



ATLANTIC DIALOGUES

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ATLANTIC VISION

Building an Atlantic Community

2025 Edition



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Introduction

Since 2018, the Atlantic Vision exercise has provided a structured space within the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program for successive cohorts to reflect collectively on the future of the Atlantic Basin. Each year, participants are divided into economic, political, and social working groups and tasked with identifying the region's most pressing challenges and proposing forward-looking solutions. Over time, these reports have formed a coherent intellectual trajectory.

The first edition established a baseline diagnosis. It identified structural obstacles to the emergence of a genuine Atlantic Community, including economic asymmetries, fragmented governance, weak coordination mechanisms, and persistent social inequalities. Subsequent cohorts expanded this agenda, responding to evolving geopolitical tensions, climate pressures, democratic stress, technological disruption, and widening inequality. The economic strand evolved from outlining a foundational roadmap to calling for structural reforms in financing, connectivity, and regulatory alignment. The political strand moved from diagnosing fragmented initiatives and misleading narratives to envisioning governance architectures capable of aligning regional strategies and elevating local voices. The social strand progressed from mapping structural injustices rooted in colonial legacies to designing participatory and narrative tools aimed at strengthening cohesion in diverse and unequal societies.

Across editions, several cross-cutting messages have become increasingly clear. The Atlantic Community remains under-constructed and insufficiently tangible in citizens' daily lives. Youth leadership is central, but it must be embedded within broader, intergenerational coalitions capable of scaling impact. Building, connecting, and anticipating are inseparable processes. Most importantly, the unfinished agenda is implementation. Cohorts have consistently converged on ambitious ideas; the challenge now lies in testing them, scaling what works, and embedding accountability mechanisms that endure beyond individual workshops.

In 2025, the original foresight horizon has been reached. This milestone marks not the end of the exercise, but its transformation. Rather than asking what should be achieved by 2025, this year's cohort was invited to engage with a retrospective of previous reports and to confront a new and more demanding question:

What would a credible, shared Atlantic Community look like by 2035 and beyond, and what concrete steps must be taken now to make it operational?

The shift is deliberate. The Atlantic Basin is one of the world's busiest oceanic corridors—a vital artery for global trade, energy flows, and commercial exchange—and an increasingly strategic geopolitical space. Yet, despite growing economic interdependence and the emergence of multiple cooperation initiatives across security, trade, climate, and blue economy governance, fragmentation persists. The region's institutional landscape remains dense but insufficiently aligned. Trust gaps endure between North and South. Social protection systems struggle to keep pace with climate disruption and technological change. Economic value chains remain vulnerable to external shocks. Against this backdrop, the 2025 cohort focused less on broad crisis mapping and more on the structural bottlenecks that prevent the Atlantic from functioning as a coherent and resilient community.

The emphasis shifted from aspiration to delivery, from vision to implementation, and from isolated initiatives to systemic alignment.

Across economic, political, and social discussions, one central insight emerged: the Atlantic space does not lack cooperation initiatives or strategic ambition; it lacks coordinated mechanisms capable of translating ambition into sustained and equitable outcomes.

This report outlines the cohort's analysis and recommendations. It builds on years of cumulative reflection while projecting forward toward 2035. The question is no longer whether the Atlantic Community should exist; the question is whether its actors are prepared to operationalize it.



Economic Challenges: Aligning Systems for Resilience

The economic discussions centered on four interrelated structural constraints that undermine the Atlantic's capacity to function as an integrated and resilient economic space. Rather than examining isolated policy failures, the group mapped how weaknesses in finance, skills, infrastructure, and trade reinforce one another.

Financing Ecosystems and Capital Constraints

Limited access to private capital remains a structural impediment to inclusive growth across many Atlantic economies. Shallow financial markets, high perceived risk, regulatory uncertainty, and insufficient coordination between public finance and private investment limit the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises to scale and innovate. Development banks and public institutions often operate without adequate mechanisms to crowd in private investment, while venture capital ecosystems remain unevenly distributed across the basin.

