

Chapter 3: Science, Culture And Education

This chapter deals with the commitments outlined in the Final Declaration of the 6th Summit: commitment 4 (scientific and technological cooperation, student, research and cultural exchanges, restitution of cultural assets and promotion of cultural heritage), commitment 5 (the Africa-Europe investment package for education - quality and safe education services, addressing learning gaps, and vocational education and training).

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Context:

- **Africa-Europe cultural cooperation is very active but little of this is acknowledged at institutional level, resulting in relatively weak political support.** Culture is consistently ranked a high priority in AEF's youth platforms and dialogues (35% in #ReimagineAfricaEurope consultations consider 'Cultural exchange and challenging misperceptions' as a leading topic to enhance mutually beneficial Africa-Europe cooperation). However, to date, the Africa-EU partnership on culture is not a high-level or politically steered process. Rather, it is driven by organic actions of European and African artists.
- **6th Summit commitments are aligned with the priority areas in the AU Agenda 2063, with a focus on research, mobility, and skills development** in line with current and future market needs, and with a strong element of e-learning. However, Summit commitments do not meet all funding requirements for the education sector. Existing pockets of excellence including universities across Africa are under enormous stress. The learning gap caused

by the pandemic has undermined education efforts in Africa, with a resultant urgent need for strategies and funding during these times of fiscal tightening.

Examples of progress to date:

- **Focus on Africa-Europe exchange on space technologies is increasing.** The *Global Monitoring for Environment and Security and Africa* programme provides a framework for sustained cooperation between Europe and Africa in space science and technology, and earth observation. The launch of the *African Space Agency* in January 2023 was an important step to deepen cooperation, and leverage earth observation, especially in relation to climate and agri-food. A continued focus on space, including the roll-out of the *EU-Africa Space* initiative holds great potential for a strengthened partnership and cooperation as indicated by the first EU-AU Space dialogue in October 2023.

Graphic 3: Space observations and technologies

Satellite space observations can improve existing societal services or inform new services across public and private users.



Telecommunications satellites

support communication irrespective of location and are typically used for television, radio, telephone, and internet



Positioning satellites

provide positioning, navigation, and timing and data services; the best-known application of these satellites is for global positioning system (GPS) data



Earth observation satellites

and more particularly remote sensing satellites, provide images and data used for meteorology, cartography and environmental monitoring.

A Space application is an activity in which the use of signals or data from satellites can improve existing societal services or inform new services across public and private users.

Natural & industrial disaster relief	Food security	Informing decent living conditions	Protection of health	Provision of education	Support for economic development
Responding to natural disasters e.g., floods, forest fires, locust epidemics; Monitoring and tracking desertification, cyclones, seabed pollution	Mapping of agricultural zones, water management; Measuring of social degradation, fishing	Regional planning, managing urban populations; Measuring air and other pollution	Mapping disease risk and outbreak; remote monitoring, and medical imaging; connectivity for telemedicine	Distance learning or tele-education	Transportation development; search for mineral resources; internet access

- As an enabler for other areas, digital solutions play a central role in the implementation of many of the initiatives across the different commitment areas. This ranges from digital skills and education (e.g. the *Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa*) to the development of green data centres as part of the green transition, or improved health access. As such, AU-EU digital cooperation has centred notably on Artificial Intelligence and the nexus between digital and space

technology. At African national level there has been noticeable progress in the development of National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, data governance, and implementation of Data Protection Rights in Rwanda, Ghana and Senegal, with the latter having developed and adopted a dedicated Data Strategy.

- The most notable Africa-Europe cooperation within the space of digital innovation is the *Digital for Development (D4D) Hub*. Launched in 2020, it has enjoyed considerable advances

with 14 Member States participating in a Team Europe approach. However, unlike other areas covered by the Global Gateway, the EU's digital cooperation still lacks a significant footprint in Africa. This may be due to China's positioning as a key digital actor under the Digital Silk Road.

