Odome Angone Ferdulis Zita, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Dakar (Senegal)
Provincializing academic knowledge: the university, a machine for depoliticizing discourse?

From childhood, we internalize through conditioning that the frames of reference associated with the current educational system are the guarantors of knowledge with a "universal" vocation. Consequently, any epistemic contribution outside of institutional channels, on the margins of the official canon, is alternately relegated to the category of the derisory or to the periphery of the superfluous, in the name of a questionable postulate according to which any knowledge not recognized by scientific validation circuits has only apocryphal value. To this end, for more than ten years, I have been reflecting on the structural mechanisms that render invisible epistemologies seeking legitimacy, diminished within the canon. Many of us in the worlds of the "Global South," and more particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, have grown up with a diet of images, texts, signs, sounds, and meanings from elsewhere. Amidst these eclectic influences, one might wonder what happens when we tell our own stories or develop our own bodies of work, from an endogenous prism. My contribution is part of a spirit of sharing experiences on my teaching methodology forged by a transversal, inclusive, rhizomatic and inter-epistemic reading grid in a university context where the colonial legacy of the academic canon in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa continues to marginalize endogenous knowledge by taking up the tropes of a narrative punctuated by self-flagellation. The reflection is,

among other things, a summative self-assessment, in this case an intimate experience of uprooting, between the quest for (re)cognition, epistemic justice, cognitive activism and self-questioning. In light of the above, I expressly choose to present my communication, involving my subjectivity at the intersection of politics and science, aware that all knowledge is situated, even if the rhetoric of the impersonal, common in academia, imposes itself as a screen of neutrality. Keywords: Epistemic justice, endogenous knowledge, epistemical violence, Decolonial approaches.

Francesca Renda, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Can an art-based school change eurocentric perspective?

In the West, starting in the 1990s, with the emergence of participatory artistic practices, people began to talk about an “educational turn”, i.e. the possibility of art acting as a bridge between experts in the field and the public, artists and participants, institutions and citizens, through the horizontal transmission of knowledge. This thesis, theorised by Irit Rogoff (2008) among others, saw enormous growth in 2010, a historical period also marked by the first large-scale mass migrations from Africa and the Middle East to Europe. Participatory educational practices thus took on a more social, activist and, in some respects, political form. Maria Do Mar Castro Varela noted how “in a post-colonial world, even after formal decolonisation, a feudal education system prevails” (2016). This is what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has called “epistemic violence” (2016) and Anibal Quijano “el sistema modernidad/racionalidad” europeo (1991). All these theories shed light on how, after decolonisation, the main reference point and producer of knowledge is still Europe, which in this sense distances and diminishes knowledge from other non-Western countries, creating a paradigm of identification between Europe and knowledge itself. For this reason, we will analyse some case studies, the so-called “mobile academies” that have been set up in various European cities in recent years: The Silent University, by Ahmet Ögüt (2011-ongoing); Para-site School, by Felipe Castelblanco (2010-ongoing) and School of Integration by Tania Bruguera (2019). These mobile academies, which use art as a planning methodology, bring together knowledge from outside Europe through the active participation of migrant communities in the area, with a horizontal and anti-hierarchical approach. Their aim is to create micro-fractures within cultural institutions to demonstrate the gaps that exist, as well as to offer a space for sharing that is accessible to migrants, who are often marginalised by educational institutions because of their nationality.

Collective contribution

Dr. Leila Mouhib, Université libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles (Belgium)

Prof. Sara Benbelli, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Dr. Nadjat Djelloul, University of Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)

Prof. Odome Angone Ferdulis Zita, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Dakar (Senegal)

Decolonizing African-European Academic Collaborations: Cognitive Extractivism, Institutional Racism and Epistemic Justice

This panel examines how institutional racism and Eurocentric frameworks continue to shape African–European collaborations in research and higher education, and how they can be transformed through decolonial approaches. While initiatives such as CIVIS seek to promote inclusive partnerships, structural inequalities persist in the rules governing mobility, funding, recruitment, and pedagogy. Seemingly neutral notions like academic excellence often reproduce exclusionary standards that privilege specific trajectories of life and knowledge. Each participant draws on her positionality and experience within African and European universities to expose the epistemological injustices embedded in these institutional practices. Ghaliya Djelloul (Université de Lausanne) analyzes CIVIS's Blended Intensive Program BruLau to show how its regulations reinforce asymmetries through limited intra-European mobility, imposed recruitment formats, and narrow definitions of scientific standards, a process she conceptualizes as institutional emotional racework. Odome Angone (Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar) examines cognitive extractivism between European and African institutions and presents alternative recruitment models from Dakar's Decolonial Doctoral School to inspire fairer CIVIS frameworks. Leila Mouhib (Université Libre de Bruxelles) revisits the colonial ghost of the mission civilisatrice that haunts alliances like CIVIS if they fail to decolonize curricula and pedagogical practices. Drawing on her teaching of international relations, she highlights Eurocentric assumptions and strategies to challenge them. Sana Benbelli (Université de Casablanca) concludes on the need for epistemological decolonization embodied through methodological practices, showing how race, nationality, and class shape access to fieldwork and research. The panel argues that genuine African–European partnerships require both resources and a radical shift in European perspectives: not extracting from Africa while pretending to educate it, but learning with and from it. By weaving experiences from North and South, the panel explores obstacles to decolonial collaboration while highlighting creative strategies already in place.