Participants emphasized that strengthening digital financial instruments, improving risk assessment frameworks, and strategically deploying blended finance mechanisms could unlock significant productive potential. By aligning public finance with private sector incentives, Atlantic economies can move toward deeper capital markets, increased productivity, and more sustainable wealth creation. In this context, resilience begins with access to capital.

Technological Disruption and Human Capital Misalignment

Technological transformation, particularly in artificial intelligence and digital platforms, is reshaping labor markets at a pace that institutional systems struggle to match. Education systems, regulatory frameworks, and labor market policies often lag behind technological change, generating productivity gaps and exacerbating inequality risks between and within regions.

The group underscored the urgency of targeted upskilling and reskilling strategies, combined with sustained investment in digital readiness and continuous training. Policymakers, higher education institutions, and technology entrepreneurs must coordinate to ensure that innovation translates into inclusive growth rather than polarization. Without institutional adaptation, technological disruption risks reinforcing fragmentation; with alignment, it can strengthen employability, foster job creation, and reduce inequality across the Atlantic basin.

Infrastructure Governance and Efficiency

Both hard infrastructure, such as transport, energy, and digital connectivity, and soft infrastructure, including regulatory standards, institutional capacity, and governance mechanisms, remain

uneven across Atlantic economies. Weak governance frameworks, poorly structured public-private partnerships, and corruption vulnerabilities undermine efficiency and discourage long-term investment.

Participants highlighted the need to improve partnership design, strengthen transparency and accountability mechanisms, and foster innovation in infrastructure financing. When infrastructure governance is coherent and predictable, it reduces costs and inefficiencies while catalyzing bottom-up innovation and enhancing competitiveness. Infrastructure is therefore a strategic enabler of Atlantic integration.

Trade Policy Coherence and Value Chain Resilience

Fragmented trade policies and insufficient coordination among Atlantic actors heighten vulnerability to external shocks and weaken value creation. Diverging regulatory frameworks, inconsistent agreements, and limited policy dialogue hinder the development of resilient supply chains.

The group advocated for structured trade policy dialogue, applied research platforms, knowledge-sharing mechanisms, and de-risking tools capable of strengthening coherence across the basin. Renewed trade agreements grounded in shared standards and transparency can contribute to more resilient value chains and sustained economic cooperation. Trade policy coherence thus emerges as a prerequisite for long-term regional stability.

Across these four domains, economic resilience emerged as the unifying objective. Participants emphasized that youth must be recognized not merely as beneficiaries of economic policy, but as strategic actors in innovation and anticipation. The shift from diagnosis to forward looking design reflects a maturation of the Atlantic Vision exercise. Resilience requires coordination across public, private, and knowledge actors rather than isolated interventions.



	Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3	Challenge 4
What?	Lack of access to private capital and sound financing ecosystems	Impact of tech disruption on human capital and productivity	Ineffective soft and hard infrastructure	Lack of trade policy coherence and fragile supply chain
Who?	SMEs Financial inst. Govt Development banks Venture capital	Policy makers Tech entrepreneurs High ed.	Govt. PPPs Think tanks	Govt. PPPs Think tanks
How?	Funding (financing) Tools (Digital) PR (Perception)	Upskilling / Re. Funding (financing) Awareness	PPPs Funding (financing) Less corruption	Policy dialogues Research Knowledge sharing De-risking New agreements
Expected results	Economic growth Wealth creation	Employment Job creation Reduced inequality	Bottom-up innovation Reduced cost (savings)	Value creation Resilient value chain More cooperation





Political Challenges: Building Credible Foundations for Community

The political group chose to focus specifically on barriers to the realization of an Atlantic Community rather than on the broader political crises affecting the region. Three interrelated challenges were identified.