Potential areas of action:

- **Enhancing visibility of cultural cooperation, which currently is largely 'under the radar', can encourage increased investment in those exchanges.** With the new EU action on *Museums Cooperation* to be adopted in 2024 and the upcoming (currently under discussion) TEI initiative on *Cultural Cooperation*, there are opportunities to invest in this Africa-Europe partnership domain. Furthermore, with limited financial investments, giving more recognition to this dynamic area of cooperation can contribute to strengthening Africa-Europe relations beyond the area of culture and art.
- **The 6th Summit commitments and Global Gateway have made skills development a critical element of the green transition agenda.** Accelerating implementation of these commitments remains key, especially for youth entering the labour market. Reskilling and social safety nets can ensure that the green transformation will not undermine economic achievements and the status of local communities. Rather, they can contribute to accelerated development and job prospects. Standardisation of skills frameworks is critical, including a policy framework around equitable access to quality education. The African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), a policy initiative underpinned by the AU Agenda 2063, will allow the comparability of qualifications across Africa so that young people can access work and study opportunities across borders. ACQF II forms part of the *Youth for Mobility for Africa* initiative under the Global Gateway placing various EU-supported initiatives under one umbrella.
- **Accelerating investments in education and mobility between Africa and Europe and also between African states should be a priority.** The recently adopted *AU-EU Innovation Agenda* provides a new framework for enhanced scientific, technological and innovation exchange between Africa and Europe. However, a strengthened focus on youth training and mobility should be mainstreamed across all areas of cooperation, as in the case of the *Youth Mobility for Africa*, a Global Gateway initiative aiming to increase strategic engagement between the EU and Africa in higher education and skills development. This would encourage building of social capital to support international policy frameworks such as the African Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Accelerated development and scale-up of Erasmus+ and ARISE-PP programmes holds large promise in this area of cooperation.
- **Restitution of artifacts remains a critical issue, centrally embedded within Agenda 2063** (enshrined in Aspiration 5, and addressed by 2 out of 15 flagships). However, responsibility lies with Member States on both sides, hence negotiations only occur bilaterally between individual African states and specific European museums or governments. Europe's possession of a vast collection of ancient African artifacts exceeds that of Africa and other regions. The launch of the Great African Museum presents an opportunity for enhanced cooperation in relation to the restitution of cultural artefacts, as well promotion of cultural exchanges.

EDUCATION, SKILLS, AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

The Ten Commitments Framework	Main Commitments
COMMITMENT 4: Scientific and technological cooperation, student, research and cultural exchanges, restitution of cultural assets and promotion of cultural heritage	I. Scientific cooperation and technology sharing II. Exchange programmes and partnerships between universities
COMMITMENT 5: The Africa-Europe Investment Package for Education (quality and safe education services, addressed learning gaps, and Vocational Education and Training)	III. Quality and safe education services and addressed learning gaps IV. Vocational Education and Training

I. Scientific cooperation and technology sharing

Examples of progress to date:

- Key initiatives include the EU *Earth Observation and Space Technologies*; *Regional Centres of Excellence*; and the *AU-EU Innovation Agenda*.
- The development of the *Earth Observation and Space Technologies* initiative has started. It has three components aiming at i) supporting the EU-AU Space Dialogue to improve the cooperation framework for space and innovation in Africa; including the newly established African Union Space Agency; ii) supporting the uptake of space data in the private sector, iii) fostering the development of space-based services in support to green transition.
- The *Africa-EU Space Partnership* programme, has seen progress with initial actions based on three components: 1. EU-Africa Space and Partnership; 2. Space and Green Transition – Focus on Early Warning; 3. Space and Private Sector.
- The initiative on *Regional Centres of Excellence* will provide scientific and technological support to the latter with the aim to improve their contributions to policy and decision-making processes, business development and other tailored services. All contracts have been signed and implementation is to start.
- The first Action to provide scientific and technical support to *Regional Centres of Excellence* in Sub-Saharan Africa in Green Transition areas (biodiversity and forest; water; oceans; agro-ecological and sustainable agri-food systems; climate and disaster resilience; and energy) is underway.
- The EU funded - and implemented by the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS) *Research and Innovation Programme* - actions totalling EUR 60 million are ongoing since 2021 to unlock innovation potential and support transition into knowledge-based economies.
- The *Africa-EU Science4Refugees initiative* has been in operation since October 2015. It seeks to provide research and educational opportunities for refugees and disadvantaged children.

