arQus
European University Alliance



ANNUAL REPORT

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ARQUS ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



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Dorothy Kelly

COORDINATOR OF THE ARQUS ALLIANCE

Dear Arqus Community,

Looking back on the academic year 2024-25, it is a great pleasure for me to reflect on the remarkable impact we have made together.

7 years since Arqus was founded, we are celebrating the progress made, while continuing to work towards a shared future through our three mission-based Boards: Education, Research & Innovation, and Societal Engagement.

One of the highlights of the year has been the addition of Durham University as an associate partner. Durham's addition significantly strengthens Arqus academic, linguistic and cultural diversity while advancing our goal of fostering international collaboration and sustainable impact beyond the European Union.

This academic year, Arqus reaffirmed its commitment to the design and implementation of a **European Degree** through the publication of the Arqus Position Paper, based on the considerable work of the EDLab project, which comprised four alliances led by Arqus. We aim to be at the forefront of shaping future European higher education policies, supporting greater mobility for students and staff.

In **education**, the three Joint Master's Programmes that Arqus offers continue to succeed: European Studies, Translation, and the new International Cybersecurity and Cyberintelligence Master's Programme. Arqus universities are working on the design of five new Joint Master's programmes and two Bachelor's programmes, which are expected to be implemented soon. The Alliance thus consolidates its commitment to strengthen joint programmes, certifications, mobility and learning opportunities. We are also proud to have awarded 29 scholarships to PhD and Master's students after three editions of the Arqus Talent Scholarship Fund.

We uphold the **research** dimension of our Alliance, evident in our Mentoring Programme for Early-Stage Researchers, the Arqus PhD Week for Careers Beyond Academia and the Open Science Ambassadors Network. During this academic year, Arqus launched a self-funded internal call to fund research collaborations between Arqus academics and early-career researchers. This Arqus Research Initiative is designed to foster long-term, collaborative research activities among its member universities, particularly by encouraging the active participation of early-career researchers. The considerable interest in the call with over 60 applications has marked an important milestone in strengthening the research dimension of the Alliance.

The Arqus Alliance perseveres in its mission of building transformative excellence with and for all. Through the actions promoted by our **Hubs and Communities of Practice,** Arqus is fostering innovation in teaching, staff development, diversity and inclusion, plurilingual competencies and deeper intercultural understanding.

The Arqus **Annual Conference,** held in April 2025 in Leipzig, was devoted to reflecting on the evolving landscape of European higher education and the European Universities Initiative under the overall theme “European Universities at the Crossroads”.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we recognise the challenges that lie ahead. Moving forward, our goal is to strengthen our collaborative efforts, expand the involvement and engagement of our communities, and enhance the internal and broader societal impact of our shared endeavours.

I want to extend my gratitude to all members of our universities’ leadership, as well as to our students, academics, professional staff and stakeholders for their valuable contributions and unwavering support of Arqus. Together we will keep building bridges with the strong belief that this collective effort will drive meaningful, systemic and lasting transformation in our universities.



01 | THE ALLIANCE



11
Universities

317,000
Students

23,800+
Academics

14,500
Technical Staff



Vision:

A forward-looking, open, integrated and research-driven European University, building transformative excellence with and for all.

Mission:

To transform European higher education, research and innovation through deep cooperation and progressive integration, in pursuit of an equitable and sustainable future together.

Major Goals:

1

Effective barrier-free cooperation at all levels of institutional activity in order to better respond to existing and emerging societal challenges.

2

Joint evidence-based institutional learning, arising from acting as a common laboratory beyond the mainstream, innovating in pursuit of systemic, structural and sustainable impact.

3

Engaged communities of learners, academics, professionals and alumni in multi-level habitats working together for sustainable progress.

4

Co-created attractive flexible challenge-based and research-driven academic offer.

5

Joint transformational disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and innovation.

6

Enhanced intercultural competence, global understanding and respect for diversity throughout our communities.

Members:

Full partners

- University of Granada
- University of Graz
- Leipzig University
- University of Lyon 1
- Maynooth University
- University of Minho
- University of Padua
- Vilnius University
- University of Wrocław

Associate universities

- Durham University
- National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy



UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA

UNI GRAZ

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

Lyon 1 Université Claude Bernard

Maynooth University National University of Ireland Maynooth

University of Minho uminho.pt

UNIVERSITÀ DI PADOVA

Vilniaus universitetas

Uniwersytet Wrocławski

Durham University

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF KYIV-MOHYLA ACADEMY



Durham University,
new associate partner of the Arqus Alliance

In October 2024, the Arqus Rectors' Council officially approved, during their meeting at the University of Lyon 1, the work plan for the adhesion of a new associate partner: Durham University.

This exciting development was celebrated on 4 November, when five Arqus representatives travelled to Durham (UK) for a signing ceremony, marking the beginning of this momentous partnership. Durham's addition aligns with Arqus' strategic vision of fostering collaboration across borders and enhancing global academic networks.

Durham University was founded in 1832, being the third-oldest university in England. It is known as a globally outstanding centre of teaching and research excellence.

Durham shares Arqus' commitment to driving sustainable change and empowering its communities to contribute positively through its research, education and academic practices.

Durham University has joined the collaborative efforts of several Arqus working groups focused on teaching innovation, PhD mentoring, student mobility and research support, as well as the Living Labs for Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability, and European Identity and Heritage.

This new multilateral partnership has opened up fresh opportunities for academic excellence and international collaboration beyond the European Union, further increasing the impact of Arqus with new links and expertise across Europe.



Durham University | arQus European University Alliance

Associate partners

- Auvergne- Rhône-Alpes's Regional Council
- Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Granada
- City of Graz
- Coimbra Group
- Delegation of Austria's National Students Council in the University of Graz
- Erasmus Student Network Granada
- Erasmus Student Network International
- Erasmus Student Network Lyon
- Erasmus Student Network Minho
- Erasmus Student Network Padua
- Granada City Hall
- Granada's Provincial Council
- Leipzig University's Student Council
- Minho Business Association
- Municipality of Braga
- Municipality of Guimarães
- Municipality of Padua
- Marshal's Office of Lower Silesian Voivodeship
- Students' Union of the University of Minho
- The House of Europe Lyon-Rhône-Alpes
- Utrecht Network
- Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts
- Vilnius City Council



02 | A YEAR OF EXPERIENCES




2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG
European Universities
at the crossroads
arQus
European University Alliance
2-4 April
2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Leipzig, Germany
UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

October 2024



Arqus Day 2024

On 18 October, we celebrated Arqus Day with several activities held locally at our universities: press releases, Arqus informational stands, exhibition panels, games, a local meeting with students, professors and Arqus staff. This day marks the birth of the Alliance back in 2018. Six years of progress, collaboration, achievements and motivation to keep building bridges towards a shared future for our nine university members.



The University of Wrocław is awarded €2 million in funding from the National Agency for Academic Exchange

The University of Wrocław was selected in the call for the European Universities Support Programme. The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange awarded our partner university with €2 million to strengthen partnerships and the role of Polish higher education institutions in alliances within the European Universities Initiative.

The programme will be implemented from October 2024 until September 2026. The University of Wrocław will implement activities such as 3 Arqus joint degree programmes, Twinning study visits, doctoral student mentoring, researcher networking, mobility of academic staff, workshops for Arqus students, micro-certification training for academic and administrative staff, and a workshop for the staff of the International Cooperation offices at the Arqus universities.

A Journey through Artificial Intelligence webinar series

The Arqus Living Lab on Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation (AI&DT) organised two lecture series on Artificial Intelligence designed for a non-expert audience to break down complex AI concepts and make them accessible to everyone.

The JAI (A Journey through Artificial Intelligence) sessions were held both online and in person, aiming to build AI literacy and promote informed societal discourse.

The first edition took place in October and November 2024 and included 4 webinars on the fundamentals of artificial intelligence, generative AI, morality and AI in education.

The second edition was organised in June 2025, with 5 lectures on AI models, AI in music, cybersecurity, large language models, and social and environmental responsibility.

The AI&DT Living Lab organises accessible, non-technical lectures to demystify AI concepts for a broad audience, ensuring that people from all backgrounds can gain insights into its principles, challenges, and potential.



EDLab seminar and Arqus Position Paper on the European Degree

On 11 October, the University of Minho hosted an EDLab seminar in Braga. The focus of this seminar was on the new European Degree label. The European Commission's proposal was presented, as well as the results of the EDLab project, coordinated by Arqus and in collaboration with ENLIGHT, EUTOPIA and SEA-EU Alliances.

At the end of October, Arqus published its comprehensive Position Paper on the European Degree, reflecting its commitment to pioneering innovation and reform in higher education. Drawing on the conclusions of the EDLab project and the Alliance's experience developing joint academic programmes, this paper serves as a key contribution to ongoing policy discussions surrounding the European Degree and the European Degree Label.

The paper emphasises the transformative potential of the European Degree Label as a benchmark of excellence in joint international programmes. It also underscores the importance of equitable access, robust funding mechanisms, and simplified quality assurance processes to ensure the success of this ambitious framework across all educational levels.



November 2024



First Arqus Staff Week on Inclusion and Diversity at the University of Lyon 1

From 4 to 8 November 2024, the University of Lyon 1 hosted the first Arqus Staff Training Week on Inclusion & Diversity, with a special focus on accessibility. The staff week was promoted by the Arqus Inclusion & Diversity Hub and welcomed both professional and teaching staff from all partner universities to learn, share experiences and best practices and engage in practical activities.

Participants engaged in a variety of activities – panel discussions, lectures, practical workshops, group work – around three main topics: accessible teaching and learning, widening access to university, and digital and physical accessibility. Participants also had the opportunity to share and discuss their individual projects and comprehensive strategies at their university.

The Staff Week included a city tour dedicated to the topic of queerness in Lyon and Europe.



Arqus representatives meet in Maynooth for the second 2024 co-leads meeting

On 21 and 22 November, Maynooth University hosted its first major Arqus event on campus, with the local team coordinating the Arqus Working Group Co-Leads meeting. Colleagues from all Arqus universities travelled to attend the in-person occasion.

The event was filled with collaboration and positive energy shared by all and with new opportunities discussed. Throughout the two-day event, several different meetings were held all over the campus, and visiting colleagues had the chance to engage and meet new people from different departments within the university.

Astrodemo, winner of the Arqus International Innovators Award contest 2024

The Arqus International Innovators Award is an online competition that looks to select the most innovative and internationalised Arqus start-ups. The members of the Arqus community of students get to know the initiatives through videos and then vote for their favourite Arqus international business model.

The 2024 International Innovators Award was Astrodemo, which launches innovations into the Space Economy through Low-Cost space missions, helping to make an impact in orbit and on Earth.

Behind Astrodemo there is a team of Master's students, PhD candidates, and alumni from the University of Padua with strong engineering backgrounds, specialising in the key engineering fields required for developing space missions and effectively supporting their clients.

The winner was announced at a local startup event organised in Leipzig in November, with more than 400 guests.



Hackathon series AI

The Arqus Living Lab on Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation at the University of Graz, in cooperation with the Field of Excellence COLIBRI, organised two 4-week hackathons designed to foster a culture of innovation and collaboration by addressing pressing challenges facing Arqus institutions.

The series brought together participants from five Arqus universities to develop innovative solutions focused on AI literacy and societal engagement. Participants came from diverse backgrounds, including students, academic staff, and administrative staff.

The winning project, Human library in a virtual world, reimagined the traditional human library concept by moving it to a virtual space. This transition aimed to enhance inclusivity by overcoming geographical, physical and other limitations, making the human library accessible to a broader audience. Through digital storytelling, the project fostered meaningful connections and knowledge-sharing, offering a forward-thinking approach with significant societal potential. The project also aligned with the Hackathon's key themes, addressing the challenges of artificial intelligence and digital transformation, climate change and sustainability, and European identity and heritage.



December 2024



1st EMI webinar of 2024-25

The Arqus Plurlingual Hub and the English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) Community of Practice launched the second edition of their webinar series in December. It took place during the academic year 2024-25, run by Maynooth University and titled “Engaging with practice and research in English-Medium Instruction”.

The first webinar explored the complexities of knowledge diversity and intercultural responsibility in English-medium classrooms. Participants gained tools and frameworks for critically assessing their own EMI practices. The session encouraged reflective thinking about the social, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of teaching in English in globally diverse classrooms.

From December 2024 until June 2025, seven EMI webinars were organised for Arqus teachers, academics and researchers.



Arqus online workshops on “Virtual Exchange and Blended Mobility in university education”

Three online workshops were organised for Arqus educators to learn how to create collaborative, international learning experiences for students.

This programme introduced two key teaching tools: Virtual Exchange (VE), which helps students work on intercultural projects online with international partners, and Blended Mobility, which combines in-person exchange with online collaboration.

Twenty educators took part in the two-hour workshops, exploring how Virtual Exchange (VE) and Blended Mobility function and how they are being integrated into university

contexts. During the sessions, participants examined the potential learning outcomes of VE and Blended Mobility for their students, designed subject-specific tasks for virtual exchanges, and engaged in other hands-on activities. These workshops equipped educators with the skills to guide students in intercultural and collaborative projects, enriching their courses with a strong global dimension.

Fieldtrip to La Lanterna di Diogene: A lesson in sustainability and inclusion

Students from the University of Padua visited this rustic farmhouse news Modena as the Arqus bottom-up initiative "Proximity matters: Transdisciplinary joint teaching activities to foster collaborative networks between local food Producers and tourism/leisure entrepreneurs, under sustainable development and climate change prismas".

