



---

# CIVIS – The European Civic University Alliance

Enhancing collaborations at local, regional and European level



---

# European Universities Initiative

The EUI initiative from the Commission aims at

- Strengthening the quality and competitiveness of European Higher Education
- Building transnational alliances of Higher Education Institutions
- Advancing a deeper level of systematic cooperation between universities
- Contributing to the development of the European Education Area – the alliances have a transformative role as pilots
- Adopting a challenge-based approach according to which students, academics and external partners can cooperate on societal challenges
- Promoting the European dimension, bring unity in Europe, fundamental rights, solidarity, democracy, social cohesion, cultural diversity, and active citizenship
- [Developing civic engagement](#)

---

# What is a European University?

Requirements for applicants in the call:

- At least three universities from three different EU member states
- Represent different parts of Europe (geographical spread)
- Joint long-term strategy for the alliance
- Create a European inter-university campus for “seamless mobility”
- Create transdisciplinary and transnational teams of students, academics and [external stakeholders](#) to tackle big societal challenges facing Europe
- “Significantly enhance mobility”, meaning that at least 50 % of all students in the alliance should participate in physical, virtual or blended mobility

---

# 41 new European alliances

Two calls 2019 and 2020 have resulted in 41 alliances with 279 member universities, of which 11 are Swedish (116 alliances applied)

SU (Civis), KTH (Unite!), HHS (Civica), LiU (ECIU), GU (Eutopia), LU (Eugloh), Chalmers (Enhance), KI (NeurotechEU), LNU (EUniWell), LTU (Universeh), UU (Enlight)

Financing by Erasmus: €5 millions to each alliance for three years, possible prolongation for three more years

Financing by Horizon 2020: €2 millions to each alliance for three years

Having invested €287 millions so far the EU Commission plans to make EUI their main focus for the next Erasmus program period 2021-2027, in synergy with Horizon Europe

---

# CIVIS

384 000 students and  
55 000 staff members

Coordinator



Universidad Autónoma  
de Madrid



UNIVERSITÉ  
LIBRE  
DE BRUXELLES



SAPIENZA  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCHAREST  
VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
National and Kapodistrian  
University of Athens  
EST. 1837



Stockholm  
University

---

# Five societal themes

The CIVIS Alliance will design new study programmes, facilitate research collaborations and foster civic engagement focussing on five major challenges:

- Climate, Environment, Energy
- Health
- Society, Culture, Heritage
- Digital and Technological Transformations
- Cities, Territories, Mobilities

External stakeholders take part in the strategic Consultative Council of the alliance and each university has at least one external stakeholder as associate partner in the alliance

---

# Creating hubs and open labs

Two working tracks of the alliance might be of particular interest

- **Hubs** for joint education, research and innovation
  - Transdisciplinary education, i.e. involving external stakeholders also in framing questions and generating results
  - Service-learning or work-based activities such as internships
- **Open labs** for cooperation with city, region and local society
  - Open labs as platforms for CIVIS partners and local stakeholders to jointly explore and develop solutions to local and regional challenges
  - Project incubators for students
  - Service learning opportunities

---

# OpenLab Stockholm

Co-founded by universities and regional stakeholders

The City of Stockholm, Region Stockholm, the Stockholm County Administrative Board, Karolinska Institute, KTH, Stockholm University and Södertörn University

A challenge-driven local innovation community providing courses for professionals and students, co-working space, innovation projects and a conference centre

[Challenges for Emerging Cities](#) (Masters course) and [Bridging Science and Societal Needs](#) (PhD course)

The real life challenges in the courses are submitted by Stockholm City and Region Stockholm. Cross-disciplinary student groups develop solutions and innovations to the given societal challenges



---

# CIVIS and Civic engagement

The CIVIS University Alliance aspire to promote Civic engagement, mainly through the hubs and the Open labs

- HEI practices specifically designed to **actively engage and involve** communities external to the academia
- Identifying and addressing public concerns and aspirations, bringing together knowledge, information and expertise and fostering **innovative partnership**
- **Reciprocity** to empower the community while enriching the university, 2-way
- Direct interaction with a wide range of participating people resulting in a **benefit for society** as a whole, e.g. **service learning**

---

# A recent example – the CIVIS days

First joint conference of CIVIS on November 10 hosted by Stockholm University  
[Education for a greener tomorrow](#)

Online CIVIS student hackathon: [the sustainability edition](#). 42 student teams working on  
Green Erasmus: rethink student mobility  
Green campus: reinvent the campus of tomorrow  
Sustainable Development Goals: rewire education

Online conference: [Education for a sustainable future](#)  
Education for “wicked” problems  
Transdisciplinary education  
Digital transformation of higher education

→ [The European Universities as a transformative driving force for change?](#)



CIVIS

A European Civic University

Fredrik Oldsjö, Stockholm University,  
responsible for the CIVIS Alliance and  
Stockholm Trio University Alliance  
[fredrik.oldsjo@su.se](mailto:fredrik.oldsjo@su.se)

<https://civis.eu/en>

[www.su.se/civis](http://www.su.se/civis)

<https://www.civisdays.civis.eu/>

<https://openlabsthlm.se/>