Questions for the audience

- How do "neutral" standards such as academic excellence, and routine administrative processes, reproduce structural inequalities in African–European collaborations?
- What alternative recruitment and pedagogical practices can CIVIS adopt to foster inclusivity?
- How can African experiences and innovations inspire European institutions to rethink scientific partnerships ethics?

Cultural heritage and housing: protection, safeguarding, and belonging

Tandem talks

Location: Room 1 : Salle Fatema Mernissi - 27/03/2026, 11:00 – 12:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Omar Lamghibchi, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Greta Maiellaro, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens (Greece)

Dr. Christoph Munasighe, University of Milan, Milan (Italy)

The challenges of the recognition of kafalah (islamic system of foster care) in the European Union

The Islamic institution of kafālah represents an alternative form of protection for minors who lack adequate parental care. While distinct from traditional adoption and domestic foster care, it shares their essential protective function. This contribution addresses the complex issues raised by its cross-border recognition at the intersection of private international law, family law, and migration law within the European context. This work provides an original contribution through a comparative and interdisciplinary approach. By deeply analyzing Italian jurisprudence - an experience often overlooked in favor of the French model - it assesses how domestic courts have successfully balanced the cultural specificity of kafālah against the imperatives of public policy (ordre public) and the fundamental principle of the child's best interests. The contribution is structured around four aspects: the first introduces Islamic law and the principles of kafālah in Muslim-majority countries; the second compares it with foster care and adoption in Global North countries; the third examines the international and European legal framework, including the approach of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) on entry and family reunification; the fourth, finally, analyzes Italian state practice and its unique balance between assimilation to "affidamento" (foster care) and clear distinction from adoption. The central argument is that, although kafālah does not establish a legal parent-child relationship, it can and should be recognized as an effective protection tool within the Italian and European legal systems. Interpreted through a functional, intercultural, and child-centered perspective, kafālah ensures social integration and respect for the minor's fundamental rights, serving as a model for inter-cultural law in practice. The analysis also underscores the importance of accompanying such recognition with robust legal safeguards to mitigate the risks of exploitation and human trafficking.

Prof. Sanaa Hassab, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Dr. Irina Balotescu, University of Bucharest, Bucharest (Romania)

Dynamics of cultural heritage: entities engaged in the protection, safeguarding, and transmission of cultural values in Morocco and Romania

Morocco and Romania, as signatories of various UNESCO conventions on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, have made constant efforts to update their implementation. Beyond the binding international frameworks, there is an increasing concern for the specific values of both countries, especially as the

balance between maintaining multiple forms of identity (regional, national, local, cultural, etc.) and the need for integrative approaches that counter all forms of discrimination remains a sensitive issue. Local communities, as well as the overall population within state borders, migrant groups and communities, together with all representative elements of tangible heritage, are increasingly exposed to the consequences of climate and environmental degradation, natural disasters, armed conflicts, and the reduced predictability of stability and quality of life. In this context, a gap often emerges between factual reality, authoritative discourse (governance, education, research), and decision-making related to cultural heritage. Bottom-up and top-down solutions, as well as nuanced approaches that place cultural heritage at the center of interest, involve entities with either well-defined or rather vague roles in its protection, conservation, and transmission. We therefore aim to draw attention to and question the ways in which, at present, scientific and administrative dialogue can offer solutions regarding current and future cultural heritage, without overlooking the risks and fragility to which it is constantly exposed. Several observations on contemporary approaches in Morocco and Romania intend to open pathways for collaboration, at least among the CIVIS alliance states, without excluding other potential partners. Our primary concern lies in the "Cultural Heritage Code," a strategy common to both countries, with major implications for all actors responsible for cultural heritage. In this sense, our contribution aims to represent a node within a network that is part of a living, continuously evolving system.