This initiative highlights the Alliance's profound role in bridging academic knowledge with real-world practices. By supporting grassroots collaborations like this, Arqus enables students and faculty to directly engage with local communities, building essential bridges between theory and practice. This field trip exemplifies the transformative impact of Arqus bottom-up initiatives, which foster collaboration, sustainability and inclusion across its partner universities.



January 2025



Arqus Alumni Talks

Launched by the Arqus Linking Local Ecosystems team, the Alumni Talk webinar series aims to support current students and staff in facing career challenges from the professional perspective of alumni. The talks are held in an online synchronous format and last between 45 and 60 minutes. Organised by experts from the different Arqus universities, the sessions focus on topics such as integration into the labour market, starting a career, career progression and others.

In January 2025, the sixth Alumni Talk took place online. Telecommunications engineer and entrepreneur Javier Canas shared his experience successfully founding a start-up company as a university student.

The Alumni Talk series aims to support current students and staff in facing career challenges from the professional perspective of alumni.



7th ENLIGHT and Arqus Alliance Open Science Ambassador Webinar

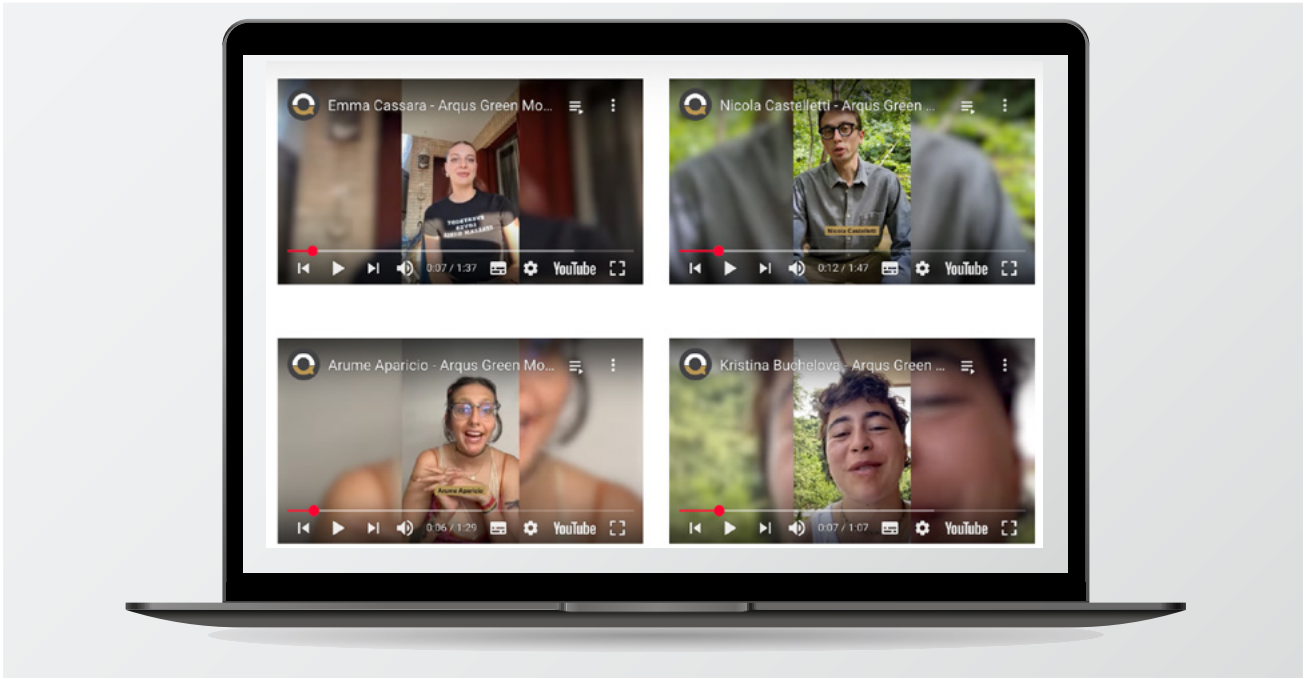
On 13 January, ENLIGHT and Arqus alliances resume the series of webinars about Open Science, jointly organised by the Arqus Open Science Ambassadors network and ENLIGHT RISE. This series started in December 2023 as part of the Arqus Research and Innovation project but has continued beyond it due to its success and to the pivotal role Open Science plays in the sharing of knowledge and research findings across disciplines.

Tell Your Mobility Story contest

In January, Arqus launched the Tell Your Mobility Story contest with the aim of getting interesting experiences from Arqus students on mobility, for future students to learn and get inspired by peers. Participants had to create a short video of up to 90 seconds showcasing their unique journey.

Videos could be submitted in two categories: Mobility Stories & Green Mobility. They were uploaded to the Arqus YouTube channel, and the videos with the most likes were selected as the winners.

Emma Cassara, Nicola Castelletti, Arume Aparicio and Kristina Buchelova were the most voted students within the Green Mobility category and won an Interrail pass. Students Emma Cassara, Mariluz López, Greta Vincini and Trinidad Bertollotti were the winners of Mobility Stories, winning a gift box of Arqus gadgets.



February 2025



Fiasco Fest: How to joyfully move on from rejection and career misfortunes

Financed by the Arqus Innovation Fund, the "Fiasco Fest goes Arqus" project promotes a more failure-friendly research culture. Developed by Sabine Bergner and Johanna Stadlbauer from the University of Graz, the Fiasco Fest initiative is now being implemented at other Arqus universities.

Through party-workshops, early-stage researchers and academics can talk openly about obstacles and failures to destigmatise rejection in academia and promote learning from mistakes in a supportive environment.

In February 2025, Sarah Blackford and Barbara Janssens hosted an online talk to present the project to the Arqus community and encourage them to organise Fiasco Fest workshops in their universities. In June, Maynooth University implemented the idea with great success.



Arqus Teaching Innovation Workshops

The Arqus Workshops on Teaching Innovation have been running since September 2023 and are one of the key activities of the alliance in the promotion of new approaches to innovative methodologies, strategies and technologies for active learning and engagement improvement. During this academic year, a total of 19 workshops took place. On 3 and 4 February, the 2-part workshop “Hacks & Habits for good teaching” was held by Tyll Zybura, a leader in the field of higher education, specializing in methods that emphasize meaningful connections between educators and students.



International Soft Landing for Young Entrepreneurs

The ISLYE programme (“International Soft Landing for Young Entrepreneurs”) offers students the chance to visit the start-up incubators of all our Arqus universities and to participate in the respective entrepreneurship programmes.

Davide Bicego and Stefano Polese had the opportunity to travel to the University of Graz at the end of February, where they counted with the expertise of the Unicorn Start-up and Innovation Hub.

March 2025



A1 online courses 2025

From March to June 2025, the Arqus Plurilingual Hub offered free A1 online courses in Lithuanian, Irish, Spanish, Polish, French, Portuguese and German.

Two participants per university could register for each course. This is one of Arqus most popular initiatives among students and staff, a perfect opportunity to learn a new language through a communicative and task-based approach, with native instructors. At the end of the course, students received a Certificate of Attendance, which demonstrates their commitment and dedication to language learning.



Vilnius Integration Week for students of the Arqus Joint Master's Programme in International Cybersecurity and Cyberintelligence

From 3 to 7 March, Vilnius University organised an Integration Week for Arqus students arriving in Lithuania for the second semester of the Joint Master's Programme in International Cybersecurity and Cyberintelligence.

17 students were studying this Master's in its first year, benefitting from the unique opportunity to study each semester in a different country, familiarising themselves with different cybersecurity practices and acquiring wide, international knowledge in this rapidly developing area. This Master's Programme is jointly carried out by four Arqus universities: Granada, Minho, Padua and Vilnius.

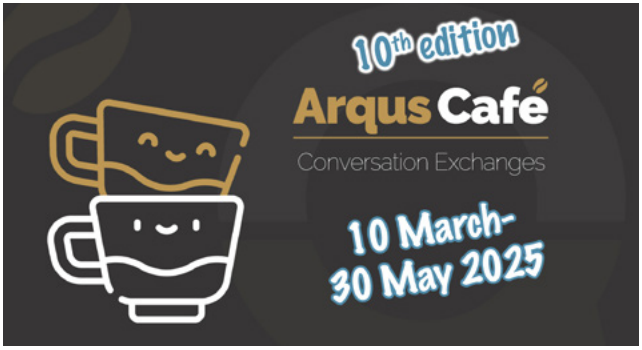
10th edition of the Arqus Cafés

The Arqus Cafés are informal sessions where students and staff can gather, either online or in person, to engage in language practice guided by native and near-native speaking tutors of the respective languages. With both digital and in-person formats, the cafés offer participants a relaxed environment to develop their language skills and broaden cultural understanding without the pressures normally found in teacher-led classroom lessons. The series have been running since October 2020. This semester, the Arqus Café celebrated an important anniversary: It was the tenth edition of this successful programme. 347 students registred to practice 13 languages in a total of 31 cafés.

10th edition: there were 347 registrations and 847 visits

Arqus Winter School at the University of Lyon 1

From 10 to 13 March, the University of Lyon 1 hosted the Arqus Winter School on Bioaerosols, health, climate change and sustainable development. More than 40 researchers, students and professors from across Arqus Alliance universities gathered for a Winter School dedicated to bioaerosols – airborne biological particles that influence climate, health, and ecosystems. This initiative was funded by the Arqus Innovation Fund.



The Arqus Lounge is a platform for Arqus academic and professional staff to get to know colleagues from other Arqus universities and to talk about current topics, their daily work, related issues and other common interests. As with the Arqus Café, this is a great opportunity to practise speaking English with others in a relaxed setting. From March to July, eight sessions were held online.



April 2025



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Arqus Annual Conference in Leipzig

Over 260 participants gathered on 2 and 3 April at Leipzig University for the 2025 Arqus Annual Conference. Under the theme “European Universities at the Crossroads”, participants had the opportunity to reflect on the evolving landscape of European higher education and the European Universities Initiative.

This major event was the annual gathering for the Arqus community, featuring university leadership, students, academics and staff from partner universities, members of the Arqus International Advisory Board (IAB), and experts and colleagues from other Alliances. The plenary sessions were live-streamed on the Arqus YouTube channel, allowing virtual participation.

The theme served as a framework to discuss the future of the Arqus Alliance and the European Universities Initiative as a whole, focusing on the future of higher education, the innovation brought by the alliances, the strengthening and resilience achieved through cooperation between higher education institutions and the key role of these alliances in achieving a sustainable and inclusive European Higher Education Area.

The Annual Conference included the 15th Arqus Rectors’ Council, the Arqus Teaching Excellence Award ceremony and the announcement of the first edition of the Arqus Open Science Award.

Arqus Green Mobility Days

To celebrate Earth Month, the Alliance organised the second edition of the Arqus Green Mobility Days. This initiative consisted of different local activities carried out by Arqus partner universities with the common objective of raising awareness about sustainable ways of approaching international mobility and new strategies to tackle climate change.

At the University of Lyon 1, participants enjoyed treasure hunts, green mobility games, zero waste DIY workshops, bike theft prevention and information stand, carbon footprint quizzes and much more.
The University of Granada organised a round table, a waste collection and kayak activity and a month-long bike challenge, merging sustainable development, green mobility and well-being.

At UMinho, a full day of activities at Guimarães included a city tour, an eco-rally and a sustainable fashion workshop. In Vilnius, the university participated in the organisation of the sustainability festival, "Breathe In, Green Out", which counted with lectures, hands-on workshops, an orienteering challenge, a Living Library and a live concert.



Refugee film screenings

The bottom-up initiative "Arqus: an Alliance supporting refugees' right to a qualified and unique study experience" aims to raise awareness and organise a day of reflection on refugee students at each partner university.

The universities of Maynooth, Wrocław, Graz, Padua and Lyon 1 organised events involving the presentation of local practices for the best inclusion of refugee students, the screening of documentary films and roundtable discussions. The other Arqus universities will follow suit during the next academic year.

Each university chose to screen one of the documentaries, "When you can't go back" or "Refugee Girls", about refugee students in European universities. The film screenings were followed by debates with the director, Leonardo Cinieri Lombroso, and project manager Elisa Gamba, from the University of Padua and member of the Arqus Inclusion and Diversity Hub.



May 2025



Europe Day

On 9 May, Arqus joined the celebration of Europe Day with several activities. A video was prepared with colleagues from every Arqus university sharing similarities between Europe and the Alliance.

The Arqus Café organised a special event on the occasion of its 10th edition as well as Europe Day. Arqus Café is one of the longest-standing Arqus activities and is very popular among students and staff.

At the University of Granada, an event under the theme " Unity in diversity and the defence of European values" took place with the participation of the Rector and local Arqus institutional coordinator. The Arqus team at the University of Granada also visited high schools, presenting to students the opportunities Europe and the Arqus Alliance can offer them.



Innovation Fund results

In spring 2025, the fourth call for the Arqus Innovation Fund was launched. The aim of this seed-funding call was twofold: for innovative initiatives within Arqus Working Groups and for ad hoc bottom-up initiatives.

The Innovation Fund has financed 22 initiatives from Arqus working groups and 31 ad hoc bottom-up initiatives since 2023.