The Absence of a Shared Atlantic Identity

Despite deep economic and historical interconnections, the Atlantic remains largely abstract in the public imagination. Without a shared narrative rooted in common interests and lived exchanges, the idea of an Atlantic Community struggles to gain societal traction.

Participants proposed expanding citizen-to-citizen exchanges across the basin, leveraging digital platforms to connect entrepreneurs, students, and innovators, and exploring the feasibility of an Atlantic exchange program modeled on existing regional mobility initiatives. By fostering bottom-up interconnection, these measures could gradually nurture a sense of Atlantic identity grounded in opportunity and cooperation rather than geopolitical rhetoric.

Power Imbalances and Diverging Interests

Persistent asymmetries between North and South Atlantic members continue to undermine trust and cooperation. Diverging interests, particularly around migration, climate, and trade, often prevent unified action.

Rather than seeking comprehensive alignment from the outset, the group proposed the formation of coalitions of the willing among subsets of countries facing similar challenges. By demonstrating concrete results in targeted areas such as climate adaptation or migration management, these coalitions could attract broader participation over time. Incremental success is more likely to build credibility than sweeping institutional redesign.

Institutional Proliferation and Trust Deficits

The Atlantic basin does not lack institutions; however, public trust in their effectiveness remains limited. The creation of new pan-Atlantic structures risks reinforcing perceptions of redundancy.

The group therefore recommended embedding an Atlantic dimension within existing regional organizations such as SADC, ECOWAS, and MERCOSUR rather than establishing new institutions. By working through established mechanisms, actors can deliver tangible outcomes and gradually restore confidence in cooperative governance.

The political discussions converge on a pragmatic insight: credibility precedes identity. An Atlantic Community will not be built through symbolic declarations but through visible results, inclusive exchanges, and adaptive institutional strategies aligned with existing regional frameworks.

	Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3
	Lack of shared Atlantic identity	Power imbalance and diverging interests	Excess of institutions and initiatives + low trust
What?	Strengthen and unify fragmented initiatives	Develop economic incentives to build a compelling narrative centered on issues affecting the Atlantic region	Encourage regional governments to recommit to multilateralism
Who?	General public	- International organizations - Regional organizations - National governments	National governments
How?	- Foster exchange through digital platforms - Atlantic Erasmus-style programs	Coalition of the willing on topics of shared interest (climate change, migration)	Add an Atlantic dimension to existing lower-level regional institutions (e.g. SADC, ECOWAS, Mercosur)
Expected results	- Increased awareness - More opportunities	- Show results by starting small - Attract more countries to join	More effective advocacy on common issues





Social Challenges: Protection, Inclusion, and Long-Term Cohesion

The social discussions centered on the capacity of Atlantic societies to protect vulnerable populations, adapt to systemic shocks, and expand inclusive opportunity.

Climate-Linked Social Protection

Climate change increasingly manifests as a social protection challenge. Many Atlantic communities lack adequate safeguards against climate-related disruptions, whether through welfare systems, housing policies, or insurance frameworks.

Participants called for ring-fenced, climate-related social protection budgets, stronger integration of climate risk into public policy, and co-investment from private sector and philanthropic actors. Crucially, local communities must co-design adaptation strategies to ensure that solutions reflect lived realities. Without such integration, climate vulnerability risks deepening inequality; with it, societies can strengthen resilience and cohesion.

Structural Poverty and Economic Exclusion

Persistent poverty and exclusion continue to undermine social mobility across the basin. Traditional top-down approaches have often failed to create sustainable mechanisms.

The group emphasized empowering vulnerable communities to design locally adapted economic resilience strategies supported by funding, education, and institutional guidance. By expanding access to information and finance, these mechanisms can foster sustainable pathways out of poverty and reinforce social stability.

Migration and Shared Responsibility

Migration flows, combined with increasingly restrictive border regimes, generate pressure on frontline states and heighten human vulnerability. Fragmented responsibility-sharing exacerbates instability.

