

United Nations University

Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies

2025

Annual Report



UNU
CRIS

United Nations University

Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies

2025 Annual Report

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United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies

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Director: Philippe De Lombaerde

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UNU-CRIS personnel and the UNU-CRIS Advisory Committee.

Director's Welcome

25 years ago, in 2001, the institute started its activities in Bruges, with the support of the Flemish Community and in partnership with the College of Europe, under the leadership of its first director Dr. Van Langenhove. The institute gradually established itself as the go-to knowledge center for the comparative study of regionalism and multi-level governance on neutral (UN) ground. Since 2016 it has continued its work in partnership with Ghent University and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB).

Since the start of the institute, 640 personnel have been connected to the institute, including visiting and associated researchers, representing 90 nationalities. Around it, a global research community has been shaped, bound by an interest in regional governance, sharing conceptual frameworks, methodologies, and data. UNU-CRIS has actively participated in major European research projects (GARNET, EU-GRASP, GR:EEN, Jean Monnet CRIFT, EL-CSID), as well as in policy-oriented projects for local and international authorities (Flanders, ASEAN, ERIA, EU, OECS, UNDP, ILO, UNESCO...). More than 2000 publications with a UNU-CRIS connection have been published so far, including several key reference works in the field. Several capacity building programmes have been implemented, including its annual doctoral schools and the School of Modern Diplomacy, with hundreds of alumni.

To celebrate these 25 years, a major publication project was launched that led to the publication of two volumes with 100 essays by authors from all over the world reflecting on the past, present and future of regionalism studies (Acharya et al. (Eds.), *Essays on Global Regionalism*, Springer).

2025 was also a year to look forward and reflect on the future of the institute in a rapidly changing world. UNU Regions was conceived as the guiding concept for the coming years. The underlying idea is to become physically present in the major world regions by transforming UNU-CRIS into a multi-campus UNU Regions. This way, the institute will be better connected to researchers and policy-makers worldwide to study the continuing, if not increasing, role of regions in global, national and local governance, while also becoming a larger, more resilient and financially stable organization. We are indeed conscious that this transformation takes place in a challenging context for the UN and its constituent parts, including UNU. The wider stakeholder community around the institute firmly believes, however, in the key convening role of our unique non-partisan institute and its continuing contributions to more effective governance.

Philippe De Lombaerde

Director, UNU-CRIS



2025 in Numbers

198 publications



Journal Articles	81
Books	11
Book Chapters	44
Policy and Insight Briefs	35
Reports	11
Working Papers	16

132 presentations and lectures



Presentations	74
Lectures	58



154 People	61 Nationalities
47% Women	53% Men

45 events



Conferences	8
Workshops, Research Seminars, Webinars, and Fora	30
Other events	7

Financial Overview



Total Budget	€2.175.601
Core Funding Flemish Government	48.17%
External Project Funding*	26.59%
Ghent University	19.73%
VUB	5.51%

*These include: FWO (via Ugent); BOF-DOS (via Ugent); Caritas International; University of Urbino Carlo Bo; McMaster University; Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS); Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA); Higher Education Commission Pakistan (via Ugent); AHF Global Public Health Institute.

External project funding corresponds to 55,2% of core funding from the Flemish Government.

The European Union in International Affairs Conference

The ninth edition of the European Union in International Affairs (EUIA) Conference took place from 21 to 23 May in Brussels, bringing together academics and policymakers to debate the role of the European Union in addressing global challenges under the theme *Europe in a Fragmenting World*. The conference was jointly organised by the Brussels School of Governance at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (BSoG-VUB), UNU-CRIS, the Institut d'études européennes at the Université libre de Bruxelles (IEE-ULB), Egmont Institute and the Department of Politics and International Studies (PAIS) of the University of Warwick, combining academic panel discussions with policy-oriented dialogue.

On the programme was the *UNU-CRIS 25th Anniversary Roundtable: Past, Present and Future of Regionalism Studies*, which brought together some key figures in the history of UNU-CRIS, including Philippe De Lombaerde, Luk Van Langenhove, Louise Fawcett, Fredrik Söderbaum, Beatrix Futák-Campbell, Gaëlle Le Pavic and Frank Mattheis, to reflect on the institute's journey over the last quarter-century, its crucial role in the field of regional studies today as a major reference centre, and its vital importance in a world that is increasingly shaped by regions.



Philippe De Lombaerde at the EUIA Conference in May.

Redefining Global AI Governance Together

UNU-CRIS co-organised the workshop *Learning from the Global Majority - A New Global AI Governance* held on 14 July at the FARI - AI for the Common Good Institute in Brussels, organised as part of the United Nations University's 50th Anniversary celebrations.

The event was hosted by Gloria González Fuster, Luk Van Langenhove, Thiago Moraes and Martin Canter (FARI - AI for the Common Good Institute) and co-organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel's Law, Science, Technology and Society (LSTS) research group, the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS) and Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-eGov), the UNU AI Network, Stellenbosch University, Humane-AI.Asia, Colnodo, and LAPIN.

The workshop brought together experts from the European Union and Global Majority countries to explore inclusive and future-oriented approaches to global AI governance.

Discussions centred on three interlinked priorities (capacity, safety and sustainability), examining whether current governance frameworks foster meaningful inclusion or risk reinforcing existing global asymmetries.

With contributions from speakers across Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, the event promoted peer exchange, new partnerships, and reinforced Brussels' role as a hub for interdisciplinary dialogue on international cooperation in AI governance.



25 Years of UNU-CRIS

2000

First Memorandum of Understanding between UNU, Flemish Community and the College of Europe



2001

Founding Director Luk Van Langenhove appointed

2006

High level conference
Reviving Chapter VIII: The United Nations and Regional Organizations- Partners for Peace, International Peace Academy in partnership with UNU-CRIS and VUB-IES, New York

2007

Launch of Springer *UNU Series on Regionalism* - First World Report on Regional Integration, in the presence of UNCTAD Secretary-General Supachai Panitchpakdi

2008

First European Union in International Affairs (EUIA) conference

Launch of EU-GRASP Project *Changing Multilateralism: the EU as a Global-Regional Actor in Security and Peace*

Launch of NETRIS Project

2010

UNESCO-UNU Chair *Regional Integration, Migration and Free Movement of People*

Launch of FP7 GR:REEN Project *Global Re-ordering: Evolution through European Networks*

2002

Second Memorandum of Understanding

UNU-CRIS Official Opening, Town Hall of Bruges, Keynote Speaker: Jean-Luc Dehaene, Former Belgian Prime Minister

2003

Start E-Working Papers Series

Third Memorandum of Understanding

2004

UNU-CRIS moves to premises at Grootseminarie, with the support of Province of West-Flanders

2005

Fourth Memorandum of Understanding

Launch of FP6 GARNET Network of Excellence on *Global Governance, Regionalisation and Regulation: The Role of the EU*

2011

Fifth Memorandum of Understanding

58th UNU Council session in Bruges

2012

Launch of annual Doctoral School on Latin American, European and Comparative Regionalism, Quito (Ecuador)

Launch of FWO-funded scientific research community *GRESI - Globalisation, Regionalisation and Socio-Economic Inequality*

Start of collaboration with MSc in Public Policy and Human Development, jointly organised by Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSog) and UNU-MERIT

Start of Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate on *Globalisation,*

the EU, and Multilateralism (EMJD-G)

Flagship publication: De Lombaerde, Baert and Felício (eds), *The United Nations and the Regions*, UNU Series on Regionalism, Springer

25 Years of UNU-CRIS

2013

Research Project
*Democracy-
building in a
regional context:
Learning from
the European
Parliament*

Flagship
publication: De
Lombaerde and
Söderbaum (eds),
Regionalism, four
volumes, SAGE

2014

Launch of PRARI
Project *Poverty
Reduction
and Regional
Integration: A
Comparative
Analysis*

Report on A
*Common Future
for the Zeelandic-
Flemish Border
Region*

2015

Launch of the UNU
Migration Network

2016

Memorandum of
Understanding
between
UNU, Flemish
Community, Ghent
University and the
Vrije Universiteit
Brussel

Anthony Antoine
appointed Director
ad interim

2020

Philippe De
Lombaerde
appointed Director
ad interim

New UNU-CRIS
cluster-based
research structure

Launch of Online
School of Modern
Diplomacy

2021

Launch of the
SDG Monitor, in
partnership with
IDEA Consult

2022

Philippe De
Lombaerde
appointed Director

First Cohort of PhD
Defences from new
partnerships

Flood Knowledge
Summit

2023

Lecture on the
*Governance
Challenges
of Artificial
Intelligence* by
Rector Tshilidzi
Marwala and panel
debate

UNU-CRIS awarded
Sustainability Hero
Prize by the City of
Bruges

	2017	2018	2019
Launch of EL-CSID Project <i>European Leadership in Cultural, Science and Innovation Diplomacy</i>	Madeleine Hosli appointed Director Launch of the AMIREG Project <i>African Migration: Root Causes and Regulatory Dynamics</i>	Townhall Lecture <i>The UN Security Council, at Grips with Tectonic Geo-Strategic Change</i> by David Malone and High-Level Academic Panel Launch of <i>Parliamentary Deliberation in Inter-Regional Relations</i> Project	Luc Soete appointed Director ad interim Lecture by Baroness Bénédicte Frankinet, Former Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations
2024	2025		

Flagship Publication: De Lombaerde (ed.), *Handbook of Regional Cooperation and Integration*, Edward Elgar

First Doctoral School on Asian and Comparative Regionalism, Surabaya (Indonesia)

Ninth edition of the EUIA Conference and UNU-CRIS 25th Anniversary Roundtable *Past, Present and Future of Regionalism Studies*, Brussels

IV Congreso GRIDALE, co-organized with UCC and UN-ECLAC, Bogotá



A background image showing two people, a man and a woman, sitting at a table in what appears to be a conference or meeting setting. The man is on the left, looking down, and the woman is on the right, wearing glasses and looking towards the right. A water bottle is visible on the table between them.

Global Impact

Knowledge for All

EVENT

IV GRIDALE Conference: Development Alternatives Amid the Crises of Latin American Integration

The IV GRIDALE Congress, held in Bogota, addressed the paralysis of Latin American subregional integration by exploring how integration can continue through a functionalist approach led by technical and research institutions.

UNU-CRIS played a central role in the conference by providing comparative research and analytical support, alongside organisations such as ECLAC, the IDB, and CAF, to promote flexible integration commitments that countries can adopt at different speeds.

The Congress sought to foster generational renewal in integration studies, linking the experience of senior scholars with the perspectives of younger researchers on the future of Latin American and European integration.

PUBLICATION

A European Framework for Science Diplomacy: Recommendations of the EU Science Diplomacy Working Groups

This report presents the results of five EU Science Diplomacy Working Groups that were established by the European Commission in order to develop recommendations for a European Framework for Science Diplomacy. The working groups consisted of 130 science and diplomacy experts from across Europe, with Luk Van Langenhove serving as Coordinator of the Working Group Chairs.

The report reviews the state-of-the-art of European science diplomacy and discusses its mission, objectives and values. Its recommendations include proposals for strategic, operational and enabling instruments and related actions, to ensure better coordination and identify synergies, to address existing vulnerabilities and for the EU to act more strategically on the global stage.



PUBLICATION

ASEAN Economic Community Report: Where Next?

Where Next? Priorities for the ASEAN Economic Community Post-2025 offers a comprehensive assessment of the future direction of ASEAN economic integration. The volume includes contributions from UNU-CRIS, notably Chapter 10 on regional production networks by Fukunari Kimura (Chair of the UNU-CRIS Advisory Committee) and Dionisius Narjoko, and Chapter 19 on monitoring the ASEAN Economic Community by UNU-CRIS Director Philippe De Lombaerde, co-authored with Aladdin D. Rillo and Tomy Waskitho.

The publication examines key policy priorities for the post-25 agenda, addressing emerging global challenges and providing evidence-based recommendations to policymakers and broader stakeholders to support a more resilient and inclusive ASEAN Economic Community.

EVENT

Contributing to the UNDRR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Nidhi Nagabhatla and Sakhi Bayramli participated in the eighth session of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025), the UN's main forum for reviewing progress on the Sendai Framework and mobilising action to strengthen disaster resilience globally held from 2 to 6 June 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

They contributed to the session *Advancing DRR Localisation Through South-South and Triangular Cooperation, Peer-to-Peer Exchange, and International Partnership*, which brought together around 200 experts from the Global North and South to deliver practical guidance for accelerating implementation of the Sendai Framework, fostering international cooperation on disaster risk reduction, and strengthening inclusive, evidence-based strategies for resilience.

EVENT

Historic WSIS+20 Review in New York

Jamal Shahin and Nadia Tjahja participated in the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on the Information Society (WSIS+20), held from 16-17 December at UN Headquarters in New York.

The meeting marked the 20 year review of the World Summit on the Information Society and addressed the future of global digital governance, including the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum.

As part of the programme, Nadia Tjahja contributed to a WSIS+20 side event, titled *Bridging Generations for an Inclusive Digital Future*, on intergenerational collaboration and youth participation in digital governance.

During the visit, Jamal Shahin also met with David Passarelli, the Director of the UNU Centre for Policy Research, to discuss developments in UN digital policy and opportunities for future collaboration.



Nadia Tjahja and Jamal Shahin at the WSIS+20 Meeting in New York.

EVENT

2025 SDG Cities Global Conference

Philippe De Lombaerde was invited to speak at the 2025 SDG Cities Global Conference, co-organised by the Shanghai Municipal People's Government and UN-Habitat, with support from Shanghai's Municipal Commission of Housing, Urban-Rural Development and Management.

He participated in a roundtable on *Green Transition towards Resilient Cities* which focused on the governance aspects of building resilient cities: the importance of considering the diversity of urban

administrative architectures, their embeddedness in vertical (multi-level) governance structures, as well as the necessary horizontal inter-municipality and cross-border policy coordination.

The conference explored how cities have adopted and tailored the SDG Cities process to their needs and transformed it into a guiding framework for streamlining decision-making, amplifying impact and delivering systemic changes for local communities.



EVENT

The State of the Art of the Economic Integration Processes in Latin America and Asia

The international seminar *State of the Art of Economic Integration Processes in Latin America and Asia* was held at the CIDE Campus in Mexico City. Organised as part of UNU-CRIS' 25th Anniversary Series, the event provided a platform for global reflection on the present and future of regional and interregional economic integration.

The seminar brought together policymakers and researchers to examine current integration dynamics in Latin America and Asia, with Day 2 focusing on Asia, particularly ASEAN and East Asia, and the prospects for strengthening Latin America-Asia relations. Keynote addresses were delivered by Chiaki Kobayashi (Director for Mexico, JICA) and Philippe De Lombaerde, alongside contributions from a broad range of academic experts from Mexico and the wider region.

Co-organised by CIDE, UNU-CRIS, CIALC-UNAM, and CONMEX-CEAPEC, the seminar aimed to strengthen analytical foundations for public policy design and regional cooperation strategies. UNU-CRIS was represented by Philippe De Lombaerde, Frank Mattheis, and Nahuel Oddone, reinforcing its role in advancing comparative and interregional research on economic integration.

EVENT

Best Research Poster Award at Nazarbayev University Conference on Planetary Health

UNU-CRIS participated in the 1st Nazarbayev University International Conference on Planetary Health and Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare, held from 4-5 December in Astana, Kazakhstan. Organised by the School of Medicine at Nazarbayev University, the conference convened international scholars and practitioners to discuss innovative approaches to planetary health and sustainable healthcare systems.

At the conference, the UNU-CRIS poster titled *Health Strategies for Resilience for Climate-Stressed Aral Sea Communities* was awarded the Best Research Poster Award. The work was presented on-site by Dr. Alma Uakhiyovna Nurtazina, Operational Director of the Central Asian Regional Center for Planetary Health (CARCPH) and Vice Rector for Strategic Development and International Cooperation at Semey Medical University, Kazakhstan.

The poster was included in the official conference proceedings, highlighting the growing relevance of UNU-CRIS's Planetary Health research and its collaborative engagement in Central Asia.

PUBLICATION

Challenges of Regional Integration in the New International Context: A Series of Dialogues Between Young Academics and Professionals from Latin America

This research report, the first in the UNU-CRIS Research Report series in 2025, presents the results of a collaborative initiative led by FLACSO Argentina and the Latin American Trade Network (Red LATN), together with regional academic institutions, to strengthen the visibility and policy relevance of Latin American regional integration.

Through a competitive call, 40 young scholars and professionals from 16 countries participated in a cycle of dialogues held in 2023, addressing integration challenges in a context of global uncertainty and multilateral crisis.

The discussions focused on international insertion, trade agreements, and emerging agendas, combining regional and subregional perspectives. The report synthesises key diagnostic findings and policy recommendations, while also commemorating 25 years of Red LATN, CAEI-UASB, and UNU-CRIS.

EVENT

COP30: One Health as SDG Accelerator

UNU-CRIS contributed to a COP30 debrief session titled *One Health as an SDG Accelerator: Integral Ecology as a Light to Foster the One-Health Approach*, reflecting on health-focused outcomes from COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

The session highlighted the growing role of the One Health approach, integrating human, animal, plant, and ecosystem health as a key pillar of the Belém Health Action Plan and its relevance for advancing the SDGs and climate adaptation under the Paris Agreement.

Nidhi Nagabhatla, leading the UNU-CRIS Nature, Climate & Health cluster, joined global experts to discuss governance advances, including surveillance financing, indigenous knowledge integration, and equitable, gender-responsive policy pathways.

PARTNERSHIPS

Launching the Central Asian Regional Center for Planetary Health

On 7 October, during the inauguration of the Central Asian Regional Center for Planetary Health (CARCPH) at Semey Medical University (SMU), UNU-CRIS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SMU, formalising a new partnership on planetary health in Central Asia.

The agreement, witnessed by Kazakhstan's First Vice-Minister of Health and regional academic leaders, establishes

collaboration on joint research, capacity building, and policy innovation, with a focus on climate-related health risks, the Aral Sea region, and cross-border governance.

The MoU reinforces UNU-CRIS's regional integration mandate and strengthens its engagement in advancing climate-resilient health cooperation in Central Asia.



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA)

During the Kerala Urban Conclave (KUC) 2025, Philippe De Lombaerde signed a Letter of Intent with the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA), formalising intentions to strengthen cooperation on urban governance and sustainable development.

Held in Kochi and organised by the Government of Kerala's Local Self Government Department, the Conclave

focused on shaping the future of sustainable urban development in the context of rapid urbanisation in the state.

On the margins of the event, Minister for Local Self Government M.B. Rajesh and Philippe De Lombaerde exchanged views on potential collaboration, including work on localising the SDGs and advancing participatory and multi-level governance.



The signing ceremony of the Letter of Intent with KILA at the Kerala Urban Conclave in September.



Local Impact

Bringing the world home

PUBLICATION

Perceptions and Narratives about Psychosocial Impacts Following the 2021 Flooding and Citizens' Displacement in Belgium

This working paper examines the psychosocial impact of the 2021 floods in Belgium, one of the country's most devastating natural disasters, with a focus on affected communities in the Vesder Valley.

Authored by Dilek Günes Reubens, Olivia Toles, Nidhi Nagabhatla, Nele De Maeyer, and Charlotte Scheerens, the study explores both individual experiences and institutional responses in the aftermath of the floods.

Based on qualitative interviews with affected citizens and frontline disaster responders, the paper identifies widespread psychosocial distress, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress symptoms, alongside strong inequalities in recovery linked to socioeconomic status and insurance coverage.

EVENT

Early Career Writing & Research Skills Workshop in the Energy Justice Space

The Early Career Writing & Research Skills Workshop on Energy Justice, held from 9-11 April at UNU-CRIS in Bruges, aimed to strengthen the research skills, publication capacity, and professional networks of early career researchers working on energy justice, climate justice, sustainability, and just transition issues.

Convened by UNU-CRIS, the TRansitions Energétiques et Environnementales (TREE) Lab of the Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, and Erasmus University Rotterdam, the three-day in-person event combined group sessions, writing time, and networking activities. Participants received guidance on academic writing, publishing in leading journals, and career development, with sessions facilitated by an international group of senior scholars and practitioners. The workshop fostered interdisciplinary exchange and supported early career researchers in advancing high-quality, policy-relevant research.



PUBLICATION

Municipal Amalgamations in Flanders: Key Findings and Policy Implications for Strengthening Local Governments

In this working paper, Chesney Callens analyses the outcomes of the 2019 municipal amalgamations in Flanders, focusing on their implications for strengthening local governments and public service delivery.

The research highlights how municipal mergers expanded policy agendas and increased administrative capacity by pooling resources, personnel, and expertise, enabling municipalities to undertake larger and more complex projects.

At the same time, the findings point to persistent challenges, particularly in cultural integration, leadership, and staff adaptation.



While structural integration was largely successful, differences in organisation culture affected employee well-being, with pre-merger staff reporting lower levels of trust and commitment compared to new hires.

The study underscores the critical role of middle management in managing change and maintaining service quality, and stresses the importance of strategic transition management, leadership development, and targeted support for staff. As further voluntary mergers are expected from 2025 onwards, the paper provides timely lessons for municipalities and policy makers seeking to make future amalgamations more effective, inclusive, and sustainable.

EVENT

20th Edition of the VVN Interuniversity Model United Nations (MUN)

The 20th edition of the VVN Interuniversity Model United Nations (MUN) took place from 4-6 December in Brussels, with the support of UNU-CRIS. Organised by the United Nations Association Belgium Flanders (VVN), the conference brought together students from the University of Antwerp, Ghent University, KU Leuven, and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel to simulate the work of the United Nations Security Council and engage in multilateral diplomacy.

The conference opened on Thursday 4 December, with a formal ceremony hosted at the Flemish Parliament in Brussels. Marking the twentieth anniversary of the VVN MUN, the opening event features welcome addresses, reflections on two decades of the initiative, and an introduction to the 2025 case study on “The Arctic Region”.

The programme included a keynote address, a high-level panel debate with academic and diplomatic experts, and interactive exchanges with students.

Frank Mattheis, Research Fellow at UNU-CRIS, contributed to the panel discussion, highlighting perspectives on diplomacy and global governance.

Throughout the conference, students assumed the role of diplomats, representing countries, defending national positions, and debating the geopolitical and environmental challenges facing the Arctic region.



Frank Mattheis speaking at the opening ceremony of the Model United Nations at the Flemish Parliament.

EVENT

A Palestinian State: (Im)possible?

On Tuesday, 23 September, UNU-CRIS organised an event to discuss Palestinian Statehood in the Goudleiderbehangzaal in central Bruges.

The event, co-organised by Lokaal Mondiaal Brugge, Brugs Vredesplatform, Mondiale Raad Brugge, and the United Nations Association, and was moderated by Philippe De Lombaerde and brought together three experts who analysed the conflict from complementary perspectives, moving beyond a narrow military framing.

Amal Sarsour examined the historical roots of the conflict and the strategic struggle over water resources, Rikkert Horemans, Policy Offer Palestine-Israel, Broederlijk Delen, outlined the international legal framework and state responsibilities,

and Catherine De Bock, Advisor on International Humanitarian Law, Oxfam International, addressed the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including famine risks and current aid distribution mechanisms. The debate took place against the backdrop of recent international recognitions of the Palestinian state, highlighting the tensions between symbolic diplomatic steps and realities on the ground, including ongoing violence, settlement expansion, and humanitarian collapse.

Through expert input and audience engagement, the event fostered critical reflection on accountability, international action, and pathways toward justice and protection for civilians.



Amal Sarsour and Philippe De Lombaerde leading the panel discussion on Palestinian statehood.

UNU-CRIS Publications

Amplifying Our Voice

We are dedicated to fostering global dialogue through our diverse research outputs, which serve as a dynamic platform for innovative ideas on regionalism and governance.

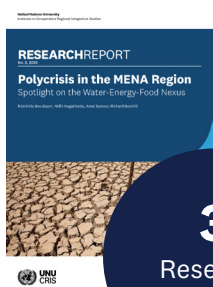
Our publications translate rigorous academic inquiry into actionable knowledge.

The Working Paper Series shares preliminary findings to stimulate early debate, while the Research Report Series delivers comprehensive, in-depth analysis.

For decision-makers, our Policy Brief Series offers targeted, evidence-based recommendations, alongside the Insight Brief Series, which provides sharp commentary on emerging global issues.

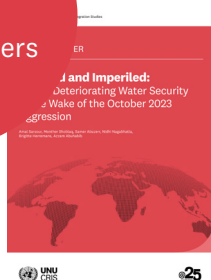
Finally, the UNU Series on Regionalism, published by Springer, produces world-class book-length scholarship.

Together, these platforms amplify critical voices and shape policy.



3
Research
Reports

16
Working Papers







Capacity Building

Beyond the Pages and Into Action

Visiting Researchers and Interns

UNU-CRIS is committed to nurturing the next generation of scholars and practitioners through its dynamic Visiting Research Fellowship and Internship programmes.

Our Visiting Fellows programme offers an inspiring environment for both early-career and established researchers to advance critical scholarship on regional integration, global governance, and multilateralism.

By collaborating directly with our experts, Fellows contribute significantly to our research outputs while expanding their own academic networks.

Similarly, our Internship programme provides highly motivated students and recent graduates with invaluable hands-on experience within a United Nations environment.

Interns actively support our research clusters and communications, bridging the gap between academic theory and practical policy impact.

In 2025, UNU-CRIS proudly hosted a vibrant, diverse cohort of international talent. We welcomed 19 Visiting Research Fellows, including 10 from developing countries and 9 women.

Furthermore, our 29 interns reflected a strong commitment to global inclusivity, with 18 hailing from developing countries and 22 women.

Together, these cohorts significantly enriched the intellectual community and global reach of UNU-CRIS.



Participants of the Early Career Writing & Research Skills Workshop in the Energy Justice Space in April.

I was a visiting fellow at UNU-CRIS for seven months in 2025, researching about climate change politics and policies in the European Union and Latin American regional organisations.

The Institute is a unique and inspiring space for exchanges with other scholars working with comparative regionalism.

Its location in Bruges facilitated the co-organisation and participation in international conferences, as well as realisation of interviews in Brussels.

Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann

Professor, PUC-Rio



Short Training Programmes

International Policies: The Nexus and Water Security for Climate Change and Participatory Research

Online | 1-28 February

Partner: Universidad Mayor de San Andrés

Salerno Winter School on Internet Governance (SWING)

Salerno, Italy | 24-28 February

Partner: University of Salerno

Economic Fitness & Complexity – Summer School

Rome, Italy | 9-14 June

Partners: Enrico Fermi Research Centre, UNU-MERIT and the Young Scholar Initiative

School of Modern Diplomacy

Online | September - November

Partners: the Department of Foreign Affairs of Flanders, Ghent University and the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG/VUB)

Pan Asia Training on International Water Law: Improving Water Governance and Climate Resilient Investment

Online and Bangkok, Thailand | 8-11 December

Partners: University of Northumbria, IUCN BRIDGE, GWP, FAO, UCC Ireland, International Water Law Academy, the European Union, the Netherlands, Finland, Bangladesh and Australia

Certificate Course on Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and Ecosystem-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR)

Online | 11-25 February

Partner: Ocean University of Sri Lanka

Policy Brief Workshop

Köszeg, Hungary | 6 May

Partner: iASK

13th Doctoral School on Latin American, European and Comparative Regionalism

Quito, Ecuador | 7-11 July

Partners: the Andean Center for International Studies of the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, FLACSO Argentina

Trusted Internet Summer School on Internet Governance and International Law

Lodz, Poland | 22-26 September

Partners: Lodz University, GigaNet and ISOC Foundation, Stetson University, University of Surrey and Queen Mary University



Participants of the Early Career Writing & Research Skills Workshop in the Energy Justice Space in April.

PhD Programme

UNU-CRIS had 36 active PhD Fellows in 2025, with five successful PhD defenses throughout the year.

(Im)mobility, Water-Related Adaptation Strategies, and Development Implications in West and Central Africa

Alix Debray (UGent)

Promoters: Ilse Ruyssen and Sorana Toma



Meaningful Participation in Global and Regional Multistakeholder Institutions: The Case of the Internet Governance Forum

Nadia Tjahja (VUB)

Promoters: Jamal Shahin and Trisha Meyer



The Trade Turn: The EU's Arrival in a Geoeconomic World

Sjorre Couvreur (UGent)

Promoters: Jan Orbie, Ferdi De Ville and Thomas Jacobs

The Politics of Life and Death: Expressions of Violence and Resistance in Belarus and Ukraine

Katsiaryna Lozka (UGent)

Promoters: Fabienne Bossuyt and Tim Haesebrouck

The EU's Relationship with Fossil Fuel Suppliers: Business as Usual or Energy Transition?

Reinhilde Bouckaert (UGent)

Promotor: Claire Dupont





Cluster Reports

Our Knowledge Communities

Regions and Cities Governance Lab (Re-LAB)

In 2025, global governance faced intensifying pressures as fragmentation deepened and multilateral cooperation came under renewed strain.

Simultaneously, regional actors sought to assert themselves with interregional summits and trade agreements.

The research cluster “Regions and Cities Governance Lab” closely monitored these dynamics and contributed to scholarly and policy debates on the evolving role of regionalism and interregionalism in an increasingly contested world order.

True to its mission of bridging research and practice, Re-LAB engaged in several

policy dialogues and played a key role in organising the ninth edition of the flagship conference *The EU in International Affairs*.

The cluster also continued to strengthen comparative regionalism in the Global South through its active involvement in the UNU-CRIS doctoral school held in Ecuador and in the Academic Council of UN Studies in Kenya.

Frank Mattheis

Cluster Coordinator
Regions and Cities Governance Lab





SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

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Cooper, Andrew. 2025. 'Authentic' Multilateralism and the Stigmatisation of 'Small Circles': China, India, and the Contestation over Institutional Design. *Third World Quarterly*, 46(15); 1838-1856

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Lenz, Tobias and Fredrik Söderbaum. 2025. Comparative Regionalism beyond Europe versus the Rest. *Review of International Studies*, 51(5): 889-905.

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Regions and Cities Governance Lab (Re-LAB)

Mesquita, Rafael and Bruno Theodoro Luciano. 2025. Busting the Myth of Convergence between the EU and LAC Countries: Analysis from UN Resolutions. *Global Policy*, 16(4): 589-601.

Qoraboyev, Ikboljon and Nazym Umirzakova. 2025. A Geopolitical Europe in Action: Pragmatism and Partnership in EU-Central Asia Relations beyond the Samarkand Summit. *Caucasus Strategic Perspectives*, 6(2): 105-119.

Parthenay, Kevin. 2025. Why and how do Regional Organizations intervene without a Mandate in Democratic Crises? The Central American Case. *International Relations*. 1-27.

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International Organizations: ECOWAS' COVID-19 Response. *Global Policy*, 16(5): 885-897.

Tieku, Thomas Kwasi and Amanda Coffie. 2025. (In) visibility of African Borders: A Decolonial Examination of the African Union's Boundary Practices." *International Affairs* 101(3): 801-819.

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Zolotarova, Oksana. 2025. Ukraine. State Aid Control: From Approximation with the EU Acquis to Wartime Derogation (2014–2025), *European State Aid Law Quarterly*, 24(4): 512–520.

SELECTED EVENTS

The State of the Art of the Economic Integration Processes in Latin America and Asia (6–7 March): Mexico City (Hybrid)

The European Union in International Affairs: Europe in a Fragmenting World (21–23 May): Brussels

UNU-CRIS 25th Anniversary Roundtable: Past, Present and Future of Regionalism Studies (21 May): Brussels

IV Congreso – GRIDALE: Grupo de Reflexión sobre Integración y Desarrollo en América Latina y Europa (1–3 July 2025): Bogotá

Regional Organisations and Electoral Observation (16 January): Bruges

The EU Science Diplomacy Towards the Southern Neighbourhood: Reappraising the EU Structural Diplomacy (14 March): Online

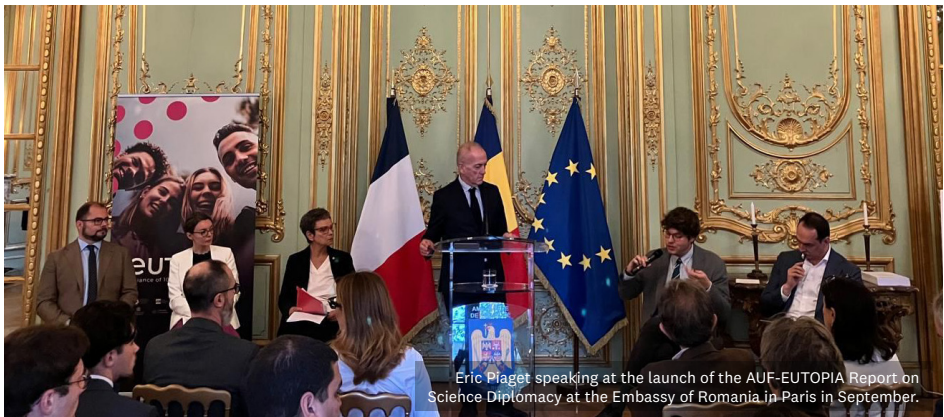
Analyzing the Conflict Early Warning–Response Gap as Divides Between Communities of Practice (18 March): Bruges

Een Palestijnse Staat: (on)mogelijk? (23 September): Bruges

The Russia–Ukraine War and Its Implications on Central Asia: Resilience, Connectivity, and Decolonization (6 March): Ghent

Japan’s Defense Engagement in the Indo-Pacific – Deterrence, Strategic Partnership, and Stable Order Building (12 March): Rome

ARTES (Amsterdam School of Regional, Transnational, and European Studies) Retreat (3–4 February): Bruges



Eric Piaget speaking at the launch of the AUF-EUTOPIA Report on Science Diplomacy at the Embassy of Romania in Paris in September.

Economic and Political Interactions

In 2025, the Economic and Political Interactions cluster examined the transformation of global trade amidst hardening environmental instruments and shifting geopolitical alliances.

Our researchers provided nuanced analysis of “flexilateralism” in EU trade policy and the rise of green regionalism in world trade law. Significant scholarly attention was thereby also paid to the Indo-Pacific dynamic.

True to its collaborative spirit, the cluster organized several technical and policy-oriented events, including workshops on digital trade governance and the Green Trade Workshop in York. These forums

tackled the nexus of food security and development finance, alongside innovative studies on the long-term effects of colonization and the impact of migration bans.

By employing advanced methodologies like dynamic machine learning and network actor models, the cluster empowered policymakers to navigate trade diversion and foster more inclusive economic integration.

Samuel Standaert

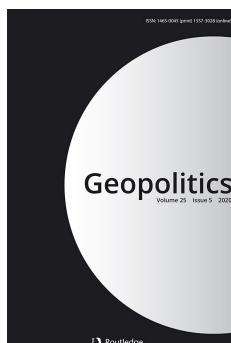
Cluster Coordinator
Economic and Political Interactions



SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Goswami, Arvind., Jangir, Kumar Rajesh, Vijay Kumar Chattu. 2025. Advancing Sustainable Development through Exports of Clean Energy Products from Emerging Asian Economies: A Poisson Pseudo Maximum Likelihood Estimation approach. Sustainable Development 1-16.

Happersberger, Simon and Caroline Bertram. 2025. Reversing the gaze in EU trade policy: Communities, hierarchies and agency under trade and sustainable development chapters. Geopolitics, 31(1): 210-258



Hsieh, Pasha L. 2025. Beyond Non-Recognition: U.S.-Taiwan Trade Agreements in Indo-Pacific Dynamics. University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law, 47(1): 1-82.

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Kalimo, Harri, Simon Happersberger and

Eleanor Mateo. 2025. Flexilateralism in EU Trade Policy: The Case of Aviation Fuels in the Hardening Environmental Trade Instruments. Transnational Environmental Law, 14(2025): 420-452.

Naeher, Dominik, Philippe De Lombaerde and Takfarinas Saber. 2025. Evaluating Accession Decisions in Customs Unions: A Dynamic Machine Learning Approach. International Economics and Economic Policy, 22(2025): 1-27.

Van Kerckhoven (and Max Nagel). 2025. Transformations in Latin American Central Banking: COVID-19 and the End of the 'Fiscal Firewall'. New Political Economy, 30(5): 666-681.



Iapadre, Lelio, Giorgia Giovannetti, Roberto Monducci and Fabio Rapiti. 2025. L'Italia nell'economia internazionale, Rapporto ICE 2024-2025, Italian Trade Agency, Roma.

Economic and Political Interactions

SELECTED EVENTS

ERIA, UNU-CRIS and FIT Joint Workshop on Regional Approaches Towards Digital Trade Governance (16 May): Brussels

Green Trade Workshop – The Greening of Trade as a Way out of the Polycrises? Regress, Reforms and Rebuilding International Cooperation in the Environment–Trade Nexus (3–4 July): York

Identifying Trade Diversion Effects in Structural Gravity (21 February): Ghent (Hybrid)

Could Commercial Presence Substitute Cross-Border Services Trade? Why Trade in Services May Not Take Off (4 March): Bruges

Food Security, Development Finance and Governance Quality: The Nexus (18 March): Bruges

Relocating the Dream: Substitution of Aspirations after Emigration Bans (25 April): Ghent (Hybrid)

Enhancing Climate Vulnerability Assessment Using Infrastructure Geospatial Data: Evidence from Guinea (6 June): Ghent (Hybrid)

Automotive Regionalism and Transnational Capitalism: Engines of Latin American Regional Integration (17 June): Bruges

Empowering Youth in Ziguinchor: An Informational Workshop to Enhance Local Employability and Motivation (20 June): Ghent (Hybrid)

Revisiting Trade Agreement Formation Using Dynamic Network Actor Models (4 July): Ghent (Hybrid)

The Long-Term Effect of Colonization on Trade and Development (17 October): Ghent (Hybrid)

The Impact of EUTR on the Volume and Structure of Trade in Timber and Timber Products (28 November): Ghent (Hybrid)



Fukunari Kimura and Lurong Chen at the Regional Approaches Towards Digital Trade Governance Workshop in Brussels in May.

Migration and Social Policy

In 2025, the Migration and Social Policy cluster scrutinised how (im)mobility and social policy shape resilience within a fragmenting world. A major milestone was Alix Debray's PhD defense on water-related adaptation, complemented by new doctoral projects exploring urban displacement in Ethiopia, social work in India, and climate-induced movement.

The cluster's intellectual reach was extended by Professor Ilse Ruysen's book, *Vloedgolf?*, which unraveled climate migration complexities, and by new associate researchers focusing on gender and mobility infrastructures.

As a key policy actor, the cluster contributed significantly to the EUIA conference and the UNU Migration Network Symposium.

By co-organising workshops on citizenship and collaborating with Re-LAB at the GAPSYM symposium, the cluster bridged local lived experiences with global governance frameworks, advancing a nuanced understanding of climate justice and global equity.

Ine Lietaert

Cluster Coordinator
Migration and Social Policy



SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Bekaert, Els. 2025. The Role of Self-Reported Health and Healthcare Dissatisfaction in Shaping Migration Aspirations Across Africa. *International Migration Review*

Adam, Ilke (and Omar N. Cham). 2025. Justifying Opposition and Support to EU-Africa Cooperation on Deportation in West Africa.

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Adam, Ilke, Florian Trauner (and Omar N. Cham). 2025. The Role of EU-promoted versus Local Narratives in Migratory Decision-Making in The Gambia. *International Migration*. 63(3): 1-14.

Cabada, Ainoa and Philomena Murray. 2025. The Role of Academics as Refugee Policy Advocates: Lessons from Australia. *Policy Studies*, 46 (4): 513-537

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van Hest, Maybritt Jill Alpes, Sarah Devos, and Ilse Derluyn 2025. Ethics in Qualitative Migration and Refugee Studies in Europe: From “Doing no Harm” to Reciprocity and Equity. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 24(2025): 1-18.

Kluczewska, Karolina and Laura Luciani. 2025. Framing Feminism in Eurasia: Bottom-up Strategies of Depoliticisation and Repoliticisation. *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, 1-25.

Le Pavic, Gaëlle and Ekaterina Korableva. 2025. ‘Humanitarian, Linguistic and Narrative Border(Ing) in Georgia: Migrations in the Context of Russia’s War on Ukraine’. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 1-25.

Penkala, Alina, Ilse Derluyn, and Ine Lietaert. 2025. Caring across Time and Borders : Ukrainian Returnees’ Journeys towards Ageing and Belonging. *International Migration*; 63 (4).

Regasa, Dereje and Ine Lietaert. 2025. Relocating Displacement: Government-Led Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban Ethiopia. *Ethnopolitics*, 1-19.

Ruyssen, Ilse, Charlotte Scheerens (Lise Vanden Haute, and Sorana Toma). 2025. Involuntary Immobility and Well-being: A Scoping Review of Existing Literature and Future Research Directions. *Globalization and Health*, 21(1): 1-15.



Migration and Social Policy

Ruyssen, Ilse (Juan Armando Torres Munguía, Marlies Hesselman, and Inmaculada Martínez Zarzoso). 2025. Mapping Energy Poverty Measures during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A New Global Panel Dataset. *Journal of Applied Economics*, 28(1): 1-16.

Ruyssen, Ilse (and Killian Foubert). 2025. Leaving terrorism behind? The Role of Terrorist Attacks in Shaping Migration Intentions Around the World. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 51(15): 4030–4056.

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Trauner, Florian (and Philipp Stutz). 2025. Democracy Matters (To Some Extent): Autocracies, Democracies and the Forced Return of Migrants from the EU. *Geopolitics*. 30(2). 704-729.

SELECTED EVENTS

The Unescapable Borders of Knowledge (Re)production in “Migration Studies”: Critical Reflections on De/Colonising Pedagogies (3 July): Paris

UNU Migration Network Symposium (29 September): Maastricht

Citizenship and Mobility (5 December): Ghent

Framing Feminism in Eurasia: Activists’ Strategies and Dilemmas (25 February): Bruges

Relocating the Dream: Substitution of Aspirations after Emigration Bans (25 April): Ghent (Hybrid)

Vloedgolf? De Complexiteit van Klimaatmigratie Ontrafeld (26 June): Ghent

CESSMIR Breakthrough Breakfast – 5th Edition: Social Services across a Contested Divide: Transnistrian Case (19 February): Ghent (Hybrid)

Cross-border resource management and regional cooperation. Ghent Africa Platform Symposium (GAPSYM), 4 December, Ghent and online.



Caritas Internationalis / Flickr

Nature, Climate and Health

The Nature, Climate, and Health cluster serves as a dynamic hub for interdisciplinary excellence and collaborative work developed via collaboration with a diverse network of experts spanning Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

The cluster members, including associate fellows and regional experts, mobilised resources to generate specialised knowledge outputs and advance the collective agenda of UNU-CRIS through research, capacity-building, and policy-focused initiatives. One key example was organising and contributing to more than 10 sessions at COP 30 in Brazil.

The cluster remained committed to addressing the complex intersections of environmental change and human well-being.

Overall, the cluster agenda in 2025 accommodated seasoned experts and mentored young scholars from across the regions, fostering an inclusive environment for collective thinking and empowering the next generation of researchers to produce and deliver high-quality research outputs and evidence-based policy briefs.

Nidhi Nagabhatla

Cluster Coordinator
Nature, Climate and Health



Nidhi Nagabhatla and Charlotte Schreerens, together with Revati Phalkey (Director, UNU-IIGH) and Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi (Director, UNU-IAS).

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Beattie, Shaun, Juliet Brodie, Nidhi Nagabhatla, Sophie Corrigan, Phaik Eem Lim, Sze-Wan Poong, Cicilia Kambey and Elizabeth J. Cottier-Cook. 2025. Recognising Seaweeds: Addressing Gaps in International Biodiversity Frameworks for Global Seaweed Conservation. *Sustainable Development* 33(5): 6968–6984.



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Devlaeminck, David J. 2025. Looking Beyond the “Watercourses”: Reconceptualising Key Norms of the Law of

International Watercourses as Obligations erga omnes. *Journal of Energy and Natural Resources Law* 43(4): 593–611.

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Fentahun Shibesh, Belayneh and Nidhi Nagabhatla. 2025. Addressing Climate Resilience in the African Region: Prioritizing Mental Health and Psychosocial Well-Being in Disaster Preparedness and Response Planning for Mainstream Communities and Migrants, *Climate*, 13(7): 1–29.

Goswami, Aravind., Kapoor, Harmanpreet Singh., Sharma, Ankita., Jadhav, Vivek., Jangir, Rajesh Kumar and Chattu, Vijay Kumar. 2025. Health and Economic Effects of Air Pollution in the USA and India: A comparative Study of Two Nations’ Breath.

Nature, Climate and Health

AIMS Public Health, 12(3): 875-889.

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Okamoto, Sanae, Kariuki Weru, Nidhi

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Rahman-Shepherd, Afifah, Nelson Aghogho Evaborhene, Ayelet Berman, Ana B Amaya, Ezekiel Boro, Osman Dar, Zheng Jie Marc Ho, Anne-Sophie Jung, Mishal Khan, Olaa Mohamed-Ahmed, Oyeronke Oyebaraji, Tikki Elka Pangestu, Sabina Faiz Rashid, Ahmed Razavi, Pía Riggirozzi, Helena Legido-Quigley and Li Yang Hsu. 2025. Establishing the Value of Regional Cooperation and a Critical Role for Regional Organisations in Managing Future Health Emergencies. Lancet Global Health, 13(3): e585-e592.

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Schunz, Simon. 2025. Was there a Notion of 'Enough' in the European Green Deal? Sufficiency in the European Union's Sustainability Discourse, Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal

Ubah, Chibuzor Charles and Nidhi Nagabhatla. 2025. Progress of the Malabo

Declaration as a Regional Agenda Towards Addressing Hunger in Africa. *Geographies*, 5(2): 1-19.

Van de Graaf, Thijs (and Marie Dejonghe). 2025. Green Colonialism or Green Transformation? The Equity Implications of Clean Hydrogen Trade. *Political Geography*, 120(2025): 1-12.

Vandenbroeck, Aline, Els Bekaert, Julia M.P. Bittner, Ismaila Ceesay, Charlotte Scheerens, and Ilse Ruyssen. 2025. Exploring barriers to healthcare among internal and international female migrants in The Gambia. *African Journal of Primary Health Care & Family Medicine*, 17(1): 1-18.

Van Griensven, Ann (Abedulla M. A. Elsaidy, Estifanos Addisu Yimer, Yunes Mogheir, Marijke Huysmans, and Lorenzo Villani). 2025. Groundwater Drought and Anthropogenic Amplifiers: A Review of Assessment and Response Strategies in Arid and Semi-arid Areas. *Science of the Total Environment*. 978 (179406). 1-23.

Zolotarova, Oksana and Dmytro Lukash. 2025. EU Energy Security amid Geopolitical Change. *Scientia Fructuosa*, 136(5): 80-92.

SELECTED EVENTS

4th International One Health Conference – Integral Ecology as a Light to Advance the One Health Vision (30 September–2 October): Rome (Hybrid)

Early Career Writing & Research Skills Workshop in the Energy Justice Space (9–11 April): Bruges

Green Trade Workshop – The Greening of Trade as a Way out of the Polycrises? Regress, Reforms and Rebuilding International Cooperation in the Environment–Trade Nexus (3–4 July): York

Youth Foresight Sprint: Investing in Resilient Futures (29 August): Online
Reflections on COP30 – Climate, Health, and Regional Resilience through the Water–Food–Human (Health) Security Nexus (24 November): Rio de Janeiro

Weaponising Water in Gaza (13 January): Bruges

Fueling Cooperation for Resilience: Minilateral Formats in Europe’s Regional Response to the 2021–2023 Gas Crisis (26 May): Bruges

Steering Transboundary Water Cooperation in the ASEAN Region: What Role for International Law? (2 June): Bruges

Enhancing Climate Vulnerability Assessment Using Infrastructure Geospatial Data: Evidence from Guinea (6 June): Ghent (Hybrid)

Understanding New Landscapes of Water Disasters: Probing Options (27 August): Online

First Meeting of the 2030 Seaweed Breakthrough Pool of Experts (9 September): Online

Digital Governance

The digital landscape in 2025 was increasingly defined by the tension between rapid technological expansion and the pursuit of digital sovereignty.

The Digital Governance cluster remained at the forefront of these debates, scrutinising the intersection of orbital sustainability and the EU's digital autonomy. Through a series of high-impact publications, researchers explored the attributes of digital sovereignty and the evolving global governance of Low Earth Orbit satellites.

Practical policy impact was a cornerstone of the cluster's work, notably through the evaluation of the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation and research into TikTok's

role in political curation. The cluster also prioritised global inclusivity, redefining AI governance by centering the *Global Majority*. This was exemplified by the Brussels-based workshop on AI governance and the *Voices Unmuted* dialogue, which empowered youth to shape the future of internet governance. By bridging the gap between infrastructure and participation, the cluster significantly influenced how digital societies are governed in an era of fragmentation.

Jamal Shahin

Cluster Coordinator
Digital Governance



Carlos Fonseca at the Salerno Winter School on Internet Governance in February.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Akcali Gur, Berna, and Joanna Kulesza. 2025. The EU's Dual Policy Dilemma: Orbital Sustainability and Digital Autonomy Policies Intertwined, 101731.

Entrena-Serrano, C., & Trisha, M. (2025). Artifacts, Practices and Social Arrangements in Content Curation on TikTok: A Study on Political and Social Issues Content. AOIR-Selected Papers of Internet Research.

Gonzalez Fuster, Gloria (Noortje Marres, Brit Ross Winthereik, Tanja Schneider, and Sascha Dickel). 2025. Infrastructural Participation in Digital Societies: Challenges and Alternatives. Science & Technology Studies.

Kulesza, Joanna and Berna Akcali Gur (eds). 2025. Global Governance of Low Earth Orbit Satellites, Lods University Press.

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Pohle, Julia, Riccardo Nanni and Mauro Santaniello. 2025. Unthinking Digital Sovereignty: A Critical Reflection on Origins, Objectives, and Practices. Policy &

Internet, 16(4):666–671.

Santaniello, Mauro. 2025. Attributes of Digital Sovereignty: A Conceptual Framework. Geopolitics, 1-22.

Gonzalez Fuster, Gloria, Luk Van Langenhove and Thiago Morais. 2025. Learning from the Global Majority: Redefining Global AI Governance Together.

Vecchi, Francesco and Nadia Tjahja. 2025. Reflection on the 2025 European Dialogue on Internet Governance. UNU-CRIS Insight Brief 24.

EVENTS

Learning from the Global Majority: A New Global AI Governance (14 July): Brussels

Voices Unmuted: Youth Shaping the Future of Internet Governance: Big Ideas Dialogue (21 August): Online

Our People

Office of the Director (5)

Philippe De Lombaerde – Director
Andrew Dunn – Policy and Communications Officer
Pascale Vantorre – Management Assistant
Noël Neven – Financial and Administrative Officer
Asjela Masovic – Administrative Assistant

Cluster Coordinators (5)

Samuel Standaert | Ine Lietaert | Jamal Shahin | Nidhi Nagabhatla | Frank Mattheis

Professorial Fellows (22)

Ike Adam | Sven Biscop | Fabienne Bossuyt | Thijs Van de Graaf | Marijke D'Haese | Dries Lesage | Trisha Meyer | Sebastian Oberthür | Jan Orbie | Ilse Ruyssen | Peter van Elsuwege | Mahya Roustaei Hossein Abadi | Stefaan Smis | Florian Trauner | Sven Van Kerckhoven | Luk van Langenhove | Gloria González Fuster | Nanditha Mathew | Ann Van Griensven | Rob Heyman | Caroline Buts | Ellen Desmet

PhD Fellows and Post Docs (39)

Nadia Tjahja* | Miguel Moreno* | Afnan Agramont* | Daniel Alejo | Kikè Yra Fonton | Orsolya Gulyás | Simon Happersberger | Sophie Hoogenboom | Maria Pilar Lorenzo | Justine Miller | Dan Jezreel A. Orendain | María Rodríguez Alcázar | Adelina Sharipova | Martina Chiara Tallartia | Flor Vandevelde | Padmi Ranasinghe | Nicolás Caso Castellón | Eric Piaget | Kevin Le Merle | Sara Canali | Carolina Londono-Escudero | Sevinj Samadzade | Rashid Sohail Khan | Martha Cassidy-Neumiller | Stijn Salden | Koen Borghys | Iana Ovsiannikova | Carlos Fonseca | Hannah Grondelaers | Maria Karasani | Thiago Moraes Guimaraes | Tina Kassie B Nicco | Matteo Peccini | Oksana Zolotarova | Gaia Romeo | Peter Odrich | Sanae Youbi | Ishita Sharam | Apra Jain

Visiting Research Fellows (9)

Tamara Avellán | Santosh Vijakumar | Alix Debray | Reinilde Bouckaert | Zeineb Bouhlef | Rustam Samadov | Samuel d'Almeida | Dele Kogbe | Mohammed Alotaibi

Associate Research Fellows (54)

Gaëlle Le Pavic | Alina Penkala | Dereje Regasa | Ashenafi Tirfie Tizazu | Ana B. Amaya | Nanae Baldauff | Els Bekaert | Edward Best | Andrew Bradley | Leiza Brumat | Richard Burchill | Andrew Cooper | Armin Cuyvers | Ludo Cuyvers | Régis Dandoy | Dimpho Deleglise | Gaspard Genna | Amandine Gnanguénon | Berna Akcali Gur | Geert Haghebaert | Lelio Iapadre | Lynda Iroulo | Eric Maertens | Rossella Marino | Philomena Murray | Nahuel Oddone | Kevin Parthenay | Jamie Pring | Ikboljon Qoraboyev | Alexis Roig | Mauro Santaniello | Amal Sarsour | Charlotte Scheerens | Simon Schunz | Timothy Shaw | Frederik Söderbaum | Ueli Staeger | Bayartsetseg Terbish | Bruno Theodoro Luciano | Hana Umezawa | Domenico Valenza | Vijay Kumamoto Chattu | Alexis Berg-Rodríguez | Keita Azuma | Germán Camilo Prieto | David J. Devlaeminck | Antoni Esteve de Ordal | Florabel Quispe Rémon | Babatunde Fagbayibo | Pasha Hsieh | Thomas Kwasi Tieku | George Mavrotos | Luca Polizzi | Adolfo Alberto Laborde Carranco

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Ebenezer Sosu | Ghulam Sakhi Bayramli | Jamiu Badmus | Uyanga Lkhagvajav | Wafi Ara Faruqui | Aakriti Maraseni | Regina Gomes | Sonia Mukhtar | Margaret Coaquira | Giuseppe Davide Germinario | Sabrin Abdullahi | Tanya Goyal | Sabit Orynassar | Elisabeth Tante

*two different affiliations in 2025

Advisory Committee

Fukunari Kimura (Chair) | Adebayo Olukoshi | Adriana Erthal Abdenur | Célestin Monga | Carl Devos | Florian Trauner | Koen Jongbloet

Our Partners



About UNU-CRIS

The United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS) is a research and training institute of the United Nations University.

We produce interdisciplinary research on policy challenges requiring cross-border and multi-level governance and cooperation.

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