Arqus Blended Intensive Programmes

In May, UMinho welcomed 50 Arqus students for the in-person phase of two Blended Intensive Programmes: “Landscape transformations, abandonment and resilience in peripheral rural areas in Southern Europe” and “Generative Artificial Intelligence to create multilingual and multimodal narratives from scientific open data”. The former involved the universities of Granada, Padua and Minho, whereas the latter was organised by the universities of Vilnius, Wrocław and Minho. The face-to-face sessions included practical workshops, institutional visits and collaborative work.

Also in May, the University of Granada hosted the “Making the planet a healthier place” BIP’s physical mobility. This BIP examined the causes and impacts of climate change, as well as how citizens can and must mobilise to address climate challenges and adopt climate resilience strategies. The first phase consisted of 11 online lectures, running from 10 March to 28 April. 30 Arqus students participated.

Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) are intensive courses that combine short periods of face-to-face activity combined with online learning and virtual collaboration. Many others have been held during this academic year.







June 2025



Arqus staff training on Joint Programmes development

In June 2025, the Arqus Learning Pathways team designed a series of online training courses on different topics relevant to the design and implementation of joint programmes, to support interested academic and administrative staff in this endeavour.

The trainings were structured as advanced modules aimed at supporting the development and implementation of individual programmes. They were designed as modules that could be attended separately or consecutively.

The trainings ranged from topics such as integrating plurilingual and intercultural elements into Joint Programmes, marketing and recruiting international students, international approval procedures, accreditation and the European approach.

More Arqus Joint Programme Trainings are planned for autumn 2025.



PhD Career Week in Padua

The fifth edition of the Arqus PhD Week for Careers Beyond Academia took place at the University of Padua from 30 June to 4 July 2025.

This five-day programme was designed to support PhD researchers beyond their first year in exploring career opportunities outside academia. It included talks and workshops led by international career experts, aimed at helping participants recognise their transferable skills, navigate recruitment processes, and understand workplace cultures beyond the academic sphere. The Phd Week also encouraged networking among early-stage researchers and professionals from diverse backgrounds and disciplines across the Arqus Alliance.

This year's edition collaborated with the project Fiasco Fest goes Arqus, which organises workshops where PhD students and researchers openly share personal setbacks in their academic and professional journeys.

Student co-designed projects

The results of the third call of student co-designed projects were published in June 2025. Five projects were selected to run their joint activities throughout 2025 and until the end of April 2026. The innovative projects selected were: What do minorities really need?; P.A.G.E.S: Picture books As Gateways to European Society; Territorial Representation of Affective and Cultural Experiences (TRACE); EcoUnity Day: Empowering Inclusive Climate Action through Intergroup Cooperation; and Human Rights Café – Voices from the peripheries: insights on human rights and democracy.



Arqus Research Initiative

In April 2025, the Alliance launched a self-funded call to fund research collaborations between Arqus academics and early-career researchers.

This internal Research Initiative was designed to foster long-term, collaborative research activities among its member universities. It marked an important milestone in strengthening the research dimension of the Alliance, particularly by encouraging the active participation of early-career researchers.

Open to all academic disciplines and welcoming the involvement of associate partners and external organisations, the call invited proposals aligned with Arqus' three key research priorities: Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability, Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation, and European Identity and Heritage. The response to the call was overwhelmingly positive, with 60 proposals submitted from across the Alliance. This enthusiastic participation highlights not only the research potential within the network but also the strong interest in building cross-institutional collaborations.

Following a thorough evaluation process, a total of €99,600 was awarded to four selected projects spanning a diverse range of disciplines, including climate science, neuroscience, plant biology and cultural heritage. All projects involve at least three Arqus partner universities and will contribute to strengthening the foundations for future joint research initiatives and funding applications.



July 2025



Arqus Student Lab 2025

On 2 and 3 July 2025, the Arqus Student Agora organised the very first Transversal Arqus Student Lab – a two-day event designed to empower students to actively shape academic life.

This dynamic initiative was a unique opportunity for Arqus students to co-create meaningful change in higher education. 18 students from all partner universities participated in this Lab at Vilnius University.

The Lab followed a structured format combining guided sessions, teamwork, and open discussion and feedback opportunities. The Student Lab brought together three diverse student teams to collaboratively tackle key challenges affecting academic life: job market connection, mental health and well-being, sustainability, student empowerment, inclusion and digital transformation.

This intensive, hands-on Lab was organised by the Arqus Student Agora and funded through the Arqus Innovation Fund.



2025 Summer School on Teaching Innovation: “Active learning in action: Engaging students through AI”

From 2 to 4 July, 45 teachers from all Arqus universities participated in this training programme where they were challenged to develop a proposal to change a course or part of it by applying techniques that fostered student engagement and artificial intelligence that helps develop content and strategies to captivate students’ attention, as well as practicing their new proposals of active learning in their courses. Participants had the opportunity to showcase creativity, exchange feedback and leave with fresh ideas to transform their teaching practice.

Arqus European Studies Summer School 2025 in Bad Hersfeld, Germany

From 3 to 7 July Leipzig University welcomed 23 master students from the universities of Granada, Graz, Vilnius and Leipzig. The summer school started with an extensive guided tour through the Point Alpha Memorial as an authentic scene of the cold war, where NATO and the Warsaw Pact faced each other until 1990. Then students discussed and exchanged perspectives on the tour, exhibition and how one can relate this historical moment to the current situation. The students carefully observed how borders and border practices are constructed in the historical approach of the memorial and how a particular emphasis of one perspective can affect the entire narrative on security and border control.

After the exhaustive but enlightening excursion, the students continued the summer school with a methodological workshop where they studied the challenges of research design, international relations and European integration theories as well as specific methods and approaches in order to be well prepared to accomplish the master's thesis successfully. Lecturers from all partner universities participated and provided guidance and information.



August 2025



Arqus Summer School “Bridging the gap – Connecting traditional and digital research approaches in agriculture”

From 25 to 29 August, Leipzig University hosted an Arqus Summer School for PhD students and early-stage researchers.

The programme of this interdisciplinary summer school addressed major challenges in agriculture and viticulture, such as climate change, labour shortages, and the need for sustainable practices. It covered topics like data management, remote sensing, robotics, and plant physiology.

Participants engaged in workshops, field trips, and idea exchanges, focusing on climate impacts, carbon balance, and crop fertility. The Arqus Summer School, titled “Bridging the gap – Connecting traditional and digital research approaches in agriculture”, fostered collaboration and offered researchers the chance to present their work in an international setting while experiencing the vibrant culture of Leipzig.

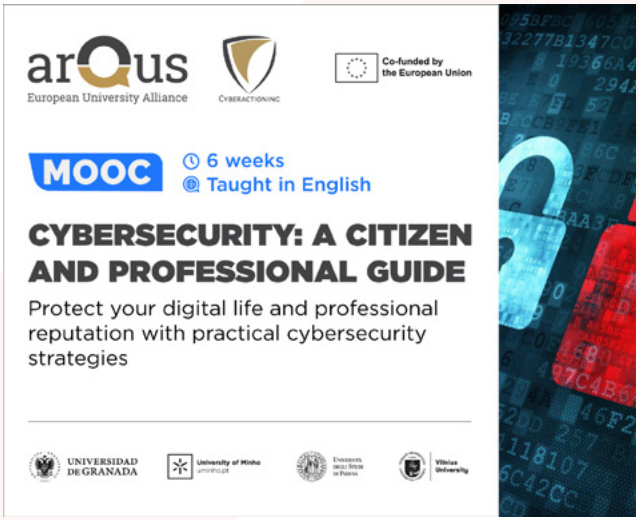
Arqus Summer School for German and Spanish

Organised by the Language Centre at Leipzig University and the Modern Language Centre at the University of Granada, 30 students participated in this summer school that comprises two weeks of all students together in Leipzig for an intensive course in Spanish and German, plus two weeks either in Leipizg or Granada to keep improving their corresponding language skills.



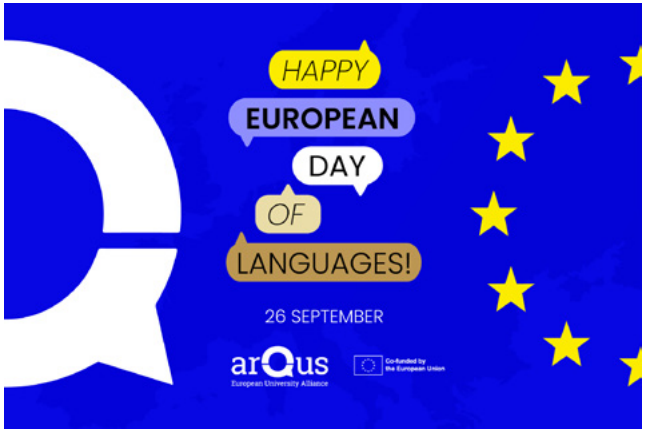
MOOC in cybersecurity

Developed within the framework of the Arqus European University Alliance as part of the Cyberactioning Project, co-funded by the Digital Europe Programme, this six-week course aimed to promote digital security skills for a broad audience (from citizens to professionals). It was developed by academics and professionals from the project's diverse consortium of academic and industry partners



September 2025





Arqus Plurilingualism Module

After the success of the pilot phase carried out at Vilnius University the previous year, Arqus launched a Plurilingualism Module starting in September 2025 and running until January 2026.

This dynamic, online and self-paced course allowed students to choose an A1 course in Lithuanian, Norwegian or French, and continue developing English skills through informal activities like the Arqus Café and tandem programmes. The course, free of charge, included theoretical webinars, language practice and individual reflections. After 150 academic hours, participants obtained an Arqus certificate of participation. Students at Vilnius University could earn 5 ECTS credits, while others received a certificate.

European Day of Languages

On 26 September, Arqus joined the celebration of the European Day of Languages with several activities.

A video was recorded with many Arqus colleagues wishing a happy European Day of Languages in their native languages. This friendly and plurilingual video illustrated the Alliance's commitment to the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity.

The Plurilingual and Intercultural Hub organised the first-ever Arqus Language Dives: a special Arqus Café event to dive into new languages. The initiative included multiple 45-minute online sessions where participants could get familiar with a new language (A1), by learning how to introduce themselves and be able to have a brief conversation. The Arqus Language Dives were an opportunity for students and staff to take part in an Arqus Café for a language that they had no prior knowledge of; they could choose from over 20 languages!



Seminar series “Strengthening Open Scholarship and Open Science Collaboration and Capacity in Arqus Member Libraries”

Maynooth University Library hosted in September the first in a series of seminars as part of the Arqus Communities of Practice - Libraries of the Future initiative.

The seminar brought together 50+ colleagues from Maynooth, Lyon, Graz , Granada, Padua, Minho, Wroclow and Durham universities to explore how universities and libraries can advance their role in supporting Open Science and Open Scholarships.

03 | OUR COMMUNITIES



Arqus Living Labs

The Arqus Living Labs were established to address three key challenges that directly relate to the Arqus Alliance's efforts: Climate Change and Sustainable Development, European Identity and Heritage, and Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation. The clusters are designed to foster collaboration and co-creation among students, academics, professionals, and external stakeholders. They serve as open, interdisciplinary spaces where challenges of the 21st century are addressed through education, knowledge-sharing, and innovation.

The Arqus Artificial Intelligence & Digital Transformation Living Lab organised a Hackathon series in October and November 2024. Participants from five universities developed solutions addressing AI literacy, societal engagement, and sustainability. Each Hackathon spanned over four weeks and provided a set of challenges. Participants got a chance to propose refinements or more challenges.

The AI&DT Living Lab held a Challenge-Based Summer School on Artificial Intelligence & Digital Transformation for Arqus PhD students from Arqus universities at the University of Graz in July 2025. The summer school provided an engaging platform to explore the impact of AI and digital technologies across various fields. 35 students benefited from this interdisciplinary programme, engaging with leading researchers, industry experts, and key stakeholders through interactive discussions, collaborative sessions, and networking events.







Two editions of the “A Journey through Artificial Intelligence” (JAI) webinar series have taken place, offering accessible, non-technical lectures to demystify AI concepts for a broad audience, ensuring that people from all backgrounds can gain insights into its principles, challenges, and potential. The JAI sessions were held both online and in person, aiming to build AI literacy and promote informed societal discourse. With a total of 9 lectures and engaging almost 400 participants, this initiative has been a success and a third edition is planned for the winter semester 2025-26.



The **Arqus European Identity & Heritage Living Lab** launched the workshop “Living Lab Heritage & Society” in June 2025 in Extremo (Portugal). Organised by the universities of Granada, Leipzig and Minho, this blended workshop allowed students, teachers and researchers to engage with the local community, addressing local development issues through co-creation and collaborative knowledge building, focused on cultural heritage and the agrarian landscape.

The **Climate Change and Sustainable Development** Living Lab carried out a wide range of activities involving students and academics. From 1 October 2024, the “Interdisciplinary Seminar Series on Climate Change and Sustainable Development” took place, and it concluded with the “Winter School on Bioaerosols, Health, Climate Change and Sustainable Development”, hosted by the University of Lyon 1 in March 2025.



In October 2024, cluster members also joined the first European Living Lab Hub meeting, which laid the foundations for future cooperation.

The Weimar Excellence Initiative, launched by the University of Lyon 1, Leipzig University and the University of Wrocław, organized events in February and June that brought together researchers from different universities and disciplines.