Participants proposed exploring the creation of an Atlantic Fund to pool resources in support of countries willing to receive and integrate migrants. By distributing responsibility more equitably, such mechanisms could reduce irregular migration pressures and improve protection standards for people on the move.

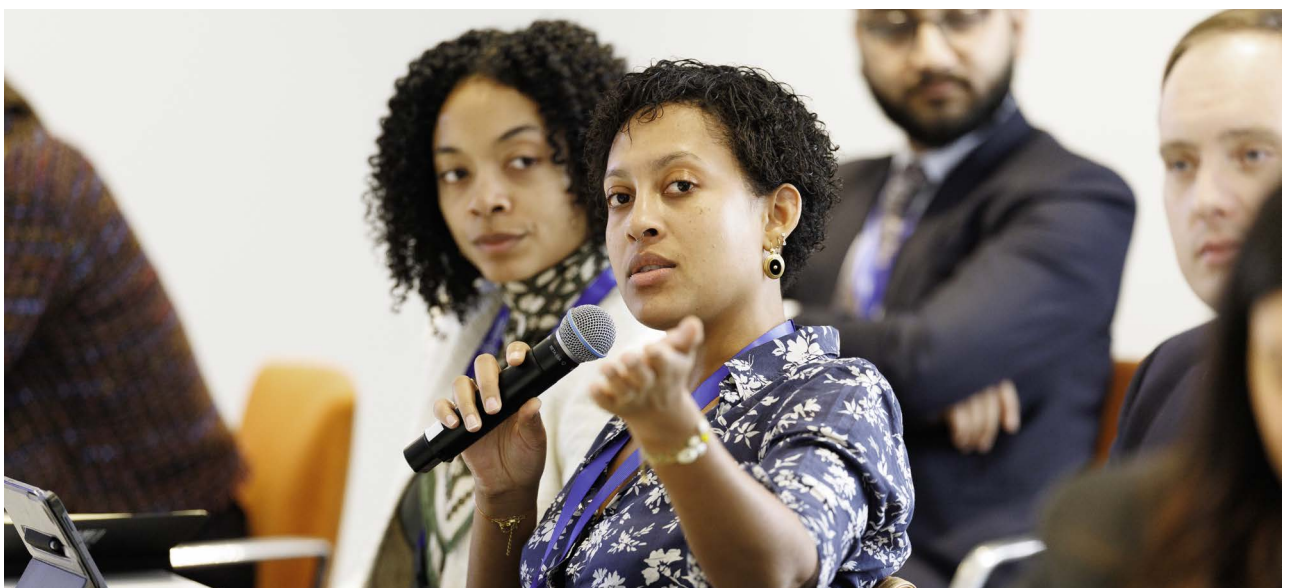
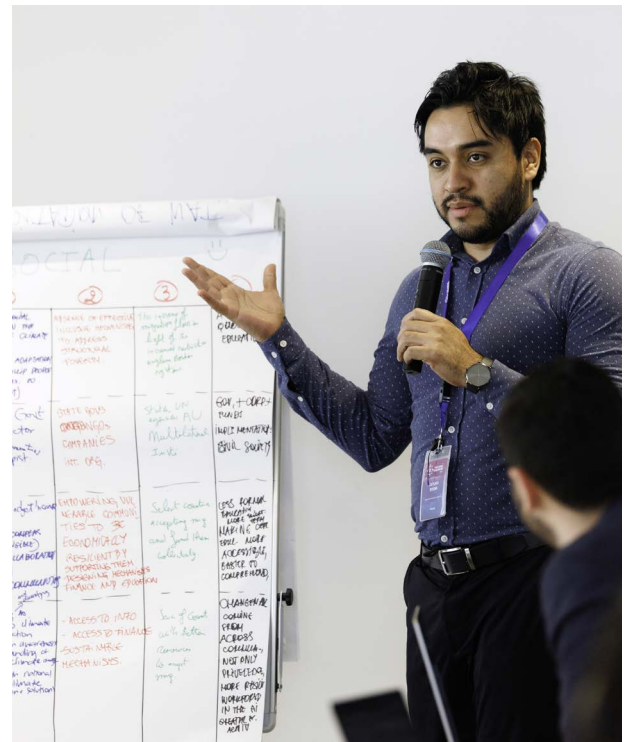
Education and Skills in the AI Era

Access to quality education remains uneven, particularly in the context of rapid technological change. Participants advocated shifting emphasis toward short-term certification programs, more

accessible educational content, and stronger collaboration between governments, corporations, and civil society.

