

# NEWSUOC

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INTERNATIONAL

## UoC and AI

- **The University of Crete at NAFSA 2024**
- **Interview: Melina Tamiolaki**



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ  
UNIVERSITY OF CRETE

# NEWSUOC

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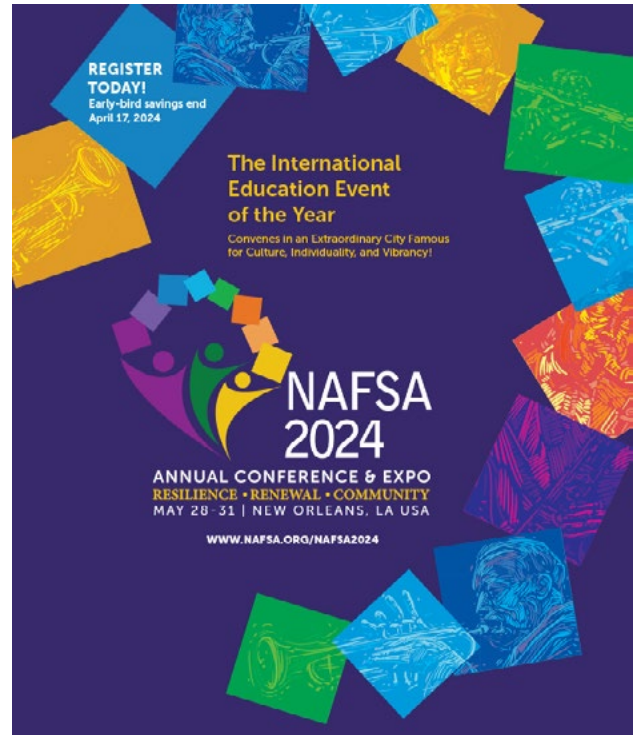
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 The University of Crete at NAFSA 2024
- 4 Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Crete and UNICEF
- 6 Days of Levina “Health - Human – Nature”
- 7 Interview: Melina Tamiolaki
- 10 My ESA24 experience: Haris Annette Benjamin
- 14 Hybrid Conference: Chatbots in the Room
- 15 Summer School: AI and Augmented Reality applications in Education and Cultural Heritage
- 16 Brain and Artificial Intelligence: A Fascinating Dynamic Interplay
- 17 Erasmus+ News
- 19 Moenia: TEDx University of Crete
- 20 Final Conference of the EUNet-INNOCHRON Research Network of the EU’s COST Program
- 22 International Symposium “Crises and Multi-Level Governance”
- 24 Distinctions
- 25 News

# The University of Crete at NAFSA 2024



*From left: the upcoming Vice Rector of Academic Affairs and Research Policy, Professor Maria Vamvakaki, the Ambassador of Greece to Washington, Aikaterini Nasika, and the Head of the Welcome Office, Ms. Eugenia Skountaki*



The University of Crete proudly announces its participation in the renowned annual exhibition for international education, **"NAFSA 2024 Annual Conference & Expo"**, held from **May 28 to May 31, 2024, in New Orleans, USA**. The University of Crete's presence at NAFSA is one of the most significant internationalization actions in the institution's history.

The Greek academic delegation, consisting of twenty representatives from nine universities, including the University of Crete, participates in NAFSA for the first time. This marks a significant milestone, highlighting the increased and growing importance of strategic cooperation between Greece and the USA in higher education.

NAFSA, a global meeting point for international education, is set to attract over 10,000 participants this year. The University of Crete's participation is not just about attendance, but about seizing a unique opportunity to showcase our academic programs and achievements to a global audience, and to foster new collaborations with international institutions.

Ms Shanna Surendra, Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Greece, and Ms. Aikaterini Nassika, Ambassador of Greece in the U.S., have underlined the significance of this event. The University of Crete was represented by Prof. Maria Vamvakaki, the upcoming Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and Research Policy, and Ms. Evgenia Skountaki, Head of the [UoC Welcome Office](#). The UoC team promoted the university's qualifications and enhanced its international presence, with strong support from the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, and the U.S. Embassy in Greece, reinforcing our commitment to internationalization and global engagement.

The University of Crete's participation in NAFSA 2024 was a decisive step towards achieving the government and institution's strategic goal of strengthening Greek-American educational relations and promoting Greece as an international educational hub.



# Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Crete and UNICEF

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Crete (UoC) and UNICEF on May 23, 2024, in the Senate Hall at Voutes Campus, Heraklion, marked a significant milestone in the UoC's commitment to children's rights.

As part of this new collaboration, the University of Crete and UNICEF proudly announce the establishment of a Child Rights Center in Heraklion. This Center, a beacon for promoting children's rights, will play a crucial role within the academic community and in society at large. It will achieve this through a series of impactful actions such as workshops, conferences, public events, and awareness-raising campaigns.

The memorandum was signed by the Rector of the University of Crete, **Prof. Georgios M. Kontakis**, and the Diplomatic Representative of the UNICEF Office in Greece, **Mr. Ghassan Khalil**. Professor Georgios Kossioris, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Lifelong Learning, International Relations and Outlook was also present at the ceremony.

Dr. Ghassan Khalil said about the signing: *"We are delighted and proud to inaugurate the Child Rights Center in the University of Crete, which will act as a hub for the entire island and focus on promoting children's rights in the local communities. We are very optimistic about this collaboration and excited about the joint initiatives that lie ahead."*



*Snapshot from the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. From left: Prof. Georgios M. Kontakis, Rector of the University of Crete, and Dr. Ghassan Khalil, Diplomatic Representative of UNICEF in Greece*



*Group photo from the signing ceremony between the University of Crete and UNICEF in Voutes Campus, Heraklion*



*Group photo after the public lecture by Dr. Ghassan Khalil at the 'House of Culture' in Rethymnon*

Prof. Georgios M. Kontakis stated: *"With the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with UNICEF, the University of Crete aims to establish a Center for Children's Rights. This Center will focus on knowledge production, research, data collection, and documentation of children's rights. In addition, it will contribute to informing and raising awareness among the academic community and the wider society through workshops, conferences and events. This collaboration highlights the commitment of the University of Crete and UNICEF to protecting and promoting children's rights, as well as their important contribution to educational and social policy for children."*

Attendees from UNICEF included Ms. Anastasia Piliouni, Management Officer; Mr. Georgios Simopoulos, Education Department; Ms. Mariela Michailidou, Child Protection Department; Ms. Anna Pantelia, Communications Department; and Ms. Kleopatra Laina, Protocol Officer.