In May 2025, several Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) were held: "One Health Approach to Host-Fungus Interaction and Virulence" in Braga and "Mechanisms and Regulation of Cell Death and Autophagy". The University of Granada hosted the Challenge Based Learning Programme "Making the Planet a Healthier Place". The project "Proximity Matters" enabled students from Granada, Padua, Wrocław, Graz and Minho to carry out field research with local tourism partners. Finally, the "EDU-CLIMA" webinar series began in Graz, bringing together educators, students and researchers to explore innovative approaches to climate education.

Arqus Communities of Practice

The Arqus Communities of Practice (CoPs) are domain-based communities of professionals that come together for bench and peer learning in all areas of institutional activity, as well as to offer staff development opportunities across all partner universities. The CoPs involve professionals or academics from at least four of the nine Arqus universities, and may also include associate partners. A fundamental component of the CoPs is the exchange of practice among staff members of the Arqus universities, intending to create a mutual space for sharing experiences. Communities of Practice also contribute to developing Arqus identity and sense of belonging across all partner institutions. The past twelve months were particularly dynamic, with thirteen new CoPs established. So far, 23 CoPs have been constituted and approved:

- Arqus International Forum on Romance Studies (AIFRS)
- Arqus Cultural Communities Network
- CoP for the prevention and management of discrimination, (sexual) harassment and mobbing at universities
- Cultural Activities
- Research Support Officers
- Artificial Intelligence for the sustainability in higher education
- ExNUrb: Exchange Network on Urban Studies
- Open Science Ambassadors Network
- PFMO: Projects Finance Management Offices
- Arqus English-Medium Instruction (EMI)
- Arqus languages and cultures
- Artificial Intelligence-based enhancement for learning and teaching in Science and Technology
- Early Modern Cultural and Translation Studies
- Libraries for future
- Mobilities Studies
- Multicultural and Migration Studies Forum
- NextGen DH: Transdisciplinary, Innovative Tools, Methods, and Expertise Exchange in Digital Humanities
- Old Literatures Teaching Methods in Practice
- Arqus Academic and Writing Support Centres Network
- Arqus Career Services Network
- Green Computing Group

In March 2025, an event at the University of Granada brought together 20 members from

all nine partner universities to further develop Communities of Practice. During the meeting, several opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, professional development and new learning ways were created. The value of bottom-up initiatives was underlined, which continue to generate enthusiasm and commitment across the Alliance. Through their work, Arqus Communities of Practice have offered students and staff alike opportunities to share knowledge, exchange practices, and build innovative approaches to education, research, and professional development. The growth in their number reflects both the energy of the Alliance's members and the recognition that Communities of Practice provide an invaluable platform for making collaboration tangible and sustainable across the European higher education space.

Open Science Ambassadors Network

Launched by the Arqus R.I. H2020 project, the Open Science Ambassador Network continues as a Community of Practice. It is aimed at the development of Open Science activities in the Arqus Alliance, in order to foster community and identity-building across our member universities. Open Science is one of the guiding principles



in research to strive for cooperation, reusability and transparency across disciplines and borders. It encompasses the reduction of obstacles for all actors involved and making research data, methods, and research findings openly available to the public.

These experts on Open Science promote and commit to the implementation of Open Science guidelines and activities by inspiring and engaging other researchers (especially PhD students and postdocs) to practise Open Science, supporting others with their expertise.
The Arqus Open Science Ambassadors, in collaboration with the ENLIGHT Alliance, organises a series of webinars on Open Science. In April 2025, at the Arqus Annual Conference, they announced the creation of the Arqus Open Science Award, the first edition opened in autumn 2025.

Inclusion and Diversity Hub

The Arqus Inclusion and Diversity Hub continues working towards an inclusive and diverse Alliance, integrating a gender and I&D lens into all Arqus activities.

By sharing best practices, providing resources, and engaging in both internal and external networking, the Inclusion and Diversity Hub team is building a strong foundation of knowledge and best practices in inclusion and diversity across Europe.

In November 2024, the first Arqus Staff Week on Inclusion and Diversity took place at the University of Lyon 1, engaging Arqus professional and teaching staff to learn, share experiences and best practices, focusing on accessibility.

At the start of the 2025 Arqus Annual Conference, the Hub organised a Collaborative Open Room dedicated to advancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within and across the Alliance. It brought together over 30 members of the Alliance, a third being students, for a hands-on, interactive session focused on translating the Arqus EDI Action Plan into meaningful, practical strategies.

The Arqus Inclusion & Diversity Hub has also collaborated in the organisation of events related to refugee students, such as the film screenings of refugee documentaries and discussions at the universities of Maynooth, Wrocław, Graz, Padua and Lyon 1 from March to June, as well as the Student Advocacy Day event in Padua in June 2025. These initiatives show the Alliance's commitment to making the academic environment more inclusive and adaptive, supporting a globally aware and culturally sensitive community.





Plurilingual and Intercultural Hub

Multilingualism and interculturality continue to be central to the Arqus Alliance. The Alliance enhances the language skills of staff and students by promoting activities such as the Arqus Cafés, webinar series and language courses.

The Arqus Café remained one of the most popular formats, with the 9th and 10th editions, taking place from October 2024 to May 2025. These editions offered 90 cafés in 18 languages and recorded around 2500 visits. The 10th edition also marked an important milestone, celebrating the initiative's anniversary with an Alliance-wide event on Europe Day. Participants consistently reported high satisfaction levels, emphasising the value of meeting peers from different cultures, practising with native speakers, and the flexible combination of virtual and in-person formats.



In person language courses continued to grow, with thirty students attending the annual German and Spanish Summer School in Leipzig and Granada.

To complement the Cafés and encourage regular language use beyond formal courses, the Arqus community also introduced the Arqus Lounge, a dedicated space for staff to practice spoken English and strengthen connections within the Alliance.

Online language provision remained strong, with A1 courses in Polish, Spanish, French, German, Irish, Portuguese and Lithuanian attracting around 200 students. These courses followed a communicative and task-based approach, and participants were eligible to receive an Arqus Certificate of Attendance upon completion.

The 9 Months, 9 Universities online lecture series continued its popularity, accumulating over 3750 views. This series brings guest lectures on language and culture to students at graduate





and postgraduate levels, as well as early-stage researchers across the Alliance.

The Arqus Plurilingual and Intercultural Hub, in collaboration with Maynooth University, organised the second edition of the English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) webinar series under the Arqus EMI Community of Practice. Titled "Engaging with practice and research in English-Medium Instruction", this series ran from December 2024 to June 2025 and delivered seven virtual seminars tailored to language teachers and academics.

A notable development this year was the pilot phase of the Plurilingualism Module at Vilnius University, implemented from October 2024 to February 2025. Focused on Lithuanian language and culture, the module combined language classes, cultural lectures, active participation in Arqus Cafés and guided reflection on language learning. This pilot provided a structured framework for plurilingual competence building and will be expanded to the broader Arqus community in the 2025-2026 academic year, with Lithuanian, Norwegian and French included in the module offering.

Communities of Practice (CoPs) continued to develop, with the establishment of new groups dedicated to English-Medium Instruction, Academic and Writing Support Centres, and AI and Language Learning and Teaching. Alongside the Network of Language Centre Directors, which met three times during the year, these CoPs organised workshops, networking meetings, and semi-annual newsletters to support professional exchange and collaboration across institutions.

Finally, the Hub expanded its suite of language resources for the Arqus community. In addition, the Arqus English Style Guide was developed for central publications, and a comprehensive set of digital resources for lifelong plurilingual and intercultural learning - including general language courses, vocabulary and grammar trainers, terminology tools and materials for academic purposes - was prepared for release on Arqus Plaza.



04 | ARQUS STUDENT AGORA



The Arqus Student Agora aims to promote student participation and engagement, enhance students' Arqus experience through student-led creative projects, accelerate their personal and professional development, and improve student services.

The main initiatives are the Arqus Student Ambassadors Programme, the Alumni Mentorship Programme, the Student Services Network Toolkit, and the Arqus Student Co-designed Projects. Through them, the Student Agora aligns with the Arqus Alliance's core values of academic excellence, mobility, and societal engagement, empowering students to become change agents and collaborators and helping to build a strong sense of belonging within the Alliance.

The academic year 2024/25 has been an inspiring one for the Arqus Student Agora, with students at the heart of innovation, co-creation and leadership across the Alliance.

The year opened with a vibrant series of welcome and orientation activities across all partner universities, from picnics and escape games to international weeks and Arqus Days, creating a strong sense of belonging to a European community. A major step forward was the release of the Student Services Network Toolkit, designed to strengthen inclusion and enhance student support services.

The 2024 Call for Student Co-designed Projects advanced into its implementation phase, while the 2025 Call, launched in March, selected five innovative projects to run until April 2026, ranging from climate action initiatives to human rights cafés.

At the governance level, co-leads and the Student Council met in Maynooth in November 2024, strengthening student participation in decision-making and fostering closer collaboration. During the annual conference in Leipzig, the Student Agora Team met with the Student Council, continuing the cooperation design of actions. In May, six Arqus students represented the Alliance at the European Student Assembly (ESA25) in Strasbourg, contributing to policy proposals debated at the European Parliament.

A highlight of the year was the first Transversal Arqus Student Lab, hosted by Vilnius University on 2–3 July 2025. Eighteen students from all partner universities co-created solutions to challenges such as sustainability, mental health, digitalization and inclusion, while gaining transversal and professional skills.

Together, these achievements underline the role of the Arqus Student Agora as a driver of change, empowering students to shape inclusive, innovative, and collaborative academic communities across Europe.



Arqus Student Ambassadors Programme

The Ambassadors Programme was launched in September 2023, and it has successfully created a network of 208 student ambassadors across member universities, each promoting the Alliance's values and strengthening local community engagement.

As Arqus Ambassadors, students take part in a variety of training and activities, such as promoting and participating in events, facilitating communication between their home university and other members of the Arqus Alliance, and contributing to the development of joint projects.

The programme offers students the chance to develop valuable skills, such as cross-cultural communication, teamwork and leadership, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the academic and cultural contexts of the Arqus Alliance partner universities.





At the beginning of the academic year, the Agora also launched the second editions of the Student Ambassadors Programme (ASAP) and the Alumni Mentorship Programme (AMP), providing students with opportunities for peer engagement, mentoring and local leadership. Ambassadors played a key role in promoting the Arqus Annual Conference through the Arqus Aware initiative, boosting visibility and engagement across the Alliance.

Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme

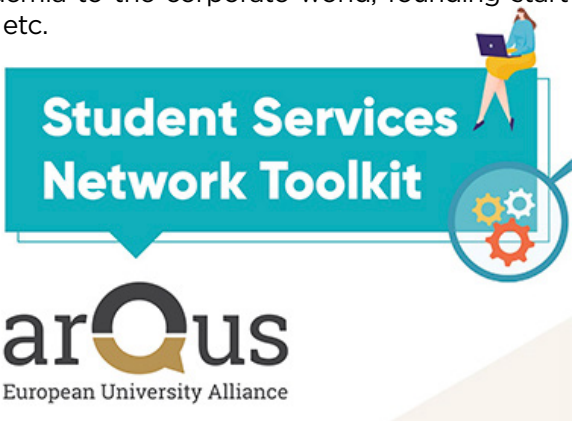
Since 2023, this initiative has supported students in their personal and professional development. The Alumni Mentorship Programme has already attracted over a hundred mentees and 40 mentors.

Mentors are alumni of one of the Arqus Alliance universities who have some experience and expertise in their field. They volunteer to guide and support a mentee in their career development, by sharing their experience, expertise and knowledge,

providing guidance and feedback.

Mentees are current students or recent graduates of one of the Arqus Alliance universities. They are selected based on their academic and professional achievements, interests, and goals.

The initiative of the **Arqus Alumni Talk webinar series** aims to help current students and graduates better prepare themselves for the professional challenges that lie ahead. Through 4 Talks, Alumni from the universities of Granada and Padua shared their experiences crafting their careers, from academia to the corporate world, founding start-ups, etc.



Student Services Network Toolkit

The Arqus Student Services Network Toolkit aims to enhance the student experience across Alliance institutions by fostering collaborative and supportive services, tailored to the needs of students across the Arqus universities. Created between student services and Arqus students, the toolkit was published in September 2024 and is accessible through the Arqus website.

This toolkit serves both student services staff and students across Arqus universities by providing a comprehensive database of resources available at each Alliance institution. The toolkit enhances transparency and usability, allowing students to easily locate relevant resources across the network.