Prof. Ludivine Damay, University of Lausanne, Lausanne (Switzerland)

Prof. Tarik Harroud, Institut National d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme Rabat (INAU)

Prof. Jmad Oumäïma, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)
Rehousing and belonging: Insights from a Belgian–Moroccan collaboration on sustainable neighbourhoods

Samya N'hari, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)
Community/ Collective Social Work in Belgium and Morocco: Towards a Contextualized Methodological Guide

This tandem talk presents the key findings and methodological insights of the joint research project Towards Sustainable Rehousing Neighbourhoods: Socio-spatial Analysis of Housing, Urban Dynamics and Resident Integration, funded by ARES (Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur). This collaborative and interdisciplinary initiative involves several Moroccan and Belgian institutions, including two members of the CIVIS network — the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and the Université Hassan II de Casablanca (UH2C) — as well as the National Institute of Urban and Regional Planning (INAU), the National Institute of Social Work (INAS), the Université catholique de Louvain (UCL), and the Haute École Louvain en Hainaut (HELHA). The research focuses on three newly developed neighbourhoods in the Rabat metropolitan area — Ain El Aouda, Tamesna, and Sidi Bouknadel — created as part of Morocco's City Without Slums programme. These neighbourhoods offer a unique lens through which to examine the intersections of urban planning, architecture, and social dynamics in the context of large-scale

rehousing policies. The project seeks to understand how these spaces are conceived, inhabited, and transformed over time; what kinds of facilities and collective spaces emerge; and how inclusion, social cohesion, and forms of local citizenship take shape within them. The presentation articulates four complementary dimensions. It first outlines the main outcomes of two ongoing doctoral research projects in urbanism and sociology, which provide the analytical foundation for the study. It then highlights a set of cross-cutting interdisciplinary findings from comparative analyses of the three neighbourhoods. A third focus examines the development of an experimental community social work methodology in Sidi Bouknadel, co-constructed through joint field visits and collaborative workshops. Finally, the talk reflects on academic collaboration and knowledge exchange in sustainable and inclusive urban development, exploring how shared research frameworks contribute to renewed practices of planning, participation, and social cohesion.

The African Cancer Immunology and Infection Initiative

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 2: Salle Mohammed Abed al Jabri - 27/03/2026, 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Abdellah Badou, Hassan II University of Casablanca, Casablanca (Morocco)

Prof. Faith Osier, Imperial College London, London (United Kingdom)

Cancer in Africa is a growing public health crisis, with ~1.1M new cases and >700K death in 2020. This is expected to rise to 2.1M cases by 2040. Breast, cervical and prostate cancers are dominant, often diagnosis is late due to limited infrastructure for screening, limited access to pathologists and high costs. At the same time, Africa has the highest burden of infectious globally, accounting for >227M years of health life lost, an annual productivity loss of >\$800 billion & an infection-related mortality of ~10M/year.

TACII is a new African Cancer and Infection Initiative that will conduct co-ordinated Africa-wide research on cancer, considering the unique context of infectious diseases, immune modulation and microbiome diversity. It has representation from the five World Health Organization regions of the continent and is led by African scientists in collaboration with international partners. We will build sustainable and equitable frameworks for cancer immunology research in Africa, and translate this into affordable and accessible treatments.

Migrant storytelling on home and belonging as transformative tools

Panel Discussion

Location: Room 3: Salle Touria Chaoui - 27/03/2026, 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)

Session chair: Prof. Adriana Ștefănel University of Bucharest (Romania)

Individual contribution

Prof. Louis Mendy - Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar (Senegal)

Environmental Violence and Migration in West Africa.

Environmental Violence and Migration in West Africa. By Louis Mendy, Professor of American Studies at Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, Senegal. When we talk about violence, we automatically think of physical, moral or verbal violence between individuals or groups of people. We, often, tend to overlook man's violence on nature or on his immediate environment; which causes people, animals and even Spirits to migrate locally or internationally. We all know that the quality of our lives is closely related to the environment. Unfortunately, man has been aggressing nature for such a long time. For quite a few decades, the issue of global warming has been a universal concern. Environmental Violence is mostly defined as follows: "The violence on the natural world as a result of human degradation of the earth and direct damage to the environment by humans that threatens their own survival. It may also include environmental policies that can be harmful to people, other living species and biodiversity".

Migration of people and other species has been quite rampant in West Africa and Africa in general, due to man's violent aggressions on nature. Deforestation, overfishing and coastal erosion are among the worst consequences of humans' actions.

The excessive cutting of trees, for example, has caused forests to lose their traditional importance. In Africa, they have always been known as the homes of good and bad Spirits, wild games, the reserve of medicinal plants and the sanctuaries for religious celebrations. Overfishing and coastal erosion are also widespread in Africa. Thus, it is more than urgent for African leaders and their populations to join efforts in order to limit the environmental violence and avoid jeopardizing next generations' living conditions.

Collective contribution

Dr. Nereida Ripero - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa)

Dr. Francisco Fuentes-Antrás - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid (Spain)

Dr. Mirna Solic - University of Glasgow, Glasgow (UK)

Prof. Louis Mendy - Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar (Senegal)

Environmental Violence and Migration in West Africa.

