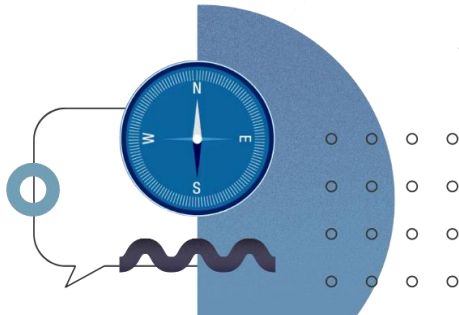




Network of Universities  
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# UNICA DAYS

BRUSSELS

28 FEB - 1 MAR 2024

Navigating the Future: Strengthening  
Democracy through Education and Research

## What's the UNICA Days in Brussels?

A pivotal event that intends to mark a significant step towards shaping the future of the network. The UNICA Days will feature some of the key topics and audiences charting a course for Europe's Higher Education environment. The agenda will comprise an array of panels, roundtables, and keynotes, as well as social and networking opportunities.

## Target groups

The UNICA Days are open to the whole UNICA community and beyond! Rectors/Presidents, Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents, Heads of International Offices from UNICA members universities; Coordinators and Members of the UNICA Working Groups; as well as partner organizations, European stakeholders, and policy makers, are all welcome in the UNICA Days 2024.

## About the topic

As the [European elections 2024](#) approach, we are aware of the interconnectedness universities and democracy. This is, therefore, the ideal moment to leverage the collective capacity of UNICA universities and make the community's voice heard among decision-makers, stakeholders, and partners in Brussels, marking a significant step towards shaping the future we aspire to create.

## Why participate?



### High level speakers

Sessions with experts European organisations, national ministries, consortia & associations in the sectors of Education and Research.



### Challenging topics

1. The democratic mission of universities ahead of the EU Parliament elections 2024
2. The developments in transnational cooperation on education in Europe
3. The visions for a new European research and innovation strategy



### Community building

Connect with your peers in an international context and contribute to the network's shared vision on the evolving role of universities in and for capital cities.

**Information & regular updates:** [www.unica-network.eu/event/unica-days-in-brussels-2024/](http://www.unica-network.eu/event/unica-days-in-brussels-2024/)



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## PROGRAMME OF THE UNICA DAYS

# "Navigating the Future: Strengthening Democracy through Education and Research"

Brussels, 28 February – 1 March 2024

### DAY 1 | 28 February

Venue: **University Foundation** (Rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels – Room Cattier – ground floor)

14:00 – 17:30

#### UNICA Working Groups and Steering Committee Meetings

*Please note that these meetings are open to the Members of the Working Groups and to any other representatives from UNICA member universities.*

*Participants who registered to attend this session will receive a detailed agenda ahead of the event.*

Welcome words by **Sorin Costreie**, UNICA President

#### Presentations of UNICA Working Groups by the Coordinators & UNICA:

- UNICA IRO Group - **Elena Avgoustidou-Kyriacou**, Acting Director of the International Relations Service, University of Cyprus
- UNICA EduLAB Working Group - **Romita Iucu**, President of the Board of Trustees, University of Bucharest
- UNICA Research
- UNICA Green & SDGs
- UNICA Scholarly Communication - **Raul Aguilera**, Head Librarian, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
- UNICA University PR & Communication - **Aswin Lutchanah**, Digital Hybrid Social Media Manager, University of Luxembourg
- UNICA & the City – **Joe Carthy**, Professor of Computer Science and Director of UCD in the Community, University College Dublin

Interactive sessions and discussion with UNICA members

Wrap up and closing by UNICA President, Sorin Costreie

19:00

**Welcome reception** (University Foundation, room Marnix)



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## DAY 2 | 29 February

**Venue: European Parliament - Info Hub** (address: Esplanade Solidarność 1980, Brussels)

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

<b>08:30-09:00</b>	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
<b>09:00 – 11:00</b>	<b>Opening Session</b>
09:00-09:20	<b>Welcome and introduction to the UNICA days</b> , by <b>Sorin Costreie</b> , UNICA President
09:20-09:30	<b>Video address</b> by <b>Iliana Ivanova</b> , Commissioner Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth
09:30-10:30	<b>Opening speeches</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ligia Deca</b>, Minister of Education of Romania</li><li>• <b>Igor Papič</b>, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Slovenia</li></ul>
10:30-11:00	Q&A
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	Coffee break
<b>11:30 -13:00</b>	<b>Session 1   The democratic mission of universities ahead of the EU Parliament elections 2024</b>
	<b>Chair: Julio Cañero Serrano</b> , Vice Rector for International Relations, University of Alcalá and Member of the UNICA Steering Committee
11:30-11:40	<b>Video message</b> by <b>MEP Maria Walsh</b>
11:40-11:50	Presentation of the <b>UNICA Student video competition "Vote for Europe"</b> by <b>Alexandra Duarte</b> , UNICA Project and Communications Officer
11:50-12:50	<b>Panel discussion</b> ( <i>speakers are listed in alphabetical order</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rita Dias</b>, President, Erasmus Student Network</li><li>• <b>Alojzy Z. Nowak</b>, Rector, University of Warsaw</li><li>• <b>Horia Onița</b>, President, European Student Union</li><li>• <b>Florian Trauner</b>, Dean of the Brussels School of Governance at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel</li><li>• <b>Henrik C. Wegener</b>, Rector, University of Copenhagen</li></ul>

12:50-13:00	<p><b>Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNICA General Assembly 2024, University of Stockholm, 26-28 June 2024</li> <li>• UNICA Rectors' Panel "UK and Switzerland and the European programmes", University of Cardiff, 10 April 2024</li> </ul>
13:00 – 13:10	Time for a group picture
13:10– 14:15	Lunch at Radisson RED (Rue d'Idalie 35, Brussels - 4-minute walking distance from the venue)
14:15-18:00	<p><b>Session 2   The developments in transnational cooperation on education in Europe</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Romita Iucu</b>, President of the Board of Trustees, University of Bucharest and Coordinator of the UNICA EduLAB</p> <p>14:15-14:30 <b>Video messages: MEP Milan Zver</b>, Standing rapporteur in the CULT Committee on the Erasmus+ programme and <b>MEP Marcos Ros Sempere</b></p> <p>14:30-15:30 <b>Keynote speeches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The democratic mission of higher education: the Council of Europe perspective</i>, by <b>Marie-Anne Persoons</b>, Vice-Chair of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee of Educational Policy and Practice</li> <li>• <i>Next steps on the implementation of the European strategy for universities</i>, by <b>Vanessa Debiais-Sainton</b>, Head of Unit Higher Education, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission</li> </ul> <p>15:30-16:00 Q&amp;A</p> <p>16:00-16:30 Coffee break</p> <p>16:30-17:50 <b>Panel discussion</b> (<i>speakers are listed in alphabetical order</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Anna-Lena Claeyss-Kulik</b>, Deputy Director for Policy Coordination &amp; Foresight, European University Association (EUA)</li> <li>• <b>Rita Dias</b>, President, Erasmus Student Network</li> <li>• <b>Elisa Gambardella</b>, President, LLLP platform</li> <li>• <b>Marie-Hélène Jobin</b>, Vice Rector for Partnerships and International Relations, University of Luxembourg</li> <li>• <b>Stéphane Lauwick</b>, President, EQAR, European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education</li> <li>• <b>Liviu Matei</b>, Head of the King's School of Education, Communication &amp; Society</li> <li>• <b>Horia Onița</b>, President, European Student Union</li> </ul> <p>17:50 – 18:00 Announcement of the UNICA EduLAB activities 2024</p> <p><b>19:00 Reception hosted by the Permanent Representation of Romania to the European Union</b> (Avenue de Cortenbergh 107, 1000 Brussels)</p>

## DAY 3 | 1 March

**Venue: European Parliament - Info Hub** (address: Esplanade Solidarność 1980, Brussels)

<b>08:30-09:00</b>	Registration of participants and welcome coffee  <b>Chair: Anastas Gerdjikov</b> , former Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and member of the UNICA Steering Committee
<b>9:00-09:30</b>	<b>Keynote speech</b> , by <b>Delphine Colard</b> , Head of Spokesperson's Unit and Deputy Spokesperson, European Parliament
<b>09:30-09:45</b>	Q&A
<b>09:45-11:30</b>	<b>Session 3   Visions for a new European research &amp; innovation strategy</b>
09:45-10:00	<b>Chair: Marius Gilbert</b> , Vice Rector Research and Valorisation, Université libre de Bruxelles  <b>Welcome and introduction to the Session by the Chair</b>  <b>Video message by MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho</b>
10:00-11:30	<b>Panel discussion</b> ( <i>speakers are listed in alphabetical order</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dan André</b>, Brussels Representative of the Stockholm Trio University Alliance</li> <li>• <b>Adrien Braem</b>, Senior Policy Officer, Science Europe</li> <li>• <b>Claude Catala</b>, President of the Academic Senate, PSL - Paris Sciences et Lettres</li> <li>• <b>Helen Roche</b>, Vice President for Research, Innovation and Impact, University College Dublin</li> </ul>
<b>11:30-12:00</b>	Coffee break
<b>12:00-13:30</b>	<b>Session 4   Networking in Brussels. Meeting the Liaison Officers</b>
12:00-12:15	<b>Chair: Dimitrios Karadimas</b> , former Vice Rector, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Member of the UNICA Steering Committee  <i>UnLiON an effective (net)working tool for Brussels based Universities</i> , by <b>Massimo Busuoli</b> , Director of NTNU Brussels Office and Chair of the UnLiON Secretariat
12:15-13:15	<b>Roundtable with Liaison Officers</b> ( <i>speakers are listed in alphabetical order</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brandusa Bitel</b>, Representative in Brussels and Deputy Director of the R&amp;D Department, Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy</li> <li>• <b>Orsolya Lugmayer</b>, Liaison Officer, Eötvös Loránd University &amp; Corvinus University of Budapest</li> <li>• <b>Markos Papadopoulos</b>, Coordinator of the Brussels Office, European Office of Cyprus</li> <li>• <b>Ignasi Salvadó-Estivill</b>, Director, Alianza 4 Universidades</li> <li>• <b>Eduardo Raul Sanchez Custodio</b>, Eu Projects Officer, University of Alcalá</li> <li>• <b>Birgitte Wederking</b>, Director, Greater Copenhagen EU Office</li> </ul>
<b>13:15-13:30</b>	<b>Closing remarks</b> , by <b>Sorin Costreie</b> , UNICA President