- The *AU-EU Innovation Agenda* was adopted in July 2023 by the AU and EU. This new strategic partnership aims to transform innovative capacities and achievements of researchers and innovators on both continents into tangible outputs, such as products, services, businesses and jobs. As part of the Global Gateway, with funding from EU programmes and NDICI-Global Europe, it represents the mainstay of Africa-Europe cooperation on Science, Technology and Innovation over the next decade.
- The EU-funded initiative *African Research Initiative for Scientific Excellence Pilot Programme (ARISE-PP)* strives to build individual and research teams' capacities, provide institutional support, and increase the relevance and impact of research in Africa. Notably ARISE-PP focuses on AU-EU innovation agenda's priorities: green transition, Innovation & Technology, Public Health, and Capacities for Science. It was set up to build scientific capacities in thirty-eight African countries by providing grants to early-career researchers.
- The AU Agenda 2063 Flagship *African Outer Space Strategy* aims to strengthen Africa's use of outer space to bolster its development, with outer space critical to the development in all fields, such as agriculture, disaster management, remote sensing, climate forecast, banking and finance, as well as defence and security. Key initiatives include:
 - Strengthening of the African Earth Observation (EO) System to improve management of the environment.
 - 4 geoportals to improve data access and knowledge management.
 - An environmental scan to identify cross-cutting areas among the four space segments: Satellite Communication; Navigation and Positioning; Astronomy; and Space Sciences).
- At least 2,000 people have been trained on Earth Observation, Satellite Communication, Navigation & Positioning, Space Science & Astronomy, and Space Regulatory Regimes.
- The AU has convened annual space dialogues with African space actors, with two reports and two baseline studies produced:
 - Priority areas of implementation by the African Outer Space Programme.
 - Study on Structural and Financial implications for African Space Agency.
 - Comprehensive Study on African Private Sector in Earth Observation, Geospatial and Allied Technologies.
 - Gap Analysis Study on Navigation and Positioning in Africa.

II. Exchange programmes and partnerships between universities

Examples of progress to date:

- The EU Flagship *Youth Mobility for Africa* is a key initiative for encouraging youth mobility. This promotes mobility learning opportunities within Africa and between Africa and the EU, supports cooperation in higher education and skills development, and promotes Africa as a study destination. Operating at the regional level, as an umbrella initiative, with a budget of EUR 970 million from the EU, it encompasses the following programmes:
 - The *ERASMUS+* programme, promoting inclusive learning opportunities for young Africans through exchanges and targeted scholarships, and partnerships between higher education institutions. A total of EUR 570 million dedicated to Sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2021-2027 covers several actions such as *International Credit Mobility*, *Capacity Building in Higher Education*, *Erasmus Mundus*, *Capacity Building in VET*, and *Virtual Exchanges in Higher Education and Youth*.
 - The *African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF II)* launched in July 2023, supports the enabling of comparability of qualifications across Africa so that young people can access work and study opportunities beyond their own borders. The Qualifications Framework enhances regional integration, complementing instruments such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
 - Other programmes covered are the *Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme*; *Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA3)*; the *Young African Leaders Programme*; and the forthcoming *Africa-Europe Youth Academy*.

III. Quality and safe education services and addressing learning gaps

Context:

- Education and skills are key pillars for Africa's continued development as highlighted in the AU Agenda 2063. However, already existing pockets of excellence across the 54 countries in Africa, such as universities, are currently under enormous stress.
- One particular area of neglect across many African countries is digitalisation. This is despite a decrease in the digital divide in most countries: mobile phones are used in numerous, creative ways (e.g., for financial transactions) and digital tools have been developed and applied for e-learning. In terms of more sophisticated digital utility, however, Africa has yet to engage further with innovations including blockchain and artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT.

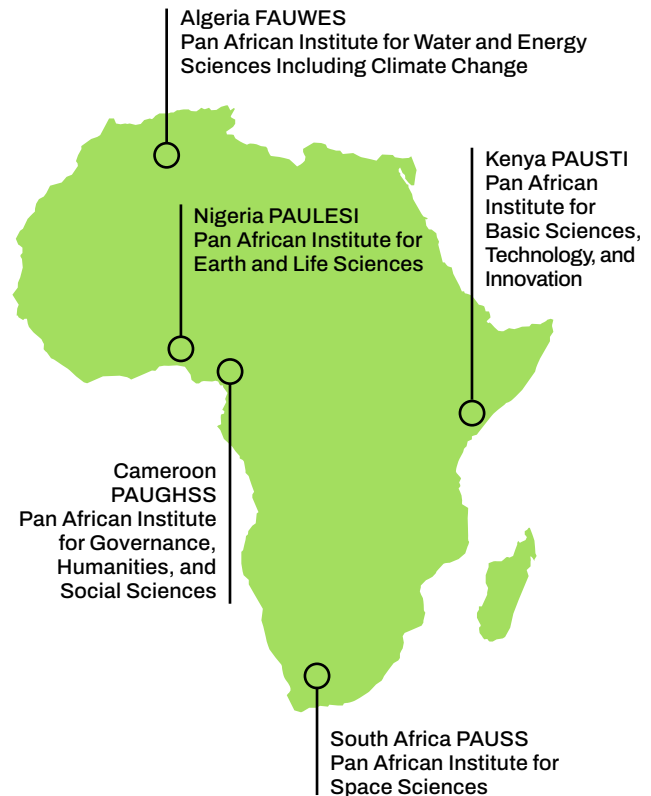
Examples of progress to date:

