



Excellencies,
Esteemed guests,
Dear Rectors, dear colleagues,
Dear CIVIS Friends
Dear all,

It is my pleasure to be here today for this very special event for us and for the whole CIVIS community.

One year ago, almost day to day, was launched the call for European universities by the European Union.

We had 6 months to complete our project, to imagine what we could build all together, to define our goals, to shape our guidelines... to make CIVIS a sustainable but ambitious project. 6 months to build and create something totally new. As Rector Gaudio just said, and I totally support, these European universities are a strategic step for Europe. And we are now part of this challenge!

In June, we learnt our CIVIS project was selected. We all had the feeling of happiness, pride but we also felt all the responsibly, all the expectations of our communities, and the way to turn our project into reality. But we all had one conviction : all together we will succeed; for our students, for our staff, for our territories, for Europe. We are all deeply committed to make Civis come true.

Since the beginning of October 2019, and even before, hard work has started. And the first step in this agenda is the kick off meeting.

Some few words about Civis:

1/ CIVIS, some dates



- CIVIS first emerged with a common initiative of AMU, UAM and Sapienza universita di Roma in 2016 to create a consortia as north Mediterranean transnational campus
- Then with President Macron's speech in La Sorbonne in September 2017, launched first this idea of European universities, which finally turned in a European call in October 2018.
- In this new scope, we did review our ambition and project with news partners: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, University of Bucharest , Université Libre de Bruxelles, Stockholms Universitet, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. And on 2018 october 3rd, we signed in Marseille a memorandum of Intend, the founding act of what would become CIVIS..
- Since then, together, we built our project.

2/ our project

Our fil rouge is (almost) all in our name "Civis, a European civic university" this means a deep European commitment and a sense of public and social involvement in Europe but in our 8 territories as well.

Our alliance will enable our communities to cooperate and work together across borders, in different languages, in various disciplines, acting as well locally taking into consideration his environment as in a multicultural and globalized world.

The ambition is to create an integrated university space where students, academics, researchers and staff move and collaborate as freely as in their institution of origin. This strong commitment aims to increase and multiply opportunities for our students, researchers and staff and therefore, contribute to widen Europe's openness and to -face the current threats of disintegration. CIVIS University is a key instrument of the next step of European integration process.



CIVIS will also tackle global challenges, locally and globally such as climate and energy, cities and mobility, health, cultural heritage, digital transformation, from a local perspective but also global, with Africa and the Mediterranean area among its strategic priorities.

Today is a very important day for CIVIS, and I would like, on behalf of all CIVIS universities rectors, of the whole CIVIS community to thank all the persons, national representatives, regional representatives... who supported our project and who accompanied us in this long term vision and way.

I would also congratulate the European Union commission for launching this call. As Europe is actually facing many challenges and is at a crossroad of its history, this kind of initiative, emerging from local actors is the answer to rebuild the link between Europe and people. Universities are key actors of this new Europe integration as it deals with youth, with future, with knowledge dissemination...

I wish all my best wishes to CIVIS ! lets' make this exciting project a sustainable and lively reality !

To conclude I would quote André Frossard, french journalist who wrote

« L'Europe cherche, avec raison, à se donner une politique et une monnaie communes, mais elle a surtout besoin d'une âme. »

I am fully convinced European soul stems from its people and its youth : our CIVIS project aims also at that.

I now give the floor to Capucine Edou, to present you more precisely CIVIS project and key axes.