By broadening access to skills development, Atlantic societies can cultivate diverse changemakers and strengthen workforce resilience in the era of artificial intelligence.

Social cohesion in the Atlantic space depends on two intertwined principles: protection and empowerment. Climate adaptation, poverty reduction, migration management, and education reform must be understood as mutually reinforcing components of long-term resilience.



	Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3	Challenge 4
What?	Lack of social protection in the context of the climate crisis (capacity of adaptation, how to equip people with resources to be resilient)	Absence of effective inclusive mechanisms to address structural poverty	Increase of migration flows in light of increased restrictive asylum border systems	Access to quality education
Who?	National government - Private sector - Local communities - Philanthropists	State governments - NGOs - Companies - International organizations	States - UN agencies - AU - Multilateral institutions	Government & corporations - Funders – Implementation civil society
How?	National budget increase - Economic criteria (who is eligible) - Better collaboration - Education – local communication & advertising	Empowering vulnerable communities to be economically resilient - Supporting decision-making mechanisms - Finance and education	Select countries accepting migrants and fund them collectively	Less formal education - More short-term training - Hiring corporations - Education more accessible and easier to comprehend
Expected results	Increase & diversification in funding for climate social protection - Increased awareness and understanding of climate change impacts - Increase in national budgets for climate adaptation solutions	Access to information - Access to finance - Sustainable mechanisms	Some governments with better resources to accept migrants	Changemakers coming from diverse backgrounds - Workforce is more resilient to the challenges in the era of AI - Greater economic activity



Conclusion

The 2025 edition of the Atlantic Vision exercise represents a moment of transition. Over the years, successive cohorts of the ADEL program have diagnosed structural asymmetries, mapped institutional fragmentation, and articulated ambitious proposals to strengthen cooperation across the basin. What began as a foresight exercise toward 2025 has evolved into a coherent and sustained intellectual trajectory, shaping both the conceptual foundations and practical pathways of a credible Atlantic Community.

Earlier editions identified economic fragmentation, governance incoherence, persistent inequality, and the absence of a compelling shared narrative as major impediments to integration. They called for regulatory harmonization, improved connectivity, participatory governance, youth inclusion, and new forms of dialogue. Over time, these proposals became more concrete. Discussions evolved from broad roadmaps to targeted reforms in infrastructure, financing ecosystems, institutional design, and social cohesion. Yet the central challenge has remained consistent: how to translate vision into durable, scalable mechanisms that endure beyond individual initiatives and political cycles.

The 2025 cohort embraced this unfinished agenda. Rather than revisiting foundational diagnoses, participants concentrated on structural bottlenecks that continue to undermine resilience. In the economic sphere, they highlighted constrained access to capital, misalignment between technological transformation and human capital systems, inefficiencies in infrastructure governance, and trade policy incoherence. In the political sphere, they underscored the fragility of a shared Atlantic identity, persistent power imbalances between North and South, and growing distrust toward proliferating institutions. In the social sphere, they emphasized the urgency of climate-informed social protection, inclusive mechanisms to combat structural poverty, shared responsibility in migration governance, and accessible education systems capable of preparing societies for the AI era. Taken together, these discussions point toward a common strategic imperative: coordination.