- Launched in January 2023, the *Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa* is a key Team Europe Initiative. It will invest EUR 100 million under the EU-Africa Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package to accelerate the training of new teachers for Sub-Saharan Africa, responding to its estimated need for 15 million new qualified teachers by 2030. It will focus on two areas: i) governance, management, and attractiveness of the teacher profession; and ii) professional development for teachers, with a focus on digital and green skills. The AU Commission is a strategic partner in collaboration with UNESCO and the International Teacher Task Force. The programme will support partner countries towards a more competent, motivated, and

inclusive teacher workforce that can improve learning outcomes and socio-emotional development of children in basic education.

- EUR 46 million *Regional Teacher Facility*, signed at the Global Gateway Forum in October 2023, will support implementation of the *Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa* helping develop and implement policies and provide education and professional development for teachers in Africa. The facility will be managed by Belgium, France and Finland.
- The *Global Partnership for Education* is a multilateral global programme to help transform education systems and ensure high quality basic education in partner countries. The EU, together with Team Europe partners, will contribute EUR 700 million between 2021 and 2027.
- The *Youth Mobility for Africa* new EU initiative includes an *Erasmus+* component with 46 projects on Capacity Building in Higher Education involving 35 African countries in the pipeline.
- Additional initiatives, with EU support, include ongoing national programmes and actions focused on education and training in 43 countries in Africa.
- The AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Pan-African Virtual and E-University (PAVEU) aims to use ICT-based programs to increase access to tertiary and continuing education in Africa. This will be enacted by developing relevant and high-quality Open, Distance, and eLearning (ODeL) resources to offer students access to university from anywhere in the world and anytime. The project is an open, distance and e-learning arm of the Pan-African University (located in Yaoundé, Cameroon): 10 online courses, content and curricula have already been developed.

Graphic 4: Institutes of the Pan-African University



Source: [PAU AU](#)

IV. Vocational Education and Training

Examples of progress to date:

- Key initiatives include EU *Opportunity-Driven Skills and VET (OP-VET) in Africa and Regional Teachers Initiative for Africa*.
- The TEI *Opportunity-Driven Skills and VET (OP-VET)* in Africa is a regional EU initiative that is expected to start in the first quarter of 2024. The EUR 75 million programme seeks to ensure orientation of VET interventions towards decent employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains under the Global Gateway. This regional initiative is envisaged to be delivered by EU Member States (Belgium, Germany, Finland, France). It consists of three building blocks:
 - A request-based technical assistance facility to identify decent employment opportunities and related technical profiles in sectors and value chains aligned to Global Gateway priorities and to translate these findings in recommendations for VET provision that is responsive to identified employment opportunities;
 - Exposure to public-private partnerships on opportunity-driven VET at country and regional level;
 - A Competitive Funding Mechanism to finance regional/multi-country VET initiatives in support of (regional) value chains. Building blocks will complement programmes funded by EU and EU Member States at country level.
- The *TEI OP-VET* builds on the experiences of the *VET Toolbox*, a programme implemented in 11 African countries piloting VET provision catering to investment needs since 2020. It seeks to increase local benefits from (European) investments through VET and skills development.
- The *TEI OP-VET* is linked to the *Erasmus+* programme '*Capacity-building in the field of VET*'.
- Experiences on capacity building of VET institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa – namely the orientation of VET provision in line with employment opportunities - will be used and disseminated within the TEI.
- Results of the Erasmus+ calls in 2022 and 2023 are positive, with 67 capacity building projects selected in the field of vocational education and training involving 23 Sub-Saharan African countries in 2022 and 21 in 2023. There will be annual calls until 2027.

• *The African Skills Initiative*, established by the AU, seeks to develop skills and create linkages between employers and job seekers, and provide professional development for African youth. These initiatives aim to combat the risk of brain drain.

Additional comments:

- The commitments are aligned with the priority areas of the AU Agenda 2063, hence designed to deliver on African priorities, notably on research and education mobility, skills development for current and future market needs, and e-learning.