[more info](#)





# Days of Levina

## “Health – Culture – Human – Nature”

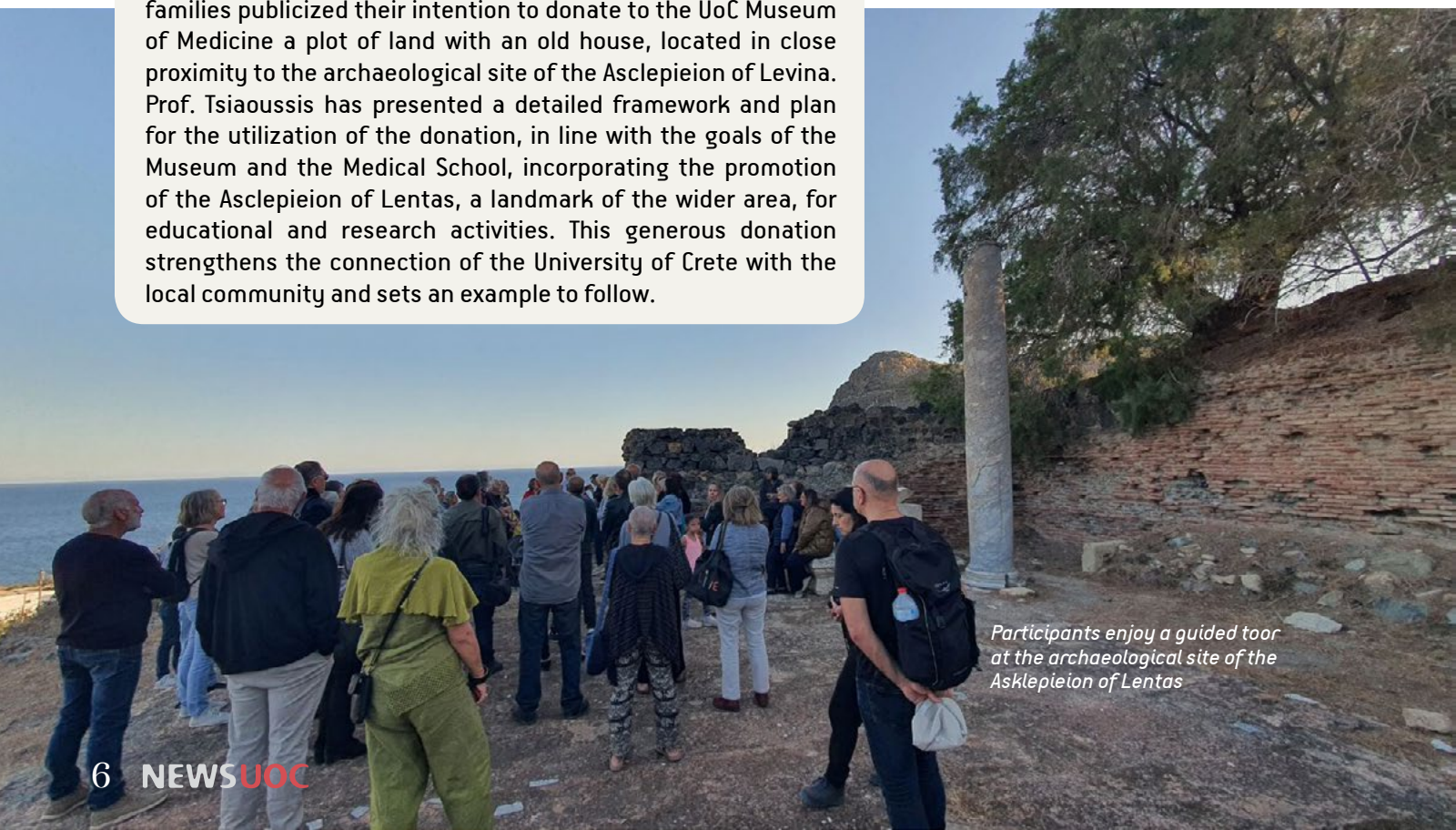
A three-day symposium in the beautiful coastal settlement of Lentas in southern Crete was organized on April 26-28, within the framework of the events for the promotion of the Asclepieion of Levina (Lentas) by the Network of Cultural Organizations of Messara and the Museum of Medicine of the University of Crete, with the support of the Region of Crete. The program included scientific seminars, parallel activities and actions, guided tours at archaeological sites and museums, and other cultural activities in the wider region of Lentas and Messara.

Yannis Tsiaoussis, Professor of the UoC Medical School, Director of the UoC Museum of Medicine and scientific supervisor of the seminars, together with scientists from the fields of Medicine (Prof. Maria Basta, Assoc. Prof. Gregory Tsoucalas), Archaeology (Dr. Antonios Vassilakis), History (Assoc. Prof. Katerina Gardika), Nutrition (Prof. Antonia Matala) and Anthropology (Dr. Elisavet Ganiatsou) provided interesting insights on the subject of the Symposium, “Health - Culture – Human – Nature”. The combination of educational programs, guided tours at the archaeological sites of the region, and the unique hospitality of the local communities made Levina Days a unique experience for all participants!

Towards the end of the three-day events, a particularly important announcement was made. The Apostolakis and Daskalakis families publicized their intention to donate to the UoC Museum of Medicine a plot of land with an old house, located in close proximity to the archaeological site of the Asclepieion of Levina. Prof. Tsiaoussis has presented a detailed framework and plan for the utilization of the donation, in line with the goals of the Museum and the Medical School, incorporating the promotion of the Asclepieion of Lentas, a landmark of the wider area, for educational and research activities. This generous donation strengthens the connection of the University of Crete with the local community and sets an example to follow.



*The Director of the UoC Museum of Medicine, Prof. Yiannis Tsiaoussis, Ms. Stella Apostolaki and Mr. Vasilis Daskalakis after the announcement of their generous donation*



*Participants enjoy a guided tour at the archaeological site of the Asklepieion of Lentas*



## Melina Tamiolaki talks about TALOS Project and AI in Humanities

### Interview: Melina Tamiolaki



Melina Tamiolaki is Professor of Ancient Greek Literature at the Dept. of Philology of the University of Crete and Appointed Vice-Rector of Development, International Affairs and Outlook of the UoC. She co-ordinates the project [TALOS](#). We are very glad that she accepted our invitation to give us this interview.

#### What inspired you to create the TALOS project?

It is interesting that the TALOS project was conceived before the launch of Chat GPT3--a very timely project, indeed!

Well, I came up with the idea of TALOS when I got the position of the Deputy Director of the University of [Crete Research Center for the Humanities, the Social and Education Sciences \(UCRC\)](#) in 2021. A major desideratum for the UCRC (and for the SSH Faculties in Rethymno, more generally) was, and still is, the increase of research funding. So, I set it as a priority to attract funding for my field; my vision was to put the Social Sciences and Humanities of the UoC on the map, to show that we can also be competitive, to

“correct” the notion that only STEM fields are modern, trendy or attractive.

Our Vice-Rectors, Profs. Michael Pavlidis and Georgios Kossioris, brought to my attention the work programme of the European Commission, HORIZON-WIDERA. This programme, which is destined to EU countries which are lagging in Research and Innovation (Greece included), contains several calls, which aim to support these countries to enhance their research and innovation culture through the promotion of structural changes and institutional reforms. The call of the ERA CHAIRS immediately appealed to me: it supports Higher Education Institutions to establish Excellence Centers/Labs on new cutting-edge fields, under the direction of an eminent researcher (the



ERA Chair Holder). So, the idea was then born to create at the UoC a Lab dedicated to AI for SSH. Although my main field expertise is not AI or Digital Humanities (I am a Professor of Classics and I love the traditional methodologies of Classics), I recognize the potential of AI to revolutionize our discipline and, moreover, I believe that SSH have an important role to play for the shaping of an ethical AI. It is also my conviction that a pioneer institution, like the UoC, should have a leading role in these evolutions.

With all these considerations in mind, I proposed to Professor Christophe Roche to be the candidate for an ERA Chair Professorship at the UoC. [Christophe Roche](#) is Professor Emeritus of AI at the University of Savoie Mont-Blanc and has a long experience in research, training, and project management, as well as many international collaborations in the field of Digital Humanities. He had already visited Crete and UCRC for a workshop back in 2020 and had enjoyed his time in Rethymno. So, he gladly accepted my invitation. Together with him and my colleagues Maria Papadopoulou (Dept. of Philology) and Eleni Katsarou (Dept. of Education), we worked hard to prepare the application and we were happy that our toil was rewarded: the TALOS project, named after the ancient bronze giant, symbol of AI, started its trip at the UoC in March 2023, will continue till 2028, and we hope that the conditions will be created for longer term sustainability.

### What is groundbreaking about TALOS?

TALOS is undoubtedly an ambitious project. Its main mission is to implement structural changes at the UoC. We are happy that important steps have already been done towards this direction : a) we are the first Greek University which founded [a programme of short duration in Digital Humanities](#) at the BA Level; this programme awards a minor degree of 30 or 60 ECTS (Level A and Level B respectively); b) we are the first Greek University, which, thanks to the TALOS project, opened and filled a Faculty Position in the field of “Digital Humanities and Classical Philology”; c) we have also processed the foundation of the TALOS Lab, which we expect to be officially established by this fall. I expect that the fruits of these initiatives will become even more apparent in the following years, raising the visibility and reputation of the UoC.

Of course, like every European project, TALOS also promotes research, organizes dissemination and training activities (conferences, workshops, summer

schools, outreach lectures) and places great emphasis on international collaborations.

### Which are the research areas you focus on?

In TALOS we have identified four main research topics: a) “Semantic Annotation of Ancient Greek Texts” (RT1), a topic which belongs to the broader field of Digital Classical Philology; b) “Naming and Classifying Objects” (RT2), from the field of Digital Archaeology and Digital Cultural Heritage; c) a topic from the field of Digital Literary Studies, entitled “Patterns in Literary and Journalistic Corpora” (RT3); and, finally, a topic from the field of Education, which focuses on the “Digitalization of Education” (RT4). All these topics are innovative and interdisciplinary, combining SSH with Data Science, advancing the research questions and the impact of SSH through AI technologies, and responding to important research and societal challenges.

Four PhDs and four Post-Docs will conduct research in these fields. So far we have hired 3 PhD students. The ERA Chair Professor supervises this research team with the support of the Research Topic Leaders, who are all talented colleagues from the UoC: Maria Papadopoulou (Dept. of Philology) is the Leader of RT1; Artemis Karnava (Dept. of History and Archaeology) is the Leader of RT2; Stergios Chatzikyriakidis and Anastasia Natsina (Dept. of Philology) are in charge of RT3; and Eleni Katsarou (Dept. of Education) leads RT4. I should also mention that TALOS project could not have survived without the excellent administrative support by Mrs. Valia Angelaki and Mrs Argyro Mamalaki.

### What about AI Ethics? Will TALOS have a contribution to the ongoing discussion on AI Ethics?

Great question, thank you. TALOS acknowledges the importance of AI Ethics; in a way, AI Ethics constitutes a framework for all our activities. AI Ethics is a rapidly emerging field; it is impressive how many ethical issues emerge, need regulation, reflection etc. (a recent famous example is of course the use (and abuse) of ChatGPT). Although it is impossible to follow all these evolutions consistently, in TALOS we believe that everyone (not only students and academics, but



also public at large) should have basic awareness of the ethical challenges and controversies related to AI. So, we have planned several activities on this field: in spring semester 2024 a course on AI Ethics was offered in the framework of the short programme ; the instructor was Michael Kritikos, a well-known expert in the field. In fall 2024, Nikos Erinakis, another gifted colleague from the Dept. of Philosophy of the UoC, will design a MOOC on AI Ethics in English, for an international audience. Together with Nikos Erinakis, we are also currently planning to organize a workshop on AI Ethics in spring 2025. Eleni Katsarou is also preparing a lecture series on the “Challenges of AI in everyday life, Education, Arts and Science”, to be held in fall 2024.

From September 2024, you will serve as Vice-Rector of Development and International Relations of the UoC. Are there opportunities and prospects for international students in TALOS? What other initiatives do you plan to promote for the internationalization of the UoC?

TALOS is an international project. First of all, all our calls (for PhD, post-doctoral researchers, visiting researchers etc.) are international, published in Euraxess and advertised in several international fora. We are happy that so far we have hired one excellent PhD student from the US, in RT1, Mrs. Rachel Milio, and we expect to hire other international students for other positions, too. In addition, we offer [mobility grants](#) to international visiting researchers: this year we hosted 2 researchers, from Italy and France; in fall semester, we expect researchers from China and Italy. The short programme in Digital Humanities is currently offered to UoC Greek students and to Erasmus students in Greece. But we are planning to open it to foreign students, too, through the foundation of a semester abroad or year abroad programme. Furthermore, we plan to establish international MA and Doctoral Programmes, to run from academic year 2025-2026.

Overall, the UoC has a strong international outlook, as is evidenced, for example, by its international BA and MA programmes, its Erasmus agreements and the organization of several summer schools. It is also noteworthy that significant progress has been

made to facilitate foreign students: the recently established Welcome Office offers useful guidance on all practical issues regarding their settlement in Crete. For the future, I think it is worth trying to increase the number of international students of the UoC, e.g. by strengthening and expanding the Erasmus agreements, by signing more MoUs and by founding international programmes at all levels of studies (BA, MA, Doctoral). Nothing of all these is easy or can be done simply with a click. That is why, in my opinion, a strategic plan of internationalization is required: this plan should be measurable and realistic, detecting the strong points of the UoC as an international institution, setting specific priorities (e.g. concerning the countries with which we wish to establish closer collaborations, the international programmes which we can find in a reasonable timeframe, the disciplines which we are more appealing etc.) and investing specific funds (e.g. to promotion, advertisement etc.) which will allow us to become a real pole of attraction for foreign students. At the same time, we should continue to support existing infrastructure of the UoC, such as the Welcome Office and the International Relations Office. A lot of work to be done, but I am optimistic that, with the harmonious collaboration between the UoC Administration, Services and academic community, we can achieve wonderful results.

How can we get regular updates on TALOS' activities?

Please follow us on Social Media! And subscribe to our [Newsletter!](#)

Many thanks for this interview.

**TALOS Site: [www.talos-ai4ssh.uoc.gr](http://www.talos-ai4ssh.uoc.gr)**

**TALOS-AI4SSH in Social Media:**



TALOS-Artificial Intelligence for Humanities and Social Sciences



TALOS-Artificial Intelligence (TALOS-AI4SSH)



TALOS-Artificial Intelligence, @talosai\_uoc



talosai.uoc

# Haris Annette Benjamin

## represents UoC & INGENIUM at ESA 2024

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Haris Annette Benjamin, student of Medicine at the UoC, talks about her experience in the European Students Assembly (ESA24), where she participated in Panel 6 on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and presented her ideas on AI Regulation for the EU

**“Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at the forefront of the technological revolution, permeating various sectors and significantly influencing our daily lives. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), AI consists of machine-based systems making predictions or decisions based on human-defined objectives and trained on datasets provided by humans. Despite its widespread use, AI literacy remains limited. Many are unaware of their interactions with AI, such as when AI screens resumes for job applications or when data is used to train AI systems without**





consent. Rapid advancement and widespread use of AI call for transparency, ethical development and use of AI models, representative databases, and homogenous bureaucratic procedures across the EU. Creating effective AI policy is a challenging feat due to the technology's broad applications, swift and ongoing progress, and the need to balance ethical development with innovation. The European Union's AI Act adopts a risk-based approach but requires further enhancement in specific areas.

I had the honor of representing the INGENIUM University Alliance and the University of Crete during the European Students Assembly (ESA24), held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg between the 10th and 12th of April this year. As part of Panel 6 on Artificial Intelligence (AI), we discussed the benefits, imminent risks, and biases stemming from AI integration in various areas, especially in high-risk systems like healthcare. Our aim was to propose solutions to close some of the regulatory gaps found in the European Union Artificial Intelligence Act (EU AI Act).



To address these challenges, we have formulated several key policy proposals summarised below:

### **1. Protecting Employees' Rights from AI Infringement**

Concerns are rising about potential infringements on creators' rights and the displacement of human workers. A standardised legal framework is needed to protect AI-vulnerable employment, safeguarding self-employed individuals, such as artists, writers and employees in various sectors from AI-based discrimination. AI developers should be held accountable for intellectual property theft. This framework should be implemented by national governments of EU member states.

### **2. Broadening the Classification of High-Risk AI Systems**

In addition to protecting employment, the EU must expand the classification of high-risk AI systems to include those used in strategic decision-making processes. This category should encompass AI impacting national security and generative AI models, which require EU-guided impact assessments before market release. Guidelines should ensure AI systems do not lead to unwanted impacts, such as spreading misinformation, with penalties for non-compliance.

### **3. Effective Educational Measures and European Age Verification**

Another critical area is the protection of children from harmful AI-generated content. Open-access platforms often produce AI-generated content unsuitable for children, such as violent or pornographic material. Member states should implement educational measures to prepare children for safe AI utilisation. Additionally, a European Age Verification Technology should be implemented to restrict access to inappropriate content.

### **4. Preventing AI Systems from Producing or Distributing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)**

The issue of child protection extends to preventing AI systems from producing or distributing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and non-consensual intimate imagery. AI-generated CSAM and non-consensual intimate imagery pose severe threats to fundamental rights and human dignity. Images of children must be excluded from generalised training datasets in AI systems, with exceptions only for strictly monitored and regulated purposes. Platforms using AI must

implement CSAM detection and removal technology periodically and retroactively. Providers must report and remove CSAM immediately upon discovery.

### **5. Boosting AI Literacy**

To mitigate these hazards and maximise AI's advantages, boosting AI literacy is crucial. AI literacy is essential to understanding the risks and benefits of AI technology. AI can be beneficial, such as in medical diagnostics, but comes with significant risks and biases. Therefore, AI literacy must be disseminated through concrete informational routes targeting students, educators, professionals, and the general public. This includes developing the European Commission's Digital Education Plan, promoting certification standards, and creating nation-wide AI informational campaigns.

### **6. Mandatory AI Documentation**

Enhancing AI literacy also involves making AI systems more transparent and accountable. Standardised AI documentation is essential for transparency, accountability, and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance. This documentation should cover model-, data-, usage- and maintenance-related information, as well as certification and evaluation particulars. It should be periodically reviewed by the newly instituted AI Office & Board to ensure consistent traceability and compliance with the AI Act.

### **7. Supporting AI Research on Human-Technology Relationships**

Understanding the human-technology relationship is crucial for addressing current crises and preventing future hurdles. The EU should support inclusive research and education projects focusing on the long-term impact of AI on society. This includes supporting institutions like the Panel on Planetary Thinking and promoting research on human interaction with technology spanning multiple decades.

### **8. Enhancing Digital Cultural Heritage Promotion**

In addition to supporting research, the EU must allocate resources to digitise and conserve cultural artefacts using technologies like high-resolution imaging and AI-powered artefact recognition. This ensures accessibility for future generations and promotes cultural tourism through virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) experiences. Establishing standards for open-access repositories and providing training in digital heritage documentation are essential steps.



## Implementation and Review

To ensure these proposals are effectively implemented, we recommend the following steps:

### Periodic Review

Establishment of a framework for regular review of AI regulations to keep pace with technological advancements and emerging ethical concerns.

### Stakeholder Involvement

Engagement of a broad range of stakeholders, including industry experts, ethicists, and representatives from vulnerable communities, in policy-making to ensure diverse perspectives.

### Education and Awareness

Launching of initiatives to improve public understanding of AI, providing resources and training for individuals to recognise and critically engage with AI systems.



## What lies ahead

By addressing these areas comprehensively, the EU can set a global standard for ethical and responsible AI development and deployment, ensuring a non-discriminatory and informed approach to technological advancement. I am proud to announce that our recommendations, aimed to balance innovation with the protection of individual rights and societal values, were well received, **gathering 216 out of 234 votes – the best result between all panels**. I am also especially pleased with the overwhelming approval of proposal 5 on the promotion of AI Literacy and 6 on Mandatory Documentation, as I played a leading role in both their initial conception and formulation. Nevertheless, the rigorous process of researching, policy drafting and writing, as well as attending weekly workshops, panel- and expert-meetings, which commenced on the 24th of January this year is still ongoing. Now, it remains for us to get in touch with specialists, legislators, and Members of Parliament (MEPs) to lobby our ideas and drive them forward to their much sought-after realisation.

Acknowledging that this programme stimulates critical thought and movement from the grassroots up to the decision-making frontline, I am beyond grateful for the opportunity, as well as for all the friends and memories made in the process of contributing towards positive change. I look forward to participating in more ESA sessions in the future and would encourage fellow students to follow suit and make their voice heard by actively engaging in fruitful discussions about how we the youth can help mould a brighter future together for the EU".



# HYBRID CONFERENCE:

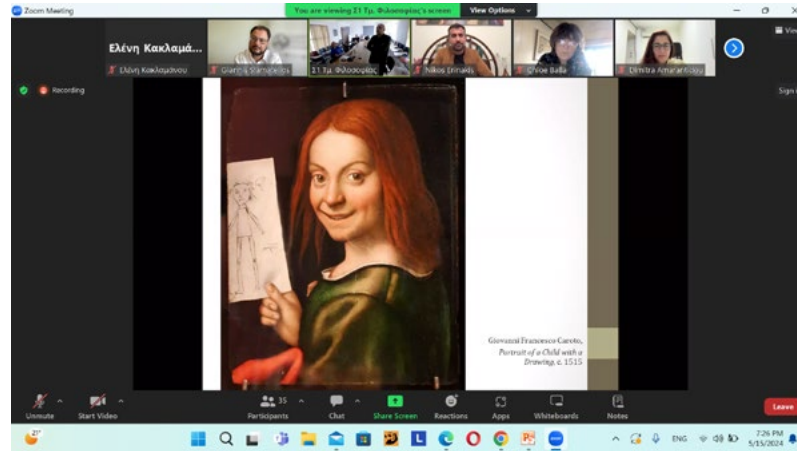
## “Chatbots in the Room: Challenges and Prospects in the Age of Artificial Intelligence”

A hybrid conference under the title “Chatbots in the Room: Challenges and Prospects in the Age of Artificial Intelligence” was organized on May 14, 2024, by the [Philosophical Research and Translation Lab](#), in collaboration with the Institute of Philosophy and Technology and KELKIP (Center for Greek and Chinese Civilizations). Members of the UoC Department of Philosophy joined forces with colleagues from the University of Macao in China and the Institute of Philosophy and Technology to shed light on both problems and prospects arising from the use of Artificial Intelligence.

In his presentation on “Socratic Chatbots as an Answer to Misinformation,” Yannis Stamatellos, PhD in Philosophy from the University of Wales and founder of the Institute of Philosophy and Technology, focused on the use of Socratic methodologies in dialogical artificial intelligence applications. He presented “TITAN”, a research program funded by the European Union, which aims to empower citizens’ critical thinking through Socratic-type dialogues while enabling them to form their own conclusions regarding the reliability of information and addressing fake news.

Shifting the discussion from ancient Greece to ancient China, Dimitra Amaradidou, a philosophy professor at the University of Macao, introduced some ideas related to Confucius. In her presentation with the title “What Chatbots Learn from Confucius. What Confucius Learns from Chatbots”, she argued in favor of a critical distance, on the one hand, from techno-optimism and, on the other hand, of technophobia and discussed the challenges of using chatbots in education, using references to Confucian moral philosophy.

The title of the presentation of Nikos Erinakis was “From Artificial Intelligence to Artificial Creativity. Pointing out that recent technological advancements in the field of artificial intelligence mark a turn, Nikos Erinakis, a member of the academic staff



of UoC (Department of Philosophy), stressed that emerging digital technologies with impressive capabilities already seem to operate in ways and with consequences that we cannot fully understand. Focusing on the transition from machine learning to deep and/or essential learning, he engaged in contemporary discussions about the potential transition to artificial general intelligence and/or artificial creativity, including the exploration of the capacity of AI systems to self-transform and autonomously produce creative and original works or participate in other creative activities.

Finally, Manolis Simos, a postdoctoral fellow at the UoC Department of Philosophy, explored the relationship between literature, art, and artificial intelligence (presentation title: “Literature, Art, and Artificial Intelligence: Some Historical Observations”). Simos focused on the creation of literary and artistic works by AI systems, using examples such as Raymond Queneau’s book *One Hundred Thousand Billion Poems* and Joachim Sauter’s digital interactive installation *Zerseher* (1992).

All presentations are available on the Institute of Philosophy and Technology’s website: <https://ipt.gr/events/chatbots/>.





## Summer School: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND AUGMENTED REALITY APPLICATIONS IN EDUCATION AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Arkasa, Karpathos, June 23-29

The E Learning Lab (Laboratory of Advanced Learning Technologies in Lifelong and Distance Education - E.DI.V.E.A.) of the UoC Department of Primary Education, in collaboration with the Municipality of Karpathos and the Regional Directorate of Education of the South Aegean, is organizing the **8th Summer School on "Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality applications in Education and Cultural Heritage"** in the beautiful island of Karpathos! The aim of the Summer School is to familiarize students with the pedagogical utilization of advanced applications of Artificial Intelligence & spatially sensitive augmented reality applications for connecting the school with local Cultural Heritage.

*more info*



# Brain And Artificial Intelligence:

## A Fascinating Dynamic Interplay



The Hellenic Society for Neuroscience, under the auspices of the University of Crete (UoC) and the Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH), and within the framework of Brain Awareness Week, organized a public event on March 26 titled «Brain and Artificial Intelligence: A Fascinating Dynamic Interplay.»

The event brought together leading researchers from the fields of neuroscience and philosophy to explore the convergence of these two rapidly evolving disciplines. The program featured pivotal talks that addressed crucial aspects of this integration. The first speech by Prof. Panayiota Poirazi (FORTH) was titled «Unraveling the Brain-AI Dichotomy» and focused on the ability of AI to enhance our understanding of the brain, showcasing how machine learning and data analysis are revolutionizing neuroscience research. The second speech by Prof. Vassilis Raos (University of Crete) was titled «Brain-machine interfaces: Science fiction or reality?» and delved into the feasibility of brain-machine interfaces, examining

the current technological advancements and future possibilities for direct communication between the brain and external devices. The third speech by Prof. Stavroula Tsinorema (University of Crete) was titled «AI Applications in the Neurosciences. Some Ethical and Social Challenges» and addressed the ethical considerations surrounding AI and neurotechnology, discussing the implications of these advancements on privacy, consent, and societal impact. Through these key presentations, the symposium aimed to engage a broader audience, inspire public interest, and promote informed dialogue about the transformative potential and societal implications of integrating AI with brain science.

Coordination: Prof. Emmanouil Froudarakis (University of Crete – FORTH).

*more info*





# Erasmus+ Staff Week at the University of Crete



Erasmus+

May 13-17, Gallos Campus (Rethymnon) & Voutes Campus (Heraklion)

**Internationalization, Inclusion, Diversity, Sustainable Development**



*Group photo of the staff week participants in Gallos Campus, Rethymnon*

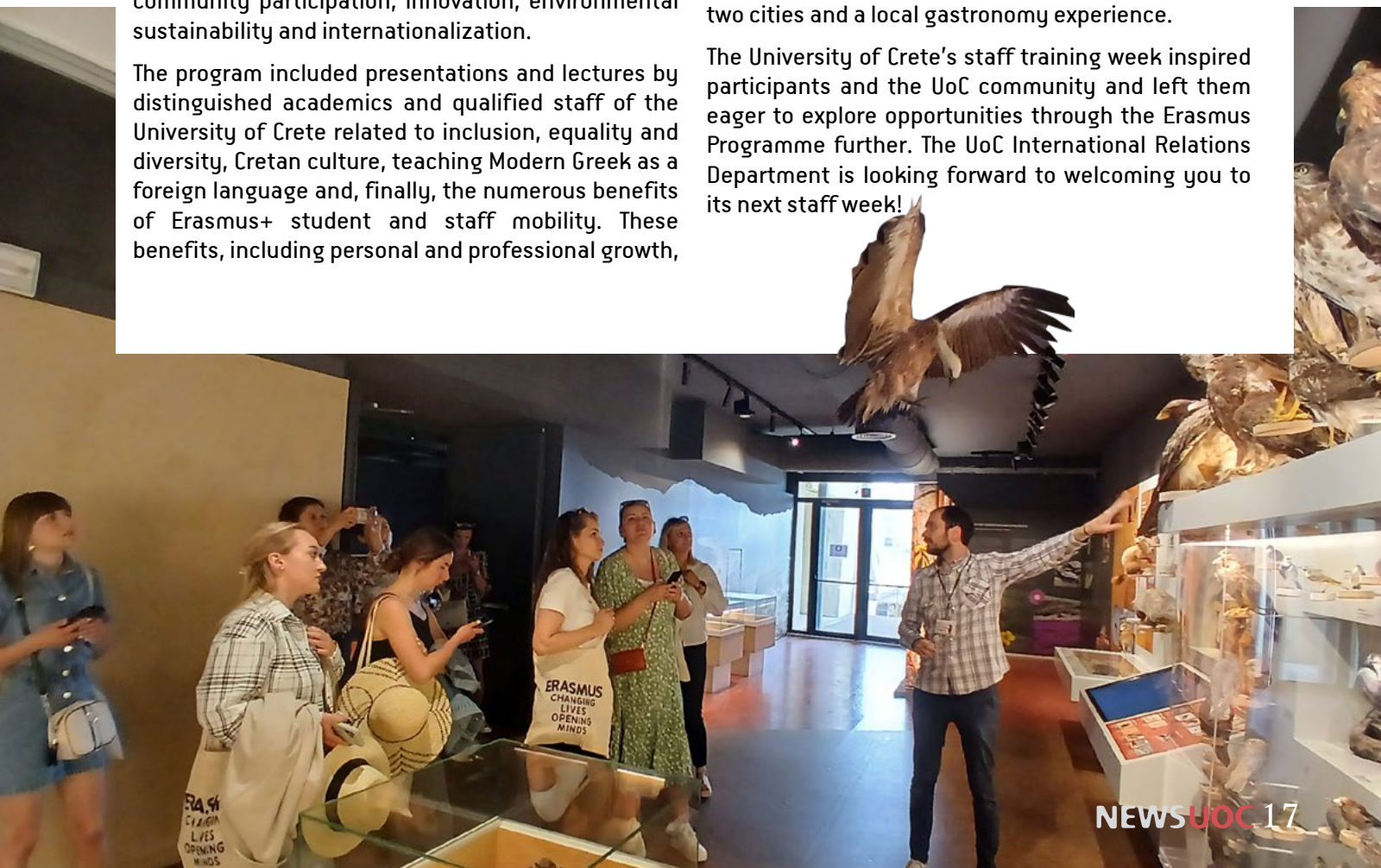
The staff training week organized by the Department of International Relations of the University of Crete was successfully held on May 13-17 on both campuses. It was a diverse gathering, with administrative staff from a variety of Higher Education Institutions in Lithuania, Italy, Croatia and Poland, all coming together to engage in a fruitful dialogue on specialized subjects, such as the promotion of employability, social inclusion, community participation, innovation, environmental sustainability and internationalization.

The program included presentations and lectures by distinguished academics and qualified staff of the University of Crete related to inclusion, equality and diversity, Cretan culture, teaching Modern Greek as a foreign language and, finally, the numerous benefits of Erasmus+ student and staff mobility. These benefits, including personal and professional growth,

were highlighted throughout the week, inspiring participants to further explore opportunities through the Erasmus+ Programme.

The training of incoming staff was enriched with guided tours at the impressive University Library and the exhibitions "Images and Books" and "On the path of History, and Memory. A. Zei", the Museum of Medicine, and the Natural History Museum. Participants also enjoyed guided tours at the historical centers of the two cities and a local gastronomy experience.

The University of Crete's staff training week inspired participants and the UoC community and left them eager to explore opportunities through the Erasmus Programme further. The UoC International Relations Department is looking forward to welcoming you to its next staff week!

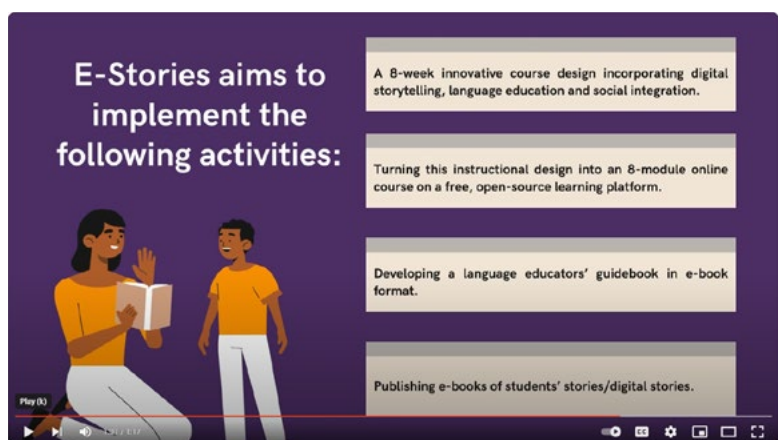




# DIGITAL STORYTELLING FOR SUPPORTING THE LANGUAGE AND TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS OF FOREIGN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS



- Enhance international university students' language use skills.
- Improve their storytelling skills and empower them as writers of their own stories.
- Foster their digital competence and digital literacy.



The University of Crete is taking part in the Erasmus+ program called "E-Stories – Digital Storytelling for Supporting the Language and Technological Skills of Foreign University Students." The main objective of the research program is to identify the needs of foreign tertiary education students in terms of the host language and their use of digital media. Based on the findings, the program aims to develop teaching interventions that will help improve their language and technological skills.

Scientific Responsible: Eleni Katsarou, Professor of Curriculum theories and Instruction in the Department of Primary Education of the University of Crete, ([katsarou@uoc.gr](mailto:katsarou@uoc.gr))

Researchers:

-Panagiota Samioti, permanent Laboratory and Teaching Staff (EDIP) at the University of Crete, in Academic Writing at the Writing Centre of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Crete

-Eirini Kassotaki, Instructor of Modern Greek as Foreign Language (external collaborator of the University of Crete in Heraklion)

Funder: Erasmus+ Higher Education KA220

For more information, visit the program's website and watch the following video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yjwjd\\_3Gdjg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yjwjd_3Gdjg)





## «Moenia» TEDxUniversity- OfCrete



*Natural dyes workshop with Antonia Dretaki and Venetia Galanaki. Sustainable and natural practices for fabric dyeing were presented, using various plants and flowers*

The annual TEDxUniversityOfCrete event, organized by students and graduates of the University of Crete, was successfully completed for the 5th consecutive year with the support of the Region of Crete and the K. Bantouvas group of companies.

On April 20, the “N. Petridis” Amphitheater of the UoC Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics was filled with laughter, tears, dance, music, and bright smiles. This year’s TEDxUniversityOfCrete was titled the Latin word “MOENIA,” which denotes walls and borders.

The talks revolved around this central theme, “walls” that are raised and broken down in the fields of biology, linguistics, sports, Artificial Intelligence, and the walls we encounter in various aspects of life.

Those who managed to secure their ticket had the chance to listen to exciting talks, watch unique performances, and participate in experiential workshops on robotics, cosmetology, sustainable fabric dyeing, and public speaking. The participation of the public, which grows more and more every year, is a great affirmation for the TEDxUniversityOfCrete team and gives it joy and enthusiasm to continue promoting innovative ideas, creative thinking, local talent and discussion in both the student community and the local society.



# Final Conference of the EUNet-INNOCHRON Research Network of the EU's COST Program

Chania, April 4 -6

A major international medical conference takes place from April 4 to April 6, 2024, at the Mediterranean Architecture Center in Chania. This is the conference of the EUNet-INNOCHRON Research Network (European Network for the Innovative Diagnosis and Treatment of Chronic Neutropenias) within the framework of the European COST (Cooperation in Science and Technology) program of the European Union, focusing on research into neutropenias.

The EUNet-INNOCHRON Network is coordinated by Professor of Hematology at the Medical School of the University of Crete and Director of the Hematology Clinic of PAGNI, Eleni Papadaki, with researchers from 32 countries as well as the European Hematology Association participating. The conference will feature 90 researchers in person from 23 countries.

The aim of the Conference is to discuss and present the research findings conducted within the framework of the Network, mainly concerning the identification of neutropenic conditions in children and adults and the prevention of their progression to acute leukemia, the new questions that have arisen, and the prospects for continuing collaboration among researchers.

According to Professor Eleni Papadaki, *"The EUNet-INNOCHRON Network has enabled many young*

*doctors and researchers from around the world to be trained in neutropenic conditions, which often represent pre-leukemic states." A particularly important result is the publication and drafting, together with the European Hematology Association, of Guidelines at the European level, for the diagnosis and treatment of chronic neutropenias, for the benefit of the patients and their families. I am happy that we are organizing the final conference in Chania, which naturally has all the prerequisites to support it."*

The Deputy Regional Governor of Chania, Mr. Nikos Kalogeris, stated: *"The scientific work carried out at the Hematology Clinic of the University of Crete and the University Hospital (PAGNI) is well known. This work goes beyond the borders of Crete, contributing significantly to the health security of society. The Region of Crete is very pleased to support the International Conference EUNet-INNOCHRON, organized in the city of Chania by Professor Eleni Papadaki and looks forward to the results and prospects of the Action."*

The Conference takes place at the Center of Mediterranean Architecture and is supported by the European COST Agency, the University of Crete, the Region of Crete through the Deputy Regional Governor of Chania, and the Municipality of Chania.





The organizers also thank the Economic Chamber of Chania and the Friends of the Hematology Clinic Renaissance Association.

Conference Website: <https://eunet-innochron.eu/eunet-innochron-final-conference>

Conference Venue: <https://eunet-innochron.eu/conference-venue>

For information: Prof. Eleni Papadaki,  
email: [e.papadaki@uoc.gr](mailto:e.papadaki@uoc.gr)

About the EuNET-INNOCHRON Network: <https://eunet-innochron.eu/about-us/about-us-2>







## International Symposium "Crises and Multi-Level Governance"

Between May 29 and 31, 2024, the three-day international symposium on «Crises and Multi-Level Governance» was successfully held. The symposium was organized by the Department of Political Science in collaboration with the National Observatory of Athens, the Center for Democracy and Law Research of the University of Macedonia, and the Region of Crete. The symposium commenced on Wednesday, May 29, with a keynote speech by Professor Sabine Saurugger, Rector of Science Po Grenoble. In her very interesting speech titled "Crises, Universities and Governance in the Evolving European Knowledge Economy," Professor Saurugger compared the French and European experiences, highlighting the challenges faced by the governance structures of European universities within the contemporary knowledge economy framework.

The symposium's proceedings continued on Thursday, May 30, and Friday, May 31, spanning a total of five thematic sessions.

The first session thoroughly discussed the recent crises faced by European health systems using very modern public policy analysis methodologies, such as the relationship between politics and the emotion of fear, the analysis of policy actor networking and their behavior in the public sphere, and public policy for pharmaceuticals.

The second session focused on the role of policy entrepreneurs in shaping public policies at both national and local levels. Research findings were also presented regarding the role and capabilities of street-level bureaucracy in adapting the implementation of public policies to their respective environments.





In the third session, different ways in which crises reflect within the structures of multi-level governance were discussed and analyzed. Topics included the EU's democratic deficit in light of the new environment created by the Eurozone crisis of the past decade, the challenges faced by citizens' digital rights and the effectiveness of recorded responses, the importance of evidence-based policymaking, and the emerging issue of revisionist tendencies in existing international space law due to pressures from private interests and competitive state policies for space resource control.

The fourth session addressed the relationship between multi-level governance and natural disaster management as events that produce focusing events. Challenges generated by these events for political leaderships, which are now called to readjust their response methods both in terms of their policy nature and the communication tools they use, were analyzed. Additionally, the relationship between produced scientific data and tools and the extent and manner in which they are utilized by political authority was discussed, raising the fundamental question of whether observed irregularities are due to science surpluses or governance deficits.

The fifth and final session of the symposium dealt with two major issues faced by multi-level governance at the European level. Firstly, the current state of the European integration project was discussed, along with the extent and manner in which applied policies incorporate policy learning processes that feedback into decision-making and policy formulation. Secondly, the current state of social policy in the

EU and the new challenges it faces were deeply analyzed. Research questions and findings regarding how continuous and successive crises (permacrisis) redefine the issues of social policy, in conjunction with intensifying inequalities and vulnerabilities that threaten the sustainability of existing social policies in the EU, were developed.

The conference took the form of an intensive workshop where each paper was subjected to exhaustive but constructive critique and discussion. The symposium was honored by the presence of researchers from the USA and Europe with a strong presence in international literature and citations, such as, indicatively, Tom Birkland, Claudio Radaelli, Evangelia Petridou, Nissim Cohen, Alison Harcourt, Stella Ladi, Manolis Plionis, Nils Bandelow, Sabine Saurugger, Chris Weible, Reimut Zohlnhoefer, and of course Nikos Zahariadis, who, in addition to being the president of the organizing committee, has developed a very productive scientific relationship with Greece and the Department of Political Science of the University of Crete.

At the end of the symposium, the guests presented various ideas for strengthening the cooperation created on the basis of this symposium, aiming to consolidate it in the future through various networking and collaboration actions.

The organizing committee of the Symposium consisted of Professors Nikos Zahariadis (Rhodes College), Ilias Georgantas, Aris Alexopoulos, and Nikos Papadakis (University of Crete), Giannis Papadopoulos, and Dr. Alexandros Kyriakidis (University of Macedonia).

# Distinctions



## **Elena Drakonaki elected Vice President of the European Society of Skeletal Radiology (ESSR)**

Dr. Elena Drakonaki, Assistant Professor of Anatomy at the Medical School of the University of Crete, was elected Vice President of the European Society of Skeletal Radiology (ESSR) in Lugano, Switzerland.

Dr. Drakonaki's term will last two years, with automatic succession to the position of President in 2026-2027. She is the fourth woman and the first Greek to assume this position since the society's founding in 1993.

Dr. Drakonaki's leadership role in the European Society of Skeletal Radiology, a global community with more than 3,000 members from 90 countries, is a testament to her influence in advancing knowledge and research in musculoskeletal radiology. Her election is a significant recognition of her contributions and scientific excellence.

We warmly congratulate Dr. Drakonaki on this important distinction and wish her every success in her endeavors.

## **Best Computer Science Scientists in Greece**

Warm congratulations to the Professors of the UoC Computer Science Department Nikos Komodakis, Kostas Stefanidis, Evangelos Markatos, Giannis Stylianou, Antonis Argyros, Dimitris Plexousakis, Ioannis Tsamardinos, Ioannis Tollis, and Xenophon Dimitropoulos, for their inclusion in the list of the top 100 Greek scientists who are ranked among the world's leading scientists in Computer Science based on bibliometric indicators.

## **Awarding of University of Crete Students in the Student Competition for Corporate Social Responsibility "Nikos Analytes"**

Three undergraduate students from the University of Crete, Dimitrios-Christoforos Karagiannis from the Department of Biology, Konstantinos Mountakis from the Department of Physics, and Emmanouil Papadogiannis from the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, are part of one of the three winning teams awarded in the 8th Student Competition for Corporate Social Responsibility "Nikos Analytes." Their project is titled "Corporate Social Responsibility - The Role of Businesses in Tackling Environmental Pollution from Microplastics."

The students from the University of Crete were awarded by Mrs. Alexandra Palli-Giannakopoulou, President of the Board of CSR HELLAS, Mr. Alexandros Katsampoulas, Vice President of the Board of CSR HELLAS, and Professor Odysseas Ioannis Zoras, Secretary General of Higher Education, at an event held on Thursday, May 30, 2024, at the University of Piraeus.

Congratulations to our students and best wishes for their future endeavors!





# Upcoming

### **Training program: Humans and Digitalization - a challenge for transborder citizenship education**

The Centre for Training and Lifelong Learning (K.E.DI.VI.M) of the University of Crete organizes course on Humans and **Digitalization: a challenge for transborder citizenship education**. The training program offers an insightful introduction to the field of e-citizenship and transborder education, focusing on cutting-edge research, theoretical approaches, modern trends and considerations relating to critical digital citizenship, education for all, extracurricular activities, migrant students and global migration, modern digital skills and basic values and concepts relating to the crisis in education and sustainable development, social justice and teacher education, collaboration skills and backpack citizens, sustaining pedagogy, the role of the Art, as well as the e-citizen and the challenge of Artificial Intelligence.

Scientific Responsible: [Pella Calogiannakis](#)

Academic Responsible: [Sibel Akin Sabuncu](#)

The programme will be conducted by **Asynchronous Distance Learning**

The official language of the seminar is **English**

Application deadline: **20 August 2024**.

For more details please visit the program's [website](#).

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### **International Conference "Feminisms and Politics in the Interwar Balkans and East-Central Europe"**

**November 28-30, 2024, Gallos Campus, Rethymnon**

UoC Department of History and Archaeology, School of Philosophy

The conference aims to explore feminist movements in the region of Balkans and East - Central

Europe in the uneasy interwar historical context, placing emphasis on transnational contacts and collaborations of feminist and women's organizations, the entanglement of their activity with politics and diplomacy at regional and international scale, and the tensions emerged between national and international agendas.

The International Conference "Feminisms and Politics in the Interwar Balkans and East-Central Europe" is organized as part of the research program "Feminisms and Politics in the Balkans during the Interwar Period (1923-1939)," which is funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI) under the Action "2nd Call for HFRI Research Projects to Support Faculty Members and Researchers" (Project Number: 3050).

Read more in the Conference website: <https://fepib-conference2024.ia.uoc.gr/>



## NEWS

**15/5**

### Quantum Days 2024: Photonics, Devices, Information

The UoC Physics Department and the [UoC Institute of Theoretical and Computational Physics](#) organize a workshop to discuss several hot topics driving the current surge of quantum science and technology. The presentations are open to all undergraduate and graduate students. The workshop features Professor Efstratios Manousakis (Florida State University and University of Athens) as invited speaker.

The event is supported by the Institute of Theoretical and Computational Physics, and the European Research Council Consolidator grant under the project titled "Non-hermitian transport in Anderson forbidden land".

Read the full program [here](#).

**22/5**

### Joint Seminar Series in Translational and Clinical Medicine: UoC Medical School – IMBB-FORTH – UCRC

The Joint Seminar Series in Translational and Clinical Medicine are organized to bring together scientists from Basic, Clinical as well as Social Sciences and Humanities providing a forum for exchanging ideas and scientific information with an intent to promote the development of de novo collaborations between researchers from UoC Medical School, IMBB-FORTH and UCRC . On May 22, Alexandros Pittis (PhD, Comparative Genomics Lab, IMBB-FORTH) presents a seminar on "Diversity, origin and molecular evolution of animal neural systems".

May 22, 15:00 – 16:00 local time

Platform link:

<https://uoc-gr.zoom.us/j/83955734209>

**23-24/5**

### International Workshop Plutarch and Xenophon: An Underexplored Relationship



The poster features a blue background with the title "INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP" at the top. Below it, the names "PLUTARCH AND XENOPHON" are written in a serif font. Two classical-style portraits of the authors are shown: Plutarch on the left and Xenophon on the right. Below the portraits, the subtitle "AN UNDEREXPLORED RELATIONSHIP" is displayed. The dates "23-24 / 5 / 2024" are prominently shown in a large, stylized font. A location pin icon indicates the venue: "STUDENT AND CULTURAL CENTER, 'XENIA' NIKOLAOU PSAROU 46 RETHYMNO". At the bottom, there is a section for the organizing committee and funding information.

<b>Organising committee</b> Jeff Beneker (University of Wisconsin-Madison) Chrysanthos S. Chrysanthou (University of Cyprus) Melina Tamiolaki (University of Crete)	<b>Funded by the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF) of the University of Crete</b> (Research Projects, Type C) Scientific Responsible: Melina Tamiolaki <b>In collaboration with</b> LACRIMALit, IMS/FORTH Contact: Melina Tamiolaki ( <a href="mailto:tamiolaki@uoc.gr">tamiolaki@uoc.gr</a> )
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This workshop aims to illuminate, through a comparative investigation of Plutarch's and Xenophon's works, individual aspects of their ideology, narrative artistry, and generic experimentation. It will provide insight into Plutarch's mechanisms of selection and adaptation of his sources, and, accordingly, into the distinctive ways of transmission and reception of classical intellectual culture in the Imperial period; it will make original contributions to the study of narrative technique and genre in antiquity from a diachronic perspective; and it will enhance our understanding of both Plutarch's and Xenophon's literary compositions in their own right.

Location: Student and Cultural Center, "Xenia" Sofokli Venizelou 10, Rethymno

#### Organizing committee

Jeff Beneker (University of Wisconsin-Madison)  
Chrysanthos S. Chrysanthou (University of Cyprus)  
Melina Tamiolaki (University of Crete)

**Funded by the Special Account for Research Funds**



**(SARF) of the University of Crete** (Research Projects, Type C Scientific Responsible: Melina Tamiolaki)

In collaboration with LACRIMALit, IMS/FORTH

Contact: Melina Tamiolaki ([tamiolaki@uoc.gr](mailto:tamiolaki@uoc.gr))

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## **23/5**

### **Erasmus Mundus Flourish lecture “Diagnosing” Resilience: Seeing the Positives in Young People Even When there are Serious Problems**

The Erasmus Mundus Program “Flourish” presents a series of farewell lectures at Gallos Campus, Rethymnon. On May 23, **Professor Michael Ungar**, Ph.D. (Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience; Director, Resilience Research Center Professor of Social Work, Dalhousie University) presents a lecture on “Diagnosing Resilience: Seeing the Positives in Young People Even When there are Serious Problems” at 17.00 – 19.00, Auditorium Δ7.

For more details, please see the attached document.

<https://welcome.uoc.gr/2024/05/20/erasmus-mundus-flourish-lecture-23rd-may-2024/>

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## **29/5-1/6**

### **International Conference on Macroeconomic Analysis and International Finance**

The Department of Economics at the University of Crete is organizing the 28th International Conference on Macroeconomic Analysis and International Finance from May 29 to June 1, 2024, at Gallos Campus, Rethymnon.

The keynote speakers of the conference are internationally renowned academics and economic policy advisors from the USA and Europe:

Agnes Benassy-Quiri (Bank of France), Francis X. Diebold (University of Pennsylvania), Iftekhar Hasan (Fordham University), and George Tsetsekos (Drexel University).

The conference is supported by the University of Crete and funded by the Bank of Greece, Eurobank,

and Drexel University’s LeBow College of Business.

Please read more at the [Conference Program](#)  
ICMAIF: [macro-conf@econ.soc.uoc.gr](mailto:macro-conf@econ.soc.uoc.gr)

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## **31/5**

### **FELASA Workshop Classification & Reporting of Severity Mouse, Rat, Zebrafish Models**

The FELASA Severity Workshop is delivered in a standardized format since the FELASA 2016 Congress with the support of the European Commission, using examples published by the 2010 FELASA/ESLAV/ECLAM Working Group. It aims to promote understanding and coherence in severity classifications across Member States, ensure harmonization in statistical reporting and help improve communication with the public. Additionally, it underlines opportunities to implement the principle of 3Rs and improve animal welfare.

The workshop is of interest to people designing procedures and projects and applying for project authorization, people responsible for animal welfare, members of ethical review boards and animal welfare bodies, scientists, study personnel, veterinarians, animal technologists and technicians.

Friday 31/05/2024 @ 09.00-14.30

Amphitheater A, Biology Department – Heraklion Campus, University of Crete

Trainers: Eirini Fragkiadaki & Argyro Zacharioudaki

Language of instruction: English

Number of participants: 40

[Registration](#)

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ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ  
UNIVERSITY OF CRETE

# NEWSUOC

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