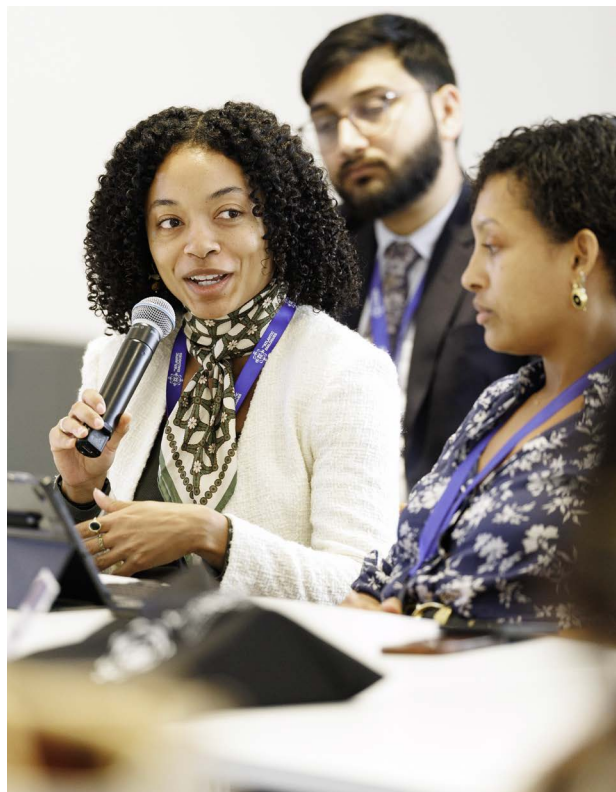
Resilience in the Atlantic space will depend not on the multiplication of initiatives, but on their alignment. Financing reforms must complement trade coherence. Infrastructure governance must reinforce regional integration. Climate adaptation must be embedded in social protection systems. Identity-building must rest on tangible exchanges and visible results. Youth leadership must be anchored within broader coalitions that combine institutional authority with bottom-up energy.

The Atlantic Basin occupies a singular position in the global order. It is a central arena for energy flows and maritime governance, and a region with no major interstate conflicts despite significant geopolitical competition. Cooperation initiatives across security, trade, climate, and blue economy governance have multiplied in recent years. At the same time, fragmentation persists, asymmetries endure, and public trust in institutional effectiveness remains fragile. This tension defines the current moment.

The Atlantic Community cannot be proclaimed into existence; it must be constructed incrementally, through aligned policies, sustained dialogue, and concrete implementation. The original Atlantic Vision 2025 exercise asked what should be achieved within a defined horizon. The 2025 cohort asks a more demanding question. Are Atlantic actors prepared to operationalize cooperation at

scale, align incentives across regions, and embed resilience within economic, political, and social systems?

The coming decade will be decisive—not because failure is inevitable, but because opportunity is tangible. The Atlantic Basin stands at a point where institutional density, economic interdependence, and youth engagement have reached a level that makes deeper cooperation more feasible than at any previous moment. The question is no longer whether the foundations exist, but whether actors across the basin can align them into a coherent architecture of action.



About the Policy Center for the New South

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank that contributes to improving economic and social public policies addressing the challenges faced by Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the Global South.

The PCNS advocates for an open, accountable, and enterprising “new South” that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical work, the think tank supports the development of public policies in Africa and provides a platform for experts from the South. This approach emphasizes dialogue and partnership, while fostering the African expertise and excellence needed for accurate analysis of both African and global challenges, as well as the formulation of solutions.

As such, the PCNS brings together researchers, publishes their work, and leverages a network of renowned partners representing different regions of the world. The PCNS hosts a series of gatherings in different formats and at different scales throughout the year, the most prominent being the annual international conferences: the Atlantic Dialogues, the African Peace and Security Annual Conference (APSACO), and the Africa Economic Symposium (AES).

Finally, the think tank is developing a community of young leaders through the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program (ADEL), a platform for cooperation and networking among a new generation of decision-makers from government, business, and civil society. Through this initiative, which already includes more than 490 members, the Policy Center for the New South contributes to intergenerational dialogue and the emergence of tomorrow's leaders.

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