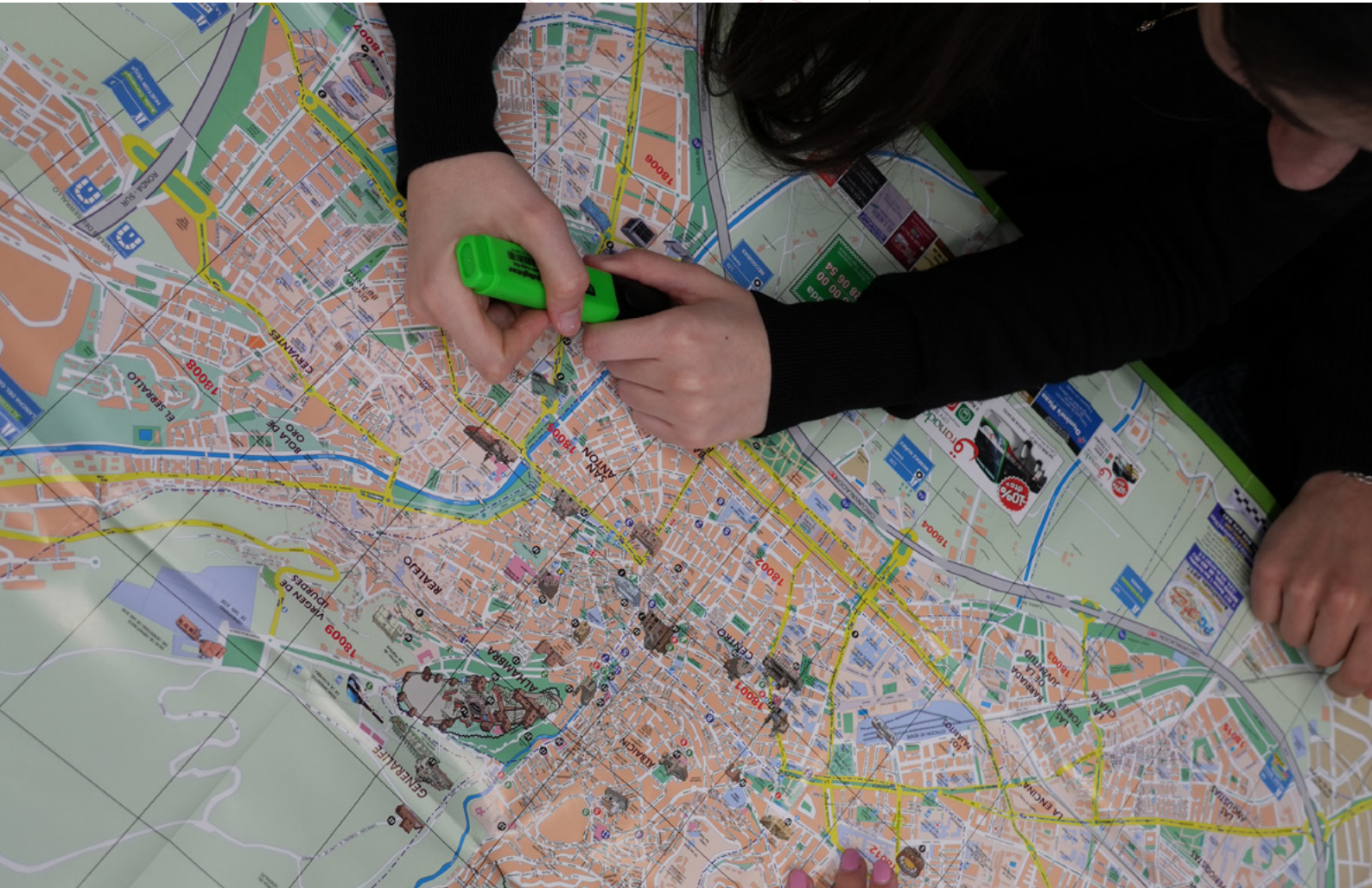
Student Co-designed Projects

Student co-designed projects aim to enhance inter-institutional student experiences within the Alliance. Through three calls in 2023, 2024 and 2025, Arqus has supported 22 innovative and collaborative initiatives that are shaping our educational environment and enhancing student engagement, consolidating the community and supporting students' personal and professional development.

Involving over a hundred students, the selected co-designed projects are shaping Arqus students' academic, social, and professional environments. They range from diverse and relevant topics such as climate action, inclusion and diversity, human rights, interculturality, human trafficking prevention, AI, reducing waste and upcycling, music, STEM, religious diversity, intergenerational exchanges, election analysis, linguistics, and much more.



05 | LEARNING PATHWAYS



Arqus Learning Pathways has launched several initiatives and is advancing Arqus' objectives regarding inter-institutional collaboration, high-quality education, mobility, lifelong learning, and innovative curricula. This reflects the collaborative effort across the Arqus Alliance to strengthen joint programmes, certifications, and learning opportunities.

The Learning Pathways team has been diligently working to advance the development of Arqus joint micro-credentials. This initiative demonstrates a high level of ambition by fostering collaboration and innovation among partner universities to create new opportunities for learners. In March 2025, the Learning Pathways team organised an online training event on micro-credentials, designed to provide staff and academics with a deeper understanding of what micro-credentials are and how they are developed.

The session fostered collaboration and served as a crucial starting point for enabling the successful implementation of Arqus micro-credentials. The event generated considerable interest, drawing over 100 registered participants, and marked an important step in the journey toward expanding flexible and innovative learning pathways. Participants were provided with key documents prepared by the Learning Pathways team – including the framework for jointly prepared micro-credential courses, an agreement template, and a syllabus template – which help them apply the knowledge gained in practice. After this training, 14 joint micro-credential proposals were submitted, evaluated and selected for funding. They are now in the development phase, with several expected to be launched in autumn 2025.



Joint Study Programmes

Significant progress has been made on Arqus joint programmes. The three master's programmes Arqus already offer continue their success: European Studies, International Cybersecurity and Cyberintelligence, and Translation.

Five more Master's programmes and two Bachelor's programmes are currently being in development: Master's in Translation, Technology and Artificial Intelligence, Digital Environmental Law, Digital Humanities, and Sustainable Development; and Bachelor's in Business Data Analytics, and in Physics.

On 18 and 19 November 2024, the Arqus Joint Programmes Implementation Workshop was held in Wrocław. This face-to-face workshop provided academic and administrative staff with expert guidance and practical insights into curriculum design, cooperation agreements, financial management, and best practices for collaboration. It served both as a kick-off meeting and as a networking platform, laying a strong foundation for the successful launch of these programmes by the end of the project funding period.

Later, experts from the four Arqus universities designing the development of the future Joint Master's in Translation, Technology and Artificial



Intelligence met in Granada in February 2025 and in Graz in June to fine-tune the curriculum.
The selection of joint programmes promotes collaborative, cross-border education, advancing the alliance's vision of a shared academic space.

Arqus Joint Programme Staff Training Modules

To support academic and administrative staff in the design and implementation of joint programmes throughout the entire development process, a dedicated sub-team of Arqus Learning Pathways has created a series of basic and advanced training modules. Nine online sessions and one on-site workshop have already been delivered between December 2024 and June 2025 attracting strong interest from participants across the Alliance. Topics ranged from introductory concepts and terminology to advanced areas such as recruitment, accreditation procedures, and language considerations. Participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many returning for multiple modules. New training sessions will continue from September 2025.

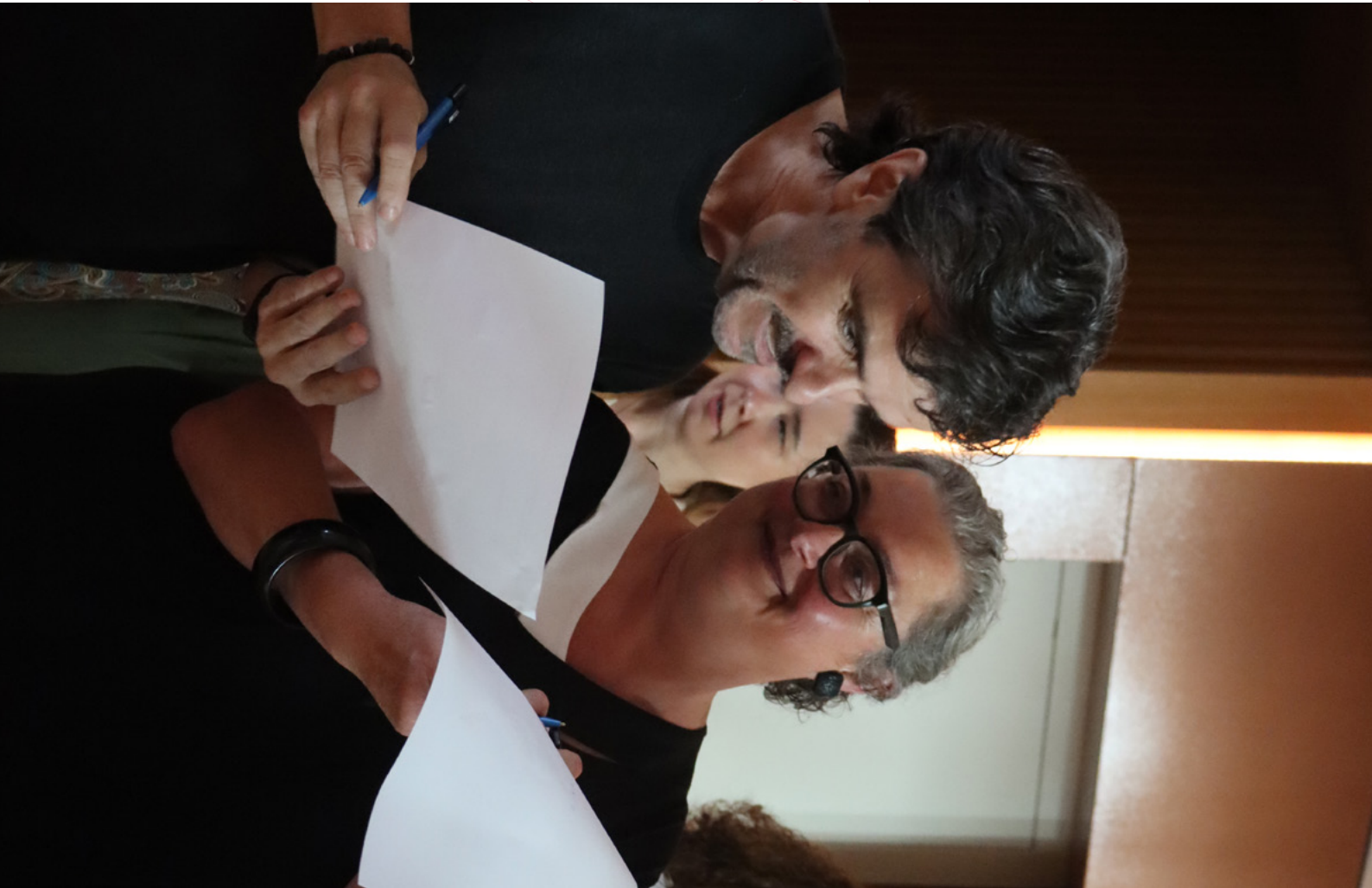
Microcredentials

14 Arqus microcredentials are in development, ranging from topics such as AI, climate change, health, science and business. This demonstrates the Alliance's commitment to supporting diverse learning paths and addressing future workforce needs.

Last year, the Learning Pathways team established the framework for jointly microcredential courses, paving the way for flexible and innovative learning opportunities, key to responding to the need for lifelong learning and upskilling.

In March 2025, an online training event was organised for academic and administrative staff from Arqus universities on what micro-credentials are and how they are developed. This session fostered active engagement and collaboration among participants and served as a crucial starting point for enabling the smooth implementation of Arqus microcredentials.

06 | TEACHING INNOVATION



The Arqus Alliance is committed to promoting innovative student-centred learning, excellence in teaching, and challenge-driven research.

After the successful editions in Vilnius and Padua, a third **Teaching Innovation Summer School** was organised in Braga in July 2025. This event was all about equipping higher education teachers with innovative strategies and tools powered by artificial intelligence to make learning more dynamic and impactful.

In addition, **20 online Teaching Innovation workshops** have been organised during the academic year 2024-25, allowing members of our teaching community to share their methods and perspectives on teaching and learning. Over two hundred teachers participated in these events. Topics covered included active methodologies, teaching portfolio, AI in education, collaborative learning, virtual exchanges, blended mobility, reading resources, creating MOOCs, educational videos and podcasts, the use of videogames, evaluation and feedback, etc.

During the 2025 Arqus Annual Conference in Leipzig, outstanding teaching practices were celebrated with Teaching Excellence Awardees sharing their best practices, inspiring other teachers to innovate and further enhance their students' learning.

The Arqus Teaching Innovation team has created the Online Resource Centre, now available on the Arqus website. It serves as a repository of materials and digital resources, providing up-to-date information on teaching innovation and excellence, featuring best practices in teaching, learning, and assessment, alongside research findings and training materials in various formats,



including text, video, and podcasts. A variety of subjects are included in this Resource Centre: AI in Learning and Teaching, Assessment in Education, Inclusive Learning and Teaching, Active Learning for Student Engagement, and Active Learning Reports.



07 | ARQUS PHD PURSUIT



The main focus of the Arqus PhD Pursuit team is to support Early-Stage Researchers and prepare them to integrate academia or the labour market at the European level. We provide PhD and postdoctoral researchers with the skills necessary to become internationally competitive inside and outside academia and contribute to innovation strategies.

Furthermore, Arqus is dedicated to including extended academic staff in its activities. We have built an active Arqus network of career experts that share their projects, ideas and skills to develop programmes and activities for Early-Stage Researchers.

Arqus Mentoring Programme for Early-Stage Researchers

The interdisciplinary mentoring programme supports doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in their academic career development through peer-group training sessions and connecting them with experienced researchers who serve as mentors.

The second round of the Arqus Mentoring Programme for PhDs and PostDocs ran from October 2024 to June 2025. A group of international Early-Stage Researchers met for a two-day Kick-Off workshop in Lyon, participated in diverse online sessions and pursued an individual mentoring journey with an experienced researcher from another Arqus University. The mentoring supported the ESRs with navigating career challenges in academia, dealing with topics such as publication strategies, project management, grant writing or sustainable networking.

Through a mix of online and in-person meetings, mentees participated in training sessions and discussions on research funding, establishing and maintaining academic networks, mental health, time management, applying for academic positions and possible next career steps. Since the mentoring programme was launched in



2023, it has counted on the participation of 65 mentees (44 PhD candidates and 21 postdocs) and 35 mentors. The programme has proven to be an invaluable resource for a successful career in academia and brings about collaborations between researchers of different career stages and disciplines.