The CIVIS Open Lab project "Migrant Storytelling on Home and Belonging as Transformative Tools" is an international collaboration between the University of

Glasgow, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, together with refugee-support organizations CEAR (Spain), Migrant Voice (UK), and Windybrow Arts Centre (South Africa). Its aim is to empower refugees and displaced people to tell their stories through participatory arts, countering stereotypes and fostering empathy.

Between May and August 2025, workshops took place in Madrid, Glasgow, and Johannesburg with refugees from various countries like Russia, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, or Zimbabwe, now living in Spain, South Africa, and the UK.

Participants reflected on “home” and “belonging” as both physical spaces and emotional experiences, expressing the trauma of displacement and the resilience of rebuilding. Activities were structured around narrative elements—character, object, plot—while allowing freedom of expression in multiple languages. The project’s main outcome is a collective eBook compiling 60 contributions—textual, oral, visual, and non-verbal—such as drawings, photos, textiles, and other creative forms. Beyond artworks, the project highlights both shared and contrasting contexts of refugee reception in Europe and South Africa. Despite different asylum systems and resources, participants voiced remarkably similar themes of memory, food, tradition, safety, and identity, underscoring migration as a global human experience.

Our presentation will share findings on specific methodological frameworks and empirical data arising from work in three different geographical and cultural urban areas – Johannesburg, Madrid, Glasgow – regarding project management and outcomes.

By centering refugees’ voices, we will discuss how the project fosters a transnational artistic dialogue that humanizes migration.

This contributes to updating the CIVIS agenda by stressing the importance of transnational activities that address global issues such as forced displacement. It also boosts civic engagement beyond borders by connecting associations that rarely collaborate despite shared objectives.

Questions for the audience

- In the context of migration and forced displacement, how can educational systems and institutions foster inclusive, multilingual and multicultural societies?
- In what ways may storytelling serve as a transforming tool for both host societies and refugees?
- How are the experiences of refugees shaped differently by the local political and social situations in South Africa, Spain, and the United Kingdom?
- What challenges and opportunities arise when working with multilingual and multicultural approaches in participatory arts?
- How do trauma and resilience coexist in narratives of forced displacement?

- Which factors—artistic excellence, societal change, policy influence, or participant wellbeing—should be used to gauge the success of such initiatives?

Closing session

Plenary

Location: Auditorium - 27/03/2026, 14:00 - 15:30 (CET)

Concluding session: Which lessons from the 1st CIVIS Forum?

Chairs:

Prof. Stefan Lang, CIVIS Secretary General

Prof. Mustapha Lkhider, Vice-President for Research and Partnerships of Hassan II University of Casablanca

In this final, interactive plenary session, all participants are invited to share their main insights from the Forum, new ideas for collaboration, and feedback for the organisers – also in regard of a possible sequel. Moreover, the discussions of the past three days will lay the basis for jointly addressing three questions* of key importance for CIVIS as a Universities Alliance with research as an important part of its agenda and the partnership of African and European universities as one of its constituent features:

How can CIVIS further improve the stimulus for collaborative research on societal challenges?

The CIVIS Roadmap for Research & Innovation, adopted in 2024, includes measures to both directly foster collaborative research (e.g., seed-funding provision, networking opportunities such as the CIVIS Forum) or to develop initiatives in support of research activities (e.g., developing doctoral training and mobility). Are we on the right track with these measures? What else can and should our alliance do in this context, in further deepening our research collaboration in challenge-oriented and inter-continental initiatives presented or explored at the Forum?

How can CIVIS support academics to succeed in grant acquisition?

Unlocking funding opportunities remains a key task for scientists, especially in transcontinental collaboration, often being a catalyst for initiating or consolidating scientific consortia in the first place. CIVIS incentivises building academic contacts, networks, or institutional support for joint grant applications. Our alliance also organises staff training and information exchange on EU funding programmes and engages in policy debates on the design of such programmes at European level. Should our alliance intensify such efforts? And if yes, how? Are there ways to go beyond such measures and explore, for instance, private or national funding sources – also within Africa – more systematically?

How to bridge education and research on societal challenges?

Developing joint educational offers, especially on societal challenges, is a core mission of CIVIS, also due to its roots in the European Universities Initiative. Promoting joint research is a crucial yet viable focus of CIVIS as an alliance of research-intensive universities. Which ideas and insights can we take away from the Forum on how these missions can grow further together? This includes concrete actions (e.g., curriculum design and experience, research-oriented

training), the design of support measures at the intersection of teaching and research (e.g., call design, mission-inclusive mobility programmes), or the promotion of a wider cultural change toward a more education-inclusive understanding of academic excellence.

* See also: *The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities*, "[The contribution of European Universities alliances to research](#)", *Blog Article*, 5 February 2026