



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens

UNICA

35TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY & RECTORS' SEMINAR

“The key role of the
Humanities in our universities”

18-20 June 2025
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens (NKUA)



Co-funded by
the European Union



TARGET GROUPS

Rectors/Presidents, Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents, representatives of academic leadership responsible for international affairs and partnerships, UNICA institutional Contact Persons, Heads of International Offices and Senior Managers involved in International and European Affairs, from UNICA member universities.

REGISTRATION

Registration forms available at the event webpage:

<https://www.unica-network.eu/event/unica-general-assembly-2025/>

Registration deadlines:

6 June 2025 for onsite participation |

13 June for online attendance of the General Assembly

FORMAT

Onsite event.

Options for online
participation and vote
provided for the General
Assembly only

For any questions, please contact the UNICA Secretariat: office@unica-network.eu



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Overall schedule of the event

Venue: NKUA Main Building, Panepistimiou St. 30, Athens

Day 0 – Wednesday, 18 June 2025

17:00-19:00	UNICA Steering Committee meeting (for SC members only) Venue: NKUA Main Building, Senate New Hall
19:00-21:00	Welcome Reception Venue: Kostis Palamas” Building , 48, Akadimias str. & Sina St.

Day 1 – Thursday, 19 June 2025

08:30-9:00	Registration of the participants & welcome coffee	
9:00-12:45	UNICA Administrative General Assembly Venue: NKUA Main Building, Great Hall Format: in person, with options for remote participation and vote	
12:45-13:00	Time for a group picture	
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:45	Parallel informal meetings	
	UNICA members leadership meeting Venue: NKUA Main Building, Great Hall	UNICA Contact Persons and IROs meeting Venue: NKUA Main Building “Alkis Argyriadis” Amphitheatre
17:00 – 19:30	Social programme (optional): visit to the Acropolis Museum and the Acropolis	
20:00	UNICA conference dinner Venue: Athens University History Museum - Address: Tholou St. 5, Plaka	

Day 2 – Friday, 20 June 2025

9:00-18:00	UNICA Rectors’ Seminar “The key role of the Humanities in our universities” Venue: NKUA Main Building, Great Hall
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UNICA RECTORS' SEMINAR

“The key role of the Humanities in our universities”

Hosted by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Friday, 20 June 2025 | 9:00-18:00

*One must never disregard the
significance of the Humanities.
Progress might drive us forward,
but purpose guides us beyond.*

Introduction

Curiosity has always been a driving force behind scientific progress. Just as humanity strives to understand the mechanics of the world, it has also been committed to uncovering the deeper meanings behind them.

Today, however, we are regrettably witnessing a growing pattern of disinvestment in the disciplines that critically explore meaning, values, and the broader implications of scientific advancement. In recent years, the closure or significant restructuring of Humanities programmes often reflects wider trends in Higher Education, including financial pressures, a shift in student interest toward STEM fields, and changing institutional priorities.

Yet we must ask: what future can science truly have if we neglect the urgent questions surrounding the significance of human experience? New technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality only heighten this concern, as they curiously defy the boundaries of human experience and consciousness.

It is in response to these crucial questions that the Rectors' Seminar taking place in the context of the 35th UNICA General Assembly will focus on the importance of the Humanities.

The event will also explore the critical role universities must play in preserving the value, relevance, and vitality of the Humanities, a mission that is of particular relevance for institutions in capital cities, where technology, culture, innovation, and policy meet.

By **Prof. Dimitrios Karadimas**, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

UNICA RECTORS' SEMINAR

“The key role of the Humanities in our universities”

Hosted by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Friday, 20 June 2025 | 9:00-18:00

PROGRAMME

Venue: NKUA Main Building, Panepistimiou St. 30, Great Hall

Overall Chair: Sorin **COSTREIE**, UNICA President

08:30-09:00	Registration of the participants and welcome coffee
09:00-09:15	Welcome addresses and introduction to the Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerasimos SIASOS, Rector, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens • Sorin COSTREIE, UNICA President
09:15-09:45	Keynote speech: <i>"The Democratic University and its Role in Modern Democracy"</i> by Dimitrios KARADIMAS , former Vice Rector for Academic and Student Affairs, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee
09:45-11:15	Session 1 – The need of humanities in our universities Chair: Sorin COSTREIE , UNICA President Speakers (15' each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The End of the Humanities? Why Do We Still Need Liberal Arts and Humanistic Education in the Universities?</i>, by Mircea DUMITRU, Professor of Philosophy and former Rector, University of Bucharest, Vice-President of the Romanian Academy • <i>In Defense of the Humanities: Addressing Contemporary Biases in Research Evaluation and Publishing Norms</i>, by Christina KOULOURI, Rector, Panteion University of Social and Economic Sciences • <i>The Transformation of the Humanities</i>, by Christopher SMITH, Executive Chair, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) - Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) (online) Open discussion with the participants
11:15-11:45	Coffee break

11:45-13:15	<p>Session 2 – Integrating Humanities in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education and research</p> <p>Chair: Anastas GERDJKOV, former Rector of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee</p> <p>Opening talks (15’ each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pericles A. MITKAS, President, Hellenic Authority for Higher Education • <i>Integrating Humanities in STEM</i>, by Gabi LOMBARDO, Director, European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASSH) (online) <p>Panel discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ksenija VIDMAR HORVAT, Vice-Rector for study and student affairs, University of Ljubljana • Pericles A. MITKAS, President, Hellenic Authority for Higher Education • Sophia PAPAIOANNOU, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, International Relations, and Extroversion, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens <p>Q&A</p>
13:15-14:15	Lunch
14:15-15:45	<p>Session 3 – Digital Humanities in Education and Research</p> <p>Chair: Julio CAÑERO SERRANO, Vice President for International Relations, University of Alcalá, UNICA Vice President</p> <p>Presentations (15’ each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Humanities for Open and Ethical Multimodal Language Research</i>, by Aliyah MORGENSTERN, Vice Rector European Affairs, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle–Paris 3 • <i>Ten Years of In Codice Ratio: Reflections on Knowledge Acquisition and Teaching Methodologies</i>, by Serena AMMIRATI, Associate Professor in Palaeography, Roma Tre University and Principal Investigator of the project CLASSICS (online) • <i>Open Science: A powerful tool for Digital Humanities</i>, by Christos PAPATHEODOROU, Professor, Dept. of History and Philosophy of Science, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens <p>Q&A</p>
15:45-16:15	Coffee break

16:15-17:45	<p>Session 4 – Protecting Humanities against the undesired effects of international rankings</p> <p>Chair: Dimitrios KARADIMAS, former Vice Rector for Academic and Student Affairs, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee</p> <p>Opening talk (15’)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From Metrics to Meaning: How Global Rankings Challenge the Humanities</i>, by Alexander HASGALL, Higher Education and Research Policy Expert, former Head of the EUA Council for Doctoral Education <p>Panel discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasos CHRISTOFIDES, Rector, University of Cyprus • Alexander HASGALL, Higher Education and Research Policy Expert, former Head of the EUA Council for Doctoral Education • Eleri ROSIER, Professor of Marketing and Strategy, Cardiff Business School and International Dean for India, Cardiff University • João SÀÁGUA, Rector, NOVA University Lisbon <p>Q&A</p>
17:45-18:00	Closing remarks and farewell