> ***I know more about myself and I'm much more confident in my academic work.***
> Mentee from the University of Wrocław

> ***Even though it was only for one year, the lessons we learned will last for our entire careers.***
> Mentee from the University of Graz

> ***It was with no doubt a very positive and fruitful experience. I met both online and in person with my mentee, and I was very happy with the meetings.***
> Mentor from the University of Padua

Careers beyond academia

Between 30 June and 4 July 2025, the University of Padua hosted the fifth edition of the Arqus Training Programme for Careers Beyond Academia, an event designed to support Early-Stage Researchers in exploring career opportunities outside academia. 35 PhD researchers from a variety of disciplines took part in workshops on interview techniques, CV writing, overcoming communication challenges and adopting an entrepreneurial approach. The five-day programme included talks and workshops led by international career experts. These were aimed at helping participants recognise their transferable skills, navigate recruitment processes and understand workplace cultures beyond academia. The programme also offered opportunities to network with PhD students and postdoctoral researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplines across the Arqus Alliance. The Career Week provided an opportunity for career professionals from various Arqus universities to convene, share insights, deliver their own workshops, and engage in Train-the-Trainer sessions organised by the local Careers Office. There was also a collaboration with the Fiasco Fest, a special workshop format organised by Dr Johanna Stadlbauer and Dr Sabine Bergner from the University of Graz. This offered a guided space to discuss academic 'failures' and learn how to move forward positively. Researchers were able to openly share personal setbacks in their academic and professional journeys, thereby promoting a more failure-friendly research culture.



08 | ARQUS TALENT & INNOVATION FUND



Arqus Talent Scholarship Fund

The Arqus Talent Scholarship Fund is a scholarship scheme aimed at talented students who want to pursue complete postgraduate studies (Master's or Doctorate) at one of the Arqus partner universities. A compulsory mobility phase (study period, training, research stay) at a second Arqus partner university is included, while the Alliance encourages applicants for multiple and longer stays at the different universities of the Arqus Alliance. This initiative is particularly committed to refugees, asylum seekers, and students with fewer opportunities.

Between October 2024 and September 2025, four students graduated and 11 scholarship holders started their studies.

Arqus Innovation Fund

The Arqus Innovation Fund is an initiative offering funding with the aim of incentivising innovative internal bottom-up activities from Arqus staff and students through the availability of seed funding. The goal behind this initiative is to drive innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset, and to strengthen the visibility of Arqus internally, promoting further staff engagement.

The Alliance financially supports innovative activities developed by Arqus staff and students that go hand in hand with the objectives of the Arqus Alliance and its three major focus areas: Education, Research and Innovation, and Social Engagement.

One final call was launched in January 2025, under which 11 new initiatives have been selected for funding. Among these selected initiatives, two are led by students. Thus, a total of 56 initiatives have been funded by the Arqus Innovation Fund across its four calls (March and October 2023, April 2024 and March 2025). The outreach of these initiatives is being boosted through the creation of a dissemination website that will be launched in autumn 2025.

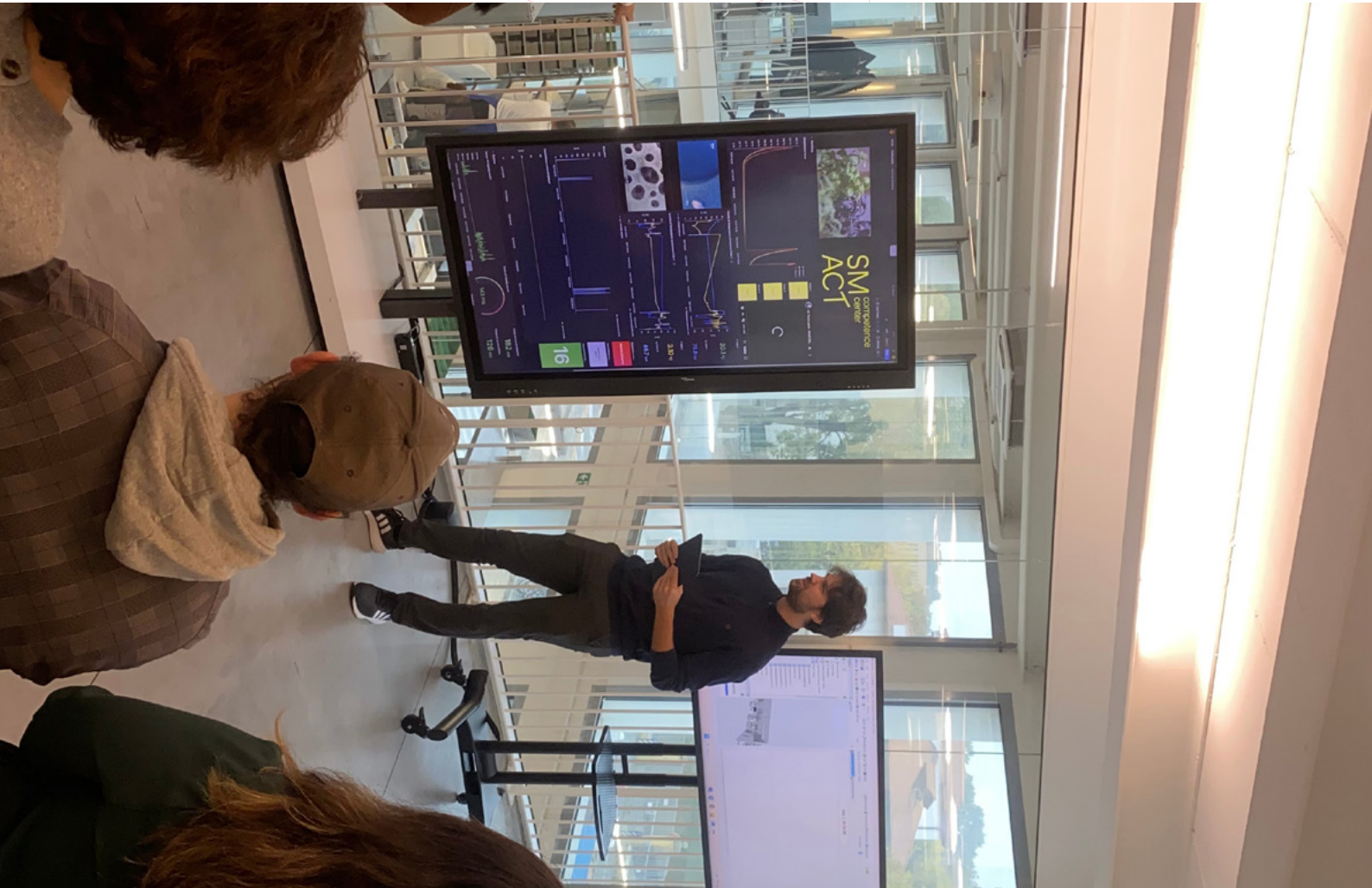


Designing Joint Calls and Final Report

A second version of the Handbook on Joint Calls is being developed. The focus of this Handbook is to provide guidance and advice for the preparation and publication of joint calls, including best practice examples from all Alliance members.

To wrap up the work of the Arqus Talent & Innovation Fund, a final report is being drafted with a focus not only on the calls, beneficiaries, execution, impact and evaluation of the Fund, but also on recommendations for future enhancement and institutionalisation.

09 | PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Arqus is committed to fostering knowledge and technology transfer, enhancing joint science dissemination, exploring deeper cooperation between our universities and their ecosystems, and contributing to regional and European innovation. The promotion of entrepreneurship has been successfully implemented with activities to advance the participation of students and alumni, connecting with our universities and their local ecosystems.

ISLYE

The Arqus International Soft Landing for Young Entrepreneurs (ISLYE) programme is a format of a start-up exchange between Arqus universities.

Between October 2024 and July 2025, five ISLYE mobilities took place between the universities of Granada, Graz, Leipzig, Minho, Padua and Wrocław. Students, researchers and entrepreneurs had the chance to visit and get in touch with interesting local contacts via incubators and accelerators at the respective universities.

The entrepreneurial exchange programme between the partner universities has begun to exchange teams between the incubators of the partner universities. Teams from Padua travelled to Graz, from Leipzig to Wroclaw and Granada, and from Minho to Leipzig to establish new international contacts and present their prototypes. The direct contact between the young start-up teams from different universities is particularly fruitful and sustainable. In total, nine young entrepreneurs got to know the ecosystems of the partner universities.





Work integrated learning

In September 2025, two summer schools based on the concept of service learning took place in Leipzig. International teams from the partner universities worked on local challenges posed by external stakeholders: 15 young researchers discussed with winegrowers how they could respond to climate change and 16 young academics developed solutions for a museum to be more inclusive. Particularly exciting here were the solution concepts that had already been implemented in other countries in some cases. Funding from external sources was also raised for both summer schools.

BIP Mentoring Programme: Turning Ideas into Businesses

This Blended Intensive Programme was an innovative initiative designed to connect Alumni of Arqus universities with current students and recent graduates from Arqus partner universities. It was created by the University of Minho, and participants from Granada, Leipzig, Maynooth, Minho and Vilnius took part.



The second edition of the BIP Mentoring Programme: Turning Ideas into Businesses aimed to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices in entrepreneurship. It had an online phase in June and July with weekly synchronous and asynchronous sessions. The face-to-face phase took place at the University of Minho from 16 to 20 June.

International Innovators Award

The Arqus International Innovators Award is an online competition aimed at recognising the most innovative and internationalised university-based start-ups. This Award allows entrepreneurs to present international business models in order to support visibility and networking on the European level.

In 2024, Astrodemo was chosen as the winner by over 600 voters from across Europe. The announcement took place at the “Leipziger Gründungsnacht” (‘Leipzig Start-up Night’) event., a regional start-up competition Astrodemo, created by students and alumni from the University of Padua, aims to launch low-cost space missions to support the growing Space Economy, aiming to make an impact both in orbit and on Earth.

The projects of the other participants from Minho, Granada, Graz, Leipzig, and Wroclaw were also presented in the “Leipziger Gründungsnacht” event.

The next edition of the Arqus International Innovators Award will take place in autumn 2025.



10 | ARQUS ON THE MOVE



The main goal of Arqus on the Move is to cultivate a sustainable mobility culture within the Arqus Alliance by providing seamless mobility opportunities for all Arqus community members, as well as providing the necessary tools, instruments and funding, developing innovative forms of mobility, offering training and networking opportunities, observing mobility and boosting the visibility of different mobility programmes.

Outgoing students

The Arqus on the Move team keeps its commitment in enhancing international mobility opportunities for the whole Alliance's community. It develops and promotes the Arqus Mobility Culture under the banners of inclusion, digitalisation and sustainability.

The group aims at reducing barriers and facilitating seamless mobilities thanks to its Open



Mobility Agreement and measures its impact through the Arqus Mobility Observatory.

It works on standard credit mobility to improve its benefits and promotes innovative schemes focusing on shorter and therefore more accessible international pathways.

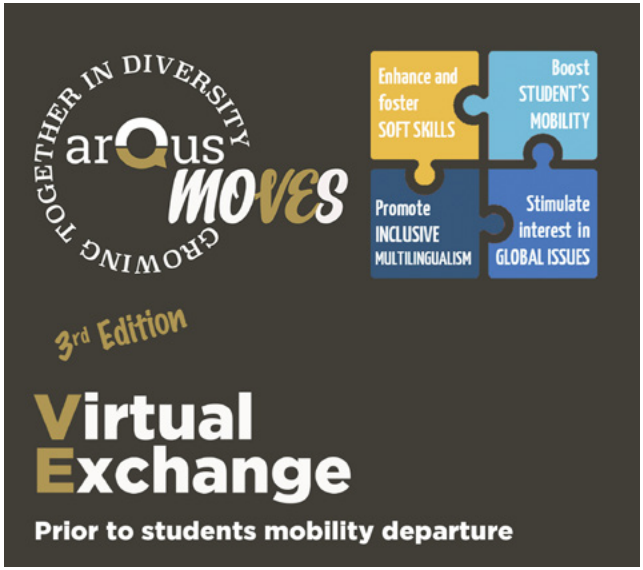
Over the last year, a number of established initiatives have been evaluated, improved and relaunched, but they have also been complemented by new forms of support for international mobility.

Arqus MoVEs

Arqus MoVEs (Pre-Mobility Virtual Exchange Programme) provides a standard learning pathway highly accessible to all Arqus students, including those of associated partners, planning an international mobility experience.

The initiative is intended as a pre-mobility project that involves students across different academic backgrounds, cultures, languages, ages and disciplines. The programme lasts 8-10 weeks and by combining synchronous and asynchronous activities, the participants develop key skills such as intercultural and global competence, critical thinking, inclusive multilingualism, digital competencies, and others.

The 3rd Arqus MoVEs edition launched in October 2024, and the 4th one in June 2025. The programme is open to all Arqus students going on mobility the next semester or academic year, as well as to those who haven't had the chance to go abroad for studies yet but are willing to meet new people in an intercultural and multilingual environment.



Twinnings 2.0

Twinning 2.0 puts the emphasis on the main Arqus themes: climate change and environmental sustainability, artificial intelligence and digital transformation, and European identity and heritage.