CULTURAL COOPERATION

The Ten Commitments Framework	Main Commitments
<p>COMMITMENT 4: Scientific and technological cooperation, student, research and cultural exchanges, restitution of cultural assets and promotion of cultural heritage</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Culture, heritage, and artist exchanges II. Restitution of cultural assets and promotion of access to and protection of cultural heritage

I. Culture, heritage, and artist exchanges

Context:

- Culture, heritage and restitution of cultural assets are important areas for the African Union and its Member States. Two Agenda 2063 flagships are dedicated to the thematic area enshrined in Aspiration 5: *Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity, Common Heritage, Values and Ethics*. The Final Declaration of the 6th Summit recognised this importance by including specific commitments and opening space for strengthened cooperation.
- Cultural and artistic exchanges most often happen organically. Various organisations such as cultural institutes, universities, think tanks, foundations, publishing houses and museums constantly handle cultural exchanges and conferences that do not involve the AU-EU institutions. However, they play a significant part in establishing cultural bonds between Africa and the EU. Among the institutional actors, various organisations that form part of the EU Member States National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) network are implementing the 2022 Summit commitment; currently without involvement from AU institutions.
- While there is considerable financial and non-financial support from Member States and regional institutions, no central registry exists that aggregates and reports on art and cultural activities.

Examples of progress to date:

- The AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Encyclopaedia Africana strives to provide an authoritative resource on the authentic history of Africa and African life. The project, initiated in 1962, was adopted as Agenda 2063 flagship during the First Ten- Year Implementation Plan. It does not have agreed targets for 2023. So far, the project has published three volumes of the Encyclopaedia Africana.
- The AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Great African Museum (GMA) seeks to showcase, protect and promote the rich cultural heritage of the continent. The flagship was conceived in 2016 and added to the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan with no agreed target for 2023. The Museum, in a temporary site, was launched in June 2023. An estimated \$57 million are required for its implementation.
- EU projects for cultural exchanges and protection, and promotion of cultural heritage, are implemented in Togo, Mozambique, Mali, and Sudan. In addition, through the *European Spaces of Culture* programme, which has been running from 2019, the EU and member states promote cultural exchanges and cooperation in Angola, Kenya, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Benin, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Tanzania and South Africa.

- European countries - Germany, Spain, Italy, France and others - have national cultural institutions in African capitals that arrange cultural exchanges.
- The EU plans to establish a *Cultural Cooperation Hub* in 2024 to facilitate cooperation, co-production and mobility of artists between Africa and the EU. It will also support regional cooperation on culture in Southern and Western Africa.

Box 10: Cultural engagement between Africa and EU

Monitoring and reporting on cultural exchanges and heritage issues (including returning artefacts) is a complex issue with a multitude of stakeholders, many informal; thus, many successful activities remain “under the radar” either because they are quite episodic and happen on a small-scale, or because crucially the main funding comes from different pools. As an example, an exchange involving no formal or political stakeholders, was of Nuraddin Farah’s visit to Norway on 28th of September 2023. The famous Somali author, resident in South Africa, was invited to Oslo for a series of readings and debates. This was widely advertised as one of the most exciting literary events of the year - causing a stir in the significant Norwegian community of Somali-Origin.

Examples of EU-Africa conferences on art and culture in 2022-2023:

- “Art beyond Politics: Africa and the “other” Europe during the cold war” conference, May 2022 at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania.
- 1st Deconfining hybrid Conference (Deconfining Arts, Culture & Policies in Europe & Africa), September 2023 at the Goethe-Institute Madrid, Spain.
- Africa Meets Europe: A forum for Young Leaders (AME), October 2023 at The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin, Germany.

II. Restitution of cultural assets and promotion of access to and protection of cultural heritage

Context:

- Restitution of artifacts remains a critical issue. Europe's possession of a vast collection of ancient African artifacts exceeds that of Africa and other regions. Notably, American museums house a mere 50,000 African items, while European counterparts showcase much larger numbers — Belgium's Royal Museum for Central Africa has 180,000, Germany's Ethnological Museum holds 75,000, France's Quai Branly Museum possesses nearly 70,000, the British Museum exhibits 73,000, and the Netherlands' National Museum of World Cultures has 66,000.

Examples of progress to date:

- The AU has been developing a Framework for Action on the Negotiations for the Return/Restitution of Illicitly Trafficked Cultural Property from the Continent, which will provide a common framework for Africa to address the return and restitution of cultural artefacts.
- France and Germany started the process of restitution with President Macron's 2019 announcement to return 26 pieces to Benin, and Germany's return of over 1,100 artefacts of significance. These actions have been noted on the African continent.

Potential areas of action:

- There is an opportunity to make considerable progress on Africa-EU relations through increased political momentum for restitution. The issue of "decolonising" European museums has been an ongoing concern since the era of African independence. Beside regional discussions, negotiations occur bilaterally between individual African states and specific European museums or governments. The process of return of priceless artefacts, like cultural exchange, is complex and often requiring granular negotiations that take considerable time.