Anniversary of the Magna Charta Universitatum MCU2020

Beyond Resilience: Universities as Active Value-Driven Agents in a Changing World

Vilnius, 14-16 October 2026

Programme

Wednesday 14 October 2026

12:00 Transfer from central Vilnius to Mykolas Romeris University
13:00 Pre-conference

Pre-conference programme

12.30 Arrival of participants and Registration
Venue: Central Building - Room 414

Focus on Lithuania and the Region

13.00 Welcome and Introductions
Inga Žalėnienė
Rector, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania
David Lock
Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory

13.15 **Lithuania's Innovation Landscape**
Edvinas Grikšas,
Minister of Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania

Panel of Baltic Rectors
Moderator:
David Lock
Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory
Lithuania
Inga Žalėnienė
President of the Lithuanian Rector's Conference and Rector, Mykolas Romeris University
Latvia
Arvīds Barševskis
Chair of the Latvian Rectors' Council and Rector, Daugavpils University
Estonia
Priit Reiska
Rector, Tallinn University

Lithuania
Ineta Dabašinskienė
Rector, Vytautas Magnus University

14.15 **The role of universities in preparing for accession to the EU**
Presentation of the opportunities, issues and progress by Ukraine

Mykola Trofymenko
Deputy Minister of Education, Ukraine
Vadym Popko
Vice-Rector, Taras Shevchenko University
Introduced by
David Lock
Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory

15.00 Refreshment break

The Magna Charta Observatory: plans, projects and progress

15.30 **Magna Charta Report on the year**
Patrick Deane
President, Magna Charta Observatory Governing Council, Canada
David Lock
Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory

15.50 **The research agenda – findings to date and next steps**
Giga Zedania
Chair of the MCO Research Agenda
Member of the Governing Council, Magna Charta Observatory, and Former Rector, Ilia State University, Georgia
Responsive and Responsible University Case study presentation
Nomeda Gudelienė
Advisor to Deputy Rector on Sustainable Development
Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania

16.30 **The Democratic Role of Universities – introduction to the EU project**
Amélia Veiga
Project leader, and Professor at University of Porto, Portugal

17.00 **Future-generations strategy**
(Featuring the theme of democratic engagement)
Moderator:
Tiago Nogueira
Steering Committee Member, Global Student Forum

NELS initiative
Peter Kwasi Kodjie
Former Secretary General All-Africa Students' Union, and member of the MCO Governing Council, Ghana
Martina Darmanin

Former President of ESU – European Students Union, and member of the MCO Governing Council, Malta

MCO Essay Competition
Okechukwu Izuchukwu
Winner from the 2025 edition,
Student, University of Uyo, Nigeria
Click here to download his essay

17.30 ***Close of afternoon session***
Welcome drinks reception
Rotonda hall

18:15 Transfer from Mykolas Romeris University to central Vilnius

Free evening

Thursday 15 October 2026

08:30 Transfer by bus from central Vilnius to Mykolas Romeris University

09:30 Morning Session

Beyond Resilience: Universities as Active Value-Driven Agents in a Changing World

Conference
Mykolas Romeris University

09.00 **Registrations open**

09.30 **Welcome and Introductory remarks**
Inga Žalėnienė
Rector, Mykolas Romeris University
Liviu Matei
Vice-President of the MCO Governing Council and Professor at King's College London, United Kingdom
Vytautas Nekrošius
President of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences
Patron of the MCU Anniversary Conference

09.50 **Keynote addresses**
Universities under pressure: the key challenges - a global perspective
Chair:
Liviu Matei
Vice-President of the MCO Governing Council and Professor at King's College London, United Kingdom

Universities under pressure: the key challenges - a global perspective
Jamil Salmi
International Tertiary consultant, formerly Head of Tertiary Education, World Bank

How universities are responding and resisting the political instrumentalisation of HE
A European perspective
Josep M. Garrell
President of the European University Association (EUA)

A North American perspective
Kathryn Enke
Vice President for Leadership and Strategy American Association of Colleges and Universities

Questions and discussion

11.20 Refreshment break

11.45 **Building resilience: how values are enabling universities to respond**
Panel with international organisations

Case studies on how values-based leaders and strategies are having an impact

Chair*: Sijbolt Noorda*
Former President of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory, The Netherlands
Newcastle University, United Kingdom
Nigel Harkness
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Center for International Higher Education, Boston College, USA
Hans de Wit
Professor Emeritus of the Practice and Distinguished Fellow
Wroclaw Medical University, Poland
Agata Strządała
Assistant Professor and Ambassador of the Magna Charta Universitatum
European Humanities University, Lithuania
Vilius Šadauskas
Rector

Q&A

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Afternoon Sessions

14.00 **Security Challenges, the role of universities and the relationship with the state and international strategies**

Can universities embrace state-driven agendas without compromising their core missions?

Moderator:
Hilligje Van't Land
Secretary General, International Association of Universities, France
Eglė Malinauskienė
Vice-Rector on Security of science in an insecure world, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania

Effective international strategies
Panel:
Hanne Leth Andersen
Roskilde University, Denmark
Mohamed Loutfi
President and Vice-Chancellor of the British University in Egypt
Alice Mattoni
President of the University Research Ethics Committee and Vice-President of the CONNECT Research Centre, Alma Mater Studiorum, Università di Bologna, Italy
Lucyna A. Woźniak
Vice Rector for International Relations, Medical University of Lodz, Poland
Horia Mosadiq
Founding Member and member of the leadership of Roshan Afghanistan online University

Discussions

15.30 **The AI Challenge – approaches and outcomes**
Chair:
David Lock
Secretary General, Magna Charta Observatory

Jekuk Chang
President, Dongseo University, South Korea

Peace, artificial intelligence, and humanism
Massimiliano Marianelli
Rector, University of Perugia, Italy

16.00 ***Refreshment break***

16.30 **Parallel sessions**

A. **North American Insights**
Amy Reid
Program Director for PEN America's Freedom to Learn Program
PEN America
Kathryn Enke
Vice President for Leadership and Strategy
American Association of Colleges and Universities

B. **Student focus**
Peter Kwasi Kodjie
Former Secretary General All-Africa Students' Union, and member of the MCO Governing Council, Ghana
Martina Darmanin
Former President of ESU – European Students Union, and member of the MCO Governing Council, Malta
Tiago Nogueira
Steering Committee Member, Global Student Forum
Ugnė Supranavičienė
President, Doctoral Students' Association , Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania

C. **Beyond cooperation: European networks and University Alliances and the future of academic values.**
How European University Alliances can reinforce the Magna Charta values?
Romita Iucu
Secretary General, CIVIS Alliance, Bucharest, Romania
Luciano Saso
Secretary General of the UNICA network of the Universities from the Capitals of Europe
Panelists
Liviu Matei
Vice-President of the MCO Governing Council and Professor at King's College London, United Kingdom (CIRCLE U Alliance)
John McCourt
Rector, University of Macerata, Italy and President of the ERUA Alliance
Ksenija Vidmar Horvat
Vice-Rector for study and student affairs, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (EUTOPIA Alliance) and Member of the Steering Committee of the UNICA network
Tarik Zaimović
Rector, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPEACE Alliance)

D. **A New Definition of Quality: Is Quality Assurance in Higher Education Keeping Pace with a Changing World?'**
Chair: *Saulius Spurga*
Deputy Rector, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania
Henk R.B.M. Kummeling
Former Rector, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

17.45 **Close of afternoon session**

18:00 Transfer from Mykolas Romeris University to central Vilnius

19:00 Conference Gala Dinner

Gourmet Restaurant at Stikliai Hotel
Gaono st. