

DRAFT AGENDA

TITLE:

Science and Skills Diplomacy in an Uncertain World

Turin, 23 November 2026

SUMMARY:

This roundtable asks how science and skills diplomacy can support trust-building, human capital development and long-term international cooperation in a fragmented geopolitical context, with a particular focus on Europe's engagement with the Mediterranean and Africa regions.

Its distinctive contribution is to connect three agendas that are often discussed separately. Science diplomacy is usually framed around research cooperation and the circulation of knowledge. Skills diplomacy brings in human capital development, institutional capacity and the ability of education and training systems to respond to social, economic and technological transitions. Higher education cooperation adds a third dimension: universities and university alliances as durable infrastructures for partnership, mobility, dialogue and mutual learning.

The event will therefore not treat science diplomacy as an abstract concept, nor skills as a narrow labour-market agenda. It will examine how science, skills and higher education can jointly contribute to more trusted, reciprocal and strategically relevant forms of cooperation with MENA (Middle East and North Africa) and African partners.

The event is co-organized by the [University of Torino \(UniTo\)](#), the [European University Institute \(EUI\)](#) and [ETF](#). It's conceived as a strategic participatory discussion involving selected academics, policy makers, practitioners from Europe and the MENA region.

Time	Agenda Item
14:30 – 14:45	Welcome, purpose and institutional setting <i>Cristina Prandi, University of Turin</i>
14:45 – 15:05	Opening analytical and policy framing <i>Angela Liberatore EUI</i> <i>Marina Cino Pagliarello EUI</i>
15:05 – 16:05	Moderated roundtable: EU engagement with MENA and Africa through science, skills and higher education cooperation <i>Moderators: Thierry Foubert, ETF and Elena Asciutti, EUI</i> <i>Interventions:</i> <i>Marcello Scalisi UNIMED</i> <i>Amb. Barucco EUI</i> <i>MAECI/AICS</i> <i>INTPA</i> <i>African Union</i> <i>Cristiana Peano, Unito</i> <i>Amb. Maurizio Massari</i>
16:05 – 16:25	Have your say
16:25 – 16:30	Closing remarks