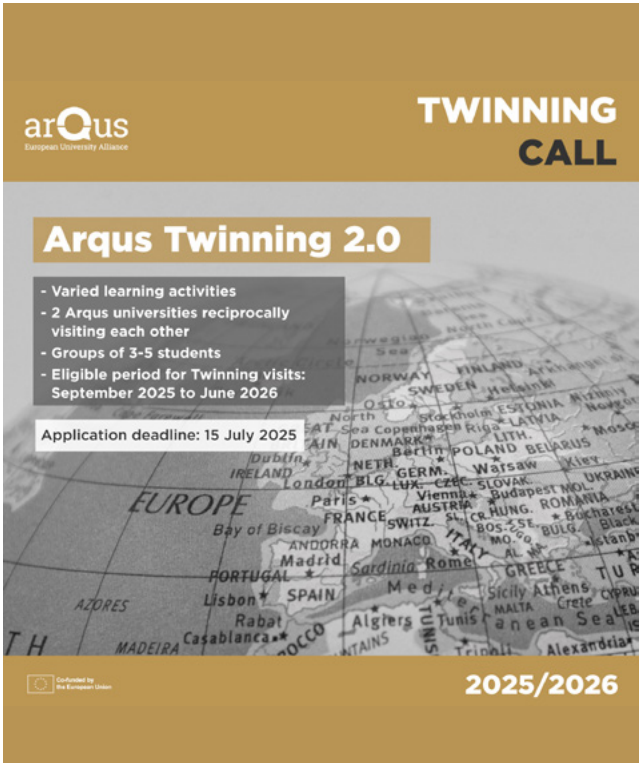
It consists of an international mobility programme for two groups from two Arqus universities, with lecturers and students reciprocally visiting each other's partner institution to carry out a joint programme and share learning experiences. This initiative aims to strengthen the subject-related collaboration of staff and students and create possibilities to carry out joint learning and teaching activities through piloting short-term flexible mobility schemes.

Throughout the academic year 2024-2025,

12 Arqus Twinning 2.0 projects have been developed. Over a hundred students and 24 lecturers have participated in mobilities among the universities of Granada, Graz, Leipzig, Lyon 1, Maynooth, Minho, Padua, Vilnius and Wrocław. Topics range from climate justice and transition, rural landscapes, energy, to European identity, interculturality, EU values, digital innovation, literature, AI in linguistics, etc.

In May 2025, a new call was launched and 6 projects have been selected to organise long-term and collaborative activities among Arqus universities. These projects will be carried out through the academic year 2025-2026, enabling about 60 students and 12 lecturers to benefit from the mobility programme.





Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs)

Arqus Blended Intensive Programmes are short, intensive programmes that use innovative ways of learning, teaching and training for students and staff, including the use of online cooperation. They are developed and implemented by at least two Arqus universities. Participants undertake a short-term physical mobility abroad combined with a compulsory virtual component, facilitating collaborative online learning, exchange and teamwork.

A few examples of BIPs organised during the 2024-25 academic year are:

- Making the planet a healthier place
- Cultural diversity: foundations, frameworks and practices
- Mentoring Programme: Turning Ideas into Businesses
- Arqus International Forum on Romance Studies (AIFRS)
- Landscape transformations, abandonment and resilience in peripheral rural areas in Southern Europe
- Mechanisms and regulation of cell death and autophagy
- Generative Artificial Intelligence to create multilingual and multimodal narratives from scientific open data
- Training in advanced sustainable metal-organic materials

Arqus Green Mobility Days

After the success of its first edition, Arqus organised the second Green Mobility Days with multiple local activities at the universities of Lyon 1, Granada, Minho, Padua and Vilnius. On the occasion of Earth Month, this initiative raises awareness about sustainable ways of approaching international mobility and new strategies to tackle climate change.

Arqus Green Mobility Days featured round tables, workshops and info booths promoting sustainable development, green mobility and well-being. Activities included a waste collection and kayak activity, treasure hunts, green mobility games, zero waste DIY workshops, bike theft prevention stands, carbon footprint quizzes, sustainable fashion workshops, orienteering challenge...





Arqus Green Mobility Days Award

The Green Mobility Days Award recognises outstanding commitment to sustainability through innovative green mobility approaches. A call for ideas was open to assemble and share the best existing practices or future projects designed by a member of the Arqus community, proposing new ways to tackle climate change effects of international mobility.

9 proposals were submitted with very useful insights that will inspire the next Green Mobility Days editions. The 2025 winner was Giada Abategiovanni, a student at the University of Padua, for her project “Green mobility week”.



Tell Your Mobility Story

This contest invited students from Arqus Universities to create short videos — up to 90 seconds — capturing their unique international mobility experiences.

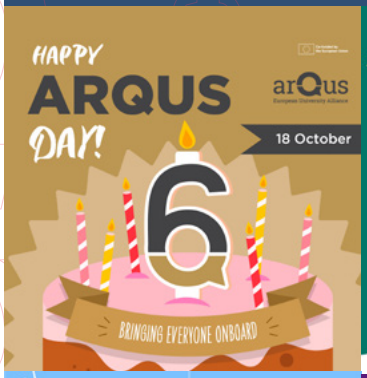
With over 2,000 votes cast, the competition featured two categories: Green Mobility and Mobility Story, allowing participants to choose the theme that best matched their journey. Once submitted, all videos were published on the Arqus YouTube channel, where viewers voted for their favourites.

In the Green Mobility category, students showcased their sustainable travel habits and shared tips on how to stay eco-friendly while abroad. To keep the green spirit alive, the 4 winners in this category received an Interrail Pass to continue exploring Europe in an environmentally friendly way.

In the Mobility Stories category, students reflected on their study abroad experiences, from classes and academic life to cultural exchanges and lifelong friendships. Winners in this category were awarded a box of Arqus gadgets.



11 | OUTREACH


HAPPY
ARQUS
DAY!
arqus
18 October
6
BRINGING EVERYONE ONBOARD


arqus
Advent Calendar
Our Advent Calendar Quiz
Play daily in our stories!


arqus
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DAY
24 JANUARY


arqus
11 February
International Day of
Women & Girls in Science


arqus
International Women's Day
8 March


Earth Day
22 April
arqus


arqus
HAPPY EUROPE DAY!
9 MAY


21 May
World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
arqus


WORLD REFUGEE DAY
20 June
2025
arqus


International Youth Day
12 August
arqus


HAPPY
EUROPEAN
DAY
OF
LANGUAGES!
26 SEPTEMBER
arqus



Arqus Knowledge Pills

The monthly podcast of the Arqus Alliance introduces research ongoing at Arqus universities in a short and comprehensive way. Each episode highlights one researcher from an Arqus university by inviting them to explain their research in 15 to 20 minutes. Arqus Knowledge Pills brings the scientific expertise of all partner universities through interviews that revolve around special research fields with social relevance or current topics. From October 2024 to September 2025, 10 episodes were published.



Europe Day and European Day of Languages

On 9 May, Arqus joined the celebration of Europe Day with several activities. A video was prepared with colleagues from every Arqus university sharing similarities between Europe and the Alliance. Also, on 26 September, Arqus joined the celebration of the European Day of Languages with several activities. A video was recorded with many Arqus colleagues wishing a happy European Day of Languages in their native languages. This friendly and plurilingual video illustrated the Alliance's commitment to the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity.

Testimonials students JMP European Studies

Several students of the Arqus Joint Master's Programme in European Studies shared their experiences studying this unique Master. They encourage those interested to join and benefit from its learning programme, its mobility offers and the opportunity to enjoy life at Granada, Graz, Leipzig and/or Vilnius.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/study-in-arqus/joint-masters-programmes/master-european-studies/testimonials-european/



Arqus Advent Calendar 2024

In December 2024, Arqus launched for the third time a successful Instagram campaign inviting students to explore their multicultural awareness through questions about facts and traditions from Arqus countries.



Arqus Food Week: À table avec Arqus

This initiative started by Lyon 1 aims to showcase the richness of European cuisine while also highlighting international opportunities available through Arqus universities. Throughout the week, academic and administrative staff have the opportunity to experience the diverse flavors of Europe.

Each day of the week features culinary specialties from different member countries, including Spain, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Italy, Lithuania and Poland.

Pride day

On 28 June, Arqus joined the celebration of the Pride Day with some key social media actions to reflect on the role of the Alliance in the defense and promotion of the LGTBQIA+ rights, along with a special article from the Maynooth University Staff Pride Network to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Marriage Equality in Ireland.

9 Months 9 University, 9M9U

Organised within the framework of the Arqus Plurilingual and Intercultural Hub, 9 Months, 9 Universities is a series of guest lectures that focus on specific topics related to language and culture and target mainly graduate and postgraduate students as well as early-stage researchers and lecturers interested in these topics. They webinars are made live on YouTube, so the audience can participate through a chat section with the speakers. After each session, the episodes are recorded and promtoed on the Arqus YouTube channel.

| FIGURES |

Follow us on
@arqusalliance

LinkedIn

4 694 followers

Impressions in the last year	207,68K
Interactions:	1 690
Number of publications:	383 posts

Facebook

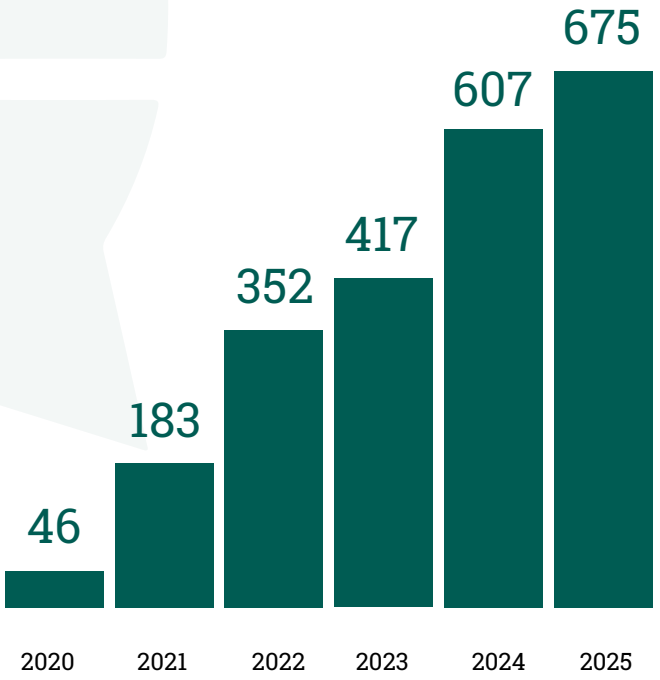
1 534 followers

1 232 likes

Instagram

3 061 followers

Total number of publications



YouTube

New followers: **293**
Subscribers: **1 030**
Number of views: **36 990**
Number of videos published: **96** videos

Newsletter

Subscribers: **4 419**
Subscriber growth: **235**

arqus-alliance.eu

141 546 users
338 news
437 420 pageviews

Arqus Knowledge Pills

10 Episodes this year.
308 Plays on Spotify.
445 Streams and downloads in all platforms.

12 | STRONGER TOGETHER



Arqus students contribute to the EUSAF24 Policy Recommendations

Arqus students contributed to the EUSAF24 Policy Recommendations recently published. This report compiles the key recommendations from the European University Student Ambassadors Forum (EUSAF) 2024.

The EUSAF24 gathered student ambassadors from across Europe in Warsaw (Poland) on 12-14 September 2024 to discuss the future of higher education and the active role of young people in strengthening the European identity. Representing the Arqus Alliance, Max Hasner attended this event as the President of the Arqus Student Council. The EUSAF24, under the title “Empowering students to shape the future of higher education”, is the pilot project for the communication of student representatives of European University alliances.



Arqus at the SwafS final event of 2nd generation alliances

On 4 October, Arqus was present at the joint SwafS event at the Norway House in Brussels, represented by Massimiliano Zattin (Vice-Rector for International Relations and Doctoral and Postgraduate Studies, University of Padua, and Chair of the Arqus Research and Innovation Board), and Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator. This important gathering brought together representatives from the European University Alliances to reflect on lessons learned from the second generation of the "Science with and for Society" (SwafS) projects and to discuss pathways for the future. Dorothy Kelly was a featured speaker at the closing session.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-at-swafs-event-2024/



Arqus participates in the BHPS II Final Conference in Athens

The event, co-organised by the Greek Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), took place in Athens on 7 and 8 October 2024, bringing together Higher Education leaders from across Europe to discuss the implementation of Bologna tools and enhance collaboration across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-participates-the-bhps-ii-final-conference-athens/



The EDLAB Seminar at Braga and the FAIRe (Forum of the Academic Federation for Information and External Representation) at Aveiro.

The University of Minho presented Arqus in two important events in Portugal in October 2024: At the EDLAB seminar at Braga and the FAIRe (Forum of the Academic Federation for Information and External Representation) in Aveiro.

In these two events, the focus was on the new European degree label. Magda Pinheiro presented the European Commission's proposal and the results of the EDLab project, in which the University of Minho participated as an Arqus member, along with the University of Algarve (a member of SEA.EU Alliance) and the New University of Lisbon (a member of EUTOPIA Alliance). In addition, Professor Henrique Santos recounted the journey of creating the Master's Programme in International Cybersecurity and Cyberintelligence under the umbrella of Arqus.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/university-of-minho-presents-arqus-in-events-portugal/



Arqus publishes its position paper on the European Degree

On 31 October, Arqus published its comprehensive Position Paper on the European Degree, reflecting its commitment to pioneering innovation and reform in higher education. Drawing on the conclusions of the EDLab project and the Alliance's experience developing joint academic programmes, this paper serves as a key contribution to ongoing policy discussions surrounding the European Degree and the European Degree Label. The paper emphasises the transformative potential of the European Degree Label as a benchmark of excellence in joint international programmes. It also underscores the importance of equitable access, robust funding mechanisms, and simplified quality assurance processes to ensure the success of this ambitious framework across all educational levels, including micro-credentials.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-position-paper-european-degree/



Granada hosts an Introductory Session on the European Commission's Blueprint for a European Degree

In November, the University of Granada hosted an Introductory Session on the European Commission's Blueprint for a European Degree organized by the EDLab pilot project on policy experimentation, which has been implemented by the Arqus Alliance in collaboration with ENLIGHT, EUTOPIA and SEA-EU. This session was a unique opportunity to reflect on the challenges and opportunities the ambitious European degree poses for the academic programmes and the European Higher Education Area.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/granada-hosts-introductory-session-on-european-commissions-blueprint-for-a-european-degree/



Arqus student Diana Radoi represents the Alliance at a press corner with Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission

Diana Radoi, a student of the Arqus Joint Master's Programme in European Studies, was one of the three students selected from the 65 funded Alliances to meet Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission in Brussels on 24 January. During the press moment, the Executive Vice-President informed on the added value of the European Universities initiative and the Blueprint for a European degree. The students were given the floor to highlight their personal experiences with their joint programme in their European University and had the opportunity to share how these experiences impacted them. This event took place in the context of ongoing work on the Blueprint for a European degree and the European Commission's study report on the "Outcomes and transformational potential of the European Universities initiative". It was a significant moment for Arqus and for Diana, as it demonstrated the recognition of Arqus efforts and the impact of the Alliance joint initiatives.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-student-diana-radoi-represents-the-alliance-at-a-press-corner-with-roxana-minzatu-executive-vice-president-of-the-european-commission/



Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, elected President of the Spanish Universities in European Universities Group (UEUE)

The Spanish Universities in European Universities Group (UEUE), the interuniversity network that brings together Spanish institutions that are members of European alliances, held its Assembly on Thursday 23 January. At this meeting, the Group elected its first Executive Committee, which will represent it and promote its work. In this context, Dorothy Kelly, full professor at the UGR and Coordinator of the Arqus Alliance, was unanimously elected as President of the UEUE Executive Committee. The Assembly also elected its vice-presidents, Pastora Martínez from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) and Professor Raúl Ramos from the University of Barcelona (UB). Besides, two additional members of the Committee were also elected, as well as the coordinators of the different working groups.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-coordinator-elected-president-spanish-universities-in-european-universities-group/



FOREU4ALL Forum Board was created and they met in Brussels

On 28 January, the FOREU4ALL Community of Practice, co-funded by the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union, held a General Forum meeting that concluded with the election of the brand new Forum Board for the 2025-2026 mandate. Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, was elected as one of its members.

Among the responsibilities of these representatives we can mention the support of FOREU4ALL's strategic direction and the facilitation of collaboration among the European University Alliances and with the wider higher education sector in the coming year.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/dorothy-kelly-arqus-coordinator-elected-member-of-the-foreu4all-board/

Later on, on 26 February, FOREU4ALL Forum Board met again, this time face-to-face in Brussels, coinciding with the European Commission's high-level meeting regarding the European Universities Initiative on 26 and 27 February. Forum Board members met to continue working together to strengthen the mission of FOREU4ALL and support the transformative goals of the European University alliances.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/foreu4all-forum-board-meeting-brussels/



Arqus at high-level meeting “Shaping the future: European Universities alliances for a competitive Europe” in Brussels

On 26 and 27 February 2025, the European Commission organized this high-level meeting in Brussels, with the presence of the Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu.

The event gathered representatives of all European Universities alliances, as well as Seal of Excellence holders and key higher education stakeholder organisations, including student organisations, European Parliament and Member States representatives.
The Arqus Alliance was represented by Dorothy Kelly (Arqus Coordinator), Fernando M. Galán (Arqus Secretary General), Eeva Leinonen (President of Maynooth University), Rui Vieira de Castro (Rector of the University of Minho) and Diana Radoi (student of the Arqus Joint Master’s Programme in European Studies).
Considering the progress made over the last five years since the launch of the European Universities initiative, this high-level meeting aimed to collectively reflect on its achievements and challenges still to be addressed. The meeting also explored avenues to continue making the European Universities initiative a success in the long term and discuss how the alliances can further contribute to Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness while defending democracy and promoting social fairness.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/high-level-meeting-brussels-shaping-future-european-universities-alliances/



EDLab representatives present the European Degree proposal in Cadiz

The EDLab pilot project presented the European Commission's proposal for the European Degree in a meeting at the University of Cadiz (Spain) on 24 March.

The EDLab project "European policy experimentation in Higher Education: Piloting a Joint European Degree Label" was developed by the Arqus Alliance in collaboration with ENLIGHT, EUTOPIA and SEA-EU Alliances. It was one of the six policy experimentation projects funded by the European Commission to explore the viability of the implementation of the European Degree Label.

Marcela Iglesias, from SEA-EU Alliance and Vice-Rector at the University of Cadiz, opened the event, highlighting the achievements and commitments of the European University Alliances to implementing joint study programmes and developing excellent educational integration. Then, Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, provided a detailed overview of the development of the European Degree concept over the last few years.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/edlab-european-degree-presentation-cadiz/



Arqus coordinator speaks on the role of Alliances in doctoral education at PRIDE Annual Conference

Dorothy Kelly participated in the session “The role of European Universities alliances in doctoral education” at the PRIDE Annual Conference 2025 at the University College London. The PRIDE Network Association aims to represent the community of Professionals in Doctoral Education within Europe and beyond. Its 7th Annual PRIDE Conference took place in London on 9 and 10 April 2025 under the theme “Back to the future. The next two decades of doctoral education”.

This event reflected on the achievements of the last 20 years since the reform of Doctoral Education and discusses future challenges. Along the same lines, Dorothy Kelly talked about how the European Universities Initiative embodies the collective effort necessary to address complex global challenges, by fostering long-term strategic, structural and sustainable cooperation among European higher education institutions. She highlighted the aim of the 65 European University alliances to enhance international competitiveness, promote shared values and a European identity.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-coordinator-at-pride-annual-conference-london/



Arqus participates in the conference “Choose Europe for Science” in Paris

Promoted by the French President, Emmanuel Macron, and the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, the conference “Choose Europe for Science” took place in La Sorbonne University in Paris. It aimed to boost the attractiveness of research in Europe and attract international researchers, with particular attention to US scientists impacted by recent restrictive policies.

Rectors Bruno Lina from the University of Lyon 1 (France), Rui Vieira de Castro from the University of Minho (Portugal) and Daniela Mapelli from the University of Padua (Italy) attended this high-level event on 5 May. They represented the Arqus Alliance, demonstrating our shared commitment to strengthening the European Research and Higher Education Area.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/choose-europe-for-science-conference/



Arqus Coordinator participates as keynote speaker at CIVICA Global Forum

Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, discussed the role of Higher Education in strengthening Europe's competitiveness at the CIVICA Global Forum 2025 in IE University (Madrid). She participated in the panel "The role of Higher Education in strengthening Europe's competitiveness" on Wednesday 7 May. There, she had the opportunity to discuss how European universities strengthen the region's global economic positioning through cutting-edge research, innovation, and talent development.

The CIVICA Global Forum 2025 took place on 6 and 7 May, under the theme "Leveraging Social Sciences in Higher Education: Navigating global challenges and complexities". This Forum featured thought-provoking keynotes, interactive panels, and engaging discussions, highlighting the power of collaboration in driving innovation and societal impact. It brought together institutional representatives, public policy makers, leaders from academia and private enterprise, and strategic partners to reflect on the role of Higher Education in major global challenges.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-coordinator-keynote-speaker-civica-global-forum/



Arqus welcomes the European Council's vision for a joint European Degree label

The European Council set out its vision for the future of European Higher Education in a recommendation and a parallel resolution, published on 12 May 2025, which laid the groundwork for the implementation of a joint European Degree label and set out the next steps towards the possible introduction of a joint European Degree.

The Arqus Alliance welcomed this roadmap, in accordance with the Arqus position paper on the European Degree published in October 2024, and reaffirmed its dedication to advancing systemic change and fostering a sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality European Higher Education Area.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-welcomes-european-council-steps-towards-joint-european-degree-label/



Arqus students attend the European Student Assembly 2025 (ESA25) at the European Parliament in Strasbourg

Arqus students made a significant impact as they participated in the fourth edition of the European Student Assembly (ESA25) that took place from 26 to 28 May 2025. With over 250 students from different European University Alliances across Europe, the ESA25 converged at the European Parliament to deliberate upon 8 pivotal themes and formulate actionable resolutions.

The ESA is a collaborative effort among students from European University Alliances, facilitated by a steering committee comprising students and academic and non-academic staff members from various higher education institutions. It provides a platform for students to voice their opinions, draft political recommendations, and advocate them among stakeholders and decision-makers.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-students-attend-esa25-european-parliament/



Arqus participates in the conference “Towards a stronger Europe” in Dublin

Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, and Gemma Irvine, Vice-President of Equality and Diversity in Maynooth University, took part on 27 May in the conference “Towards a Stronger Europe: Franco-German-Irish Perspectives on the Future of European University Alliances” in Dublin. Matthias Middell, Vice-Rector for Campus Development: Cooperation and Internationalisation at Leipzig University, also attended the conference.

The conference was organised by the French and German Embassies in Ireland, with the support of the Irish Universities Association and the Technological Higher Education Association. It aimed to foster dialogue and exchange of best practices among academic institutions from France, Ireland and Germany that are part of European University Alliances.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-at-conference-stronger-europe-dublin/



Arqus Secretary General participates in the Symposium “European Universities Initiative 5 years on”

Fernando M. Galán represented the Arqus Alliance at the “European Universities Initiative 5 years on: a research and practice symposium” on 2 and 3 June in Switzerland.

This symposium, which coincided with the fifth anniversary of the first alliances, including Arqus, offered a crucial opportunity for gathering evidence to be able to critically evaluate the EUI’s impact, exploring its achievements and challenges, and shaping its future direction. It took place at Università della Svizzera italiana (USI), in Lugano (Switzerland). The symposium brought together researchers, practitioners and policymakers to exchange knowledge and ideas and create new networking opportunities.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-secretary-general-symposium-european-universities-initiative-5-years-on/



The University of Wrocław hosts the 3rd Forum of European University Alliances

The 3rd Forum of European University Alliances took place on 12 and 13 June 2025 at the University of Wrocław. This was the first time this high-level event was hosted at an Arqus university. The conference was held under the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The discussions centred on the impact of the EUI on the European Higher Education system and beyond, together with its potential to strengthen Europe in the current complex geopolitical context, from the perspective of different stakeholders. Patrycja Matusz, Vice-Rector for Projects and International Relations of the University of Wrocław, Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Co-ordinator, and Fernando M. Galán, Arqus Secretary General, participated in several sessions.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/wroclaw-3rd-forum-european-university-alliances/



Representatives from Arqus universities participate in the Coimbra Group Annual Conference and General Assembly

The Coimbra Group network organised its Annual Conference and General Assembly on 10-13 June at the University of Bologna (Italy) under the theme “Forty Years of Impact: Universities and Cities Shaping a Sustainable Future”.

Representatives from Durham and Granada attended the event. From Durham University, Karen O’Brien, Vice-Chancellor and Warden, Charlotte Clarke, Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor for Health, Judith Akoto, Durham PGT student, and Daniel Donoghue, Professor of Geography and Treasurer of the Coimbra Group Executive Board took part in the open conference “From Durham to Bologna; the climate declaration”. Pedro Mercado, Rector of the University of Granada, and Artur Schmitt (University of Granada), Deputy Chair of the Arqus Education Board, had also an active role.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/coimbra-group-annual-conference-2025/



Arqus at the European Researchers' Night in Granada and Minho

The European Researchers' Night is an annual celebration across Europe that brings researchers and science to society through games, discussions, experiments, and various other activities.

In 2025, Arqus joined the activities in the Arqus cities of Braga and Granada, engaging the general public and students in activities to share science along with the Arqus initiatives and benefits, and reinforcing Arqus commitment to be a forward-looking, open, integrated, and research-driven European University.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-at-the-european-researchers-night-granada-and-minho/



Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, participates in the 1st Forum of students and European alliances organised by CREUP

Dorothy Kelly, Arqus Coordinator, participated on 23 September in the 1st Forum of students and European Alliances organised by the Coordinator of Representatives of Public University Students (CREUP), the national association representing more than 1,000,000 students in Spain.

As President of the Group of Spanish Universities in European Universities (UEUE), she participated in the opening and the subsequent session, where she discussed the current status of alliances and next steps involving student representation.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-coordinator-participates-in-the-1st-forum-students-and-european-alliances-creup/

Arqus Green Mobility Days at the University of Graz

The Arqus Green Mobility Days are an initiative that aims to foster and look for new ways to implement green mobility. Arqus universities carry out activities at local level to raise awareness within their academic communities regarding sustainable ways of managing international mobility, whether it comes to choosing a greener means of transport when travelling abroad or reducing the impact of daily habits while living in the hosting cities.
Through a series of short workshops, on 16 October 2025 the University of Graz brought together experts and participants to reflect on sustainable practices in mobility, food, shopping, waste, and hiking, encouraging the University community to explore different ways to be more environmentally friendly.

https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-green-mobility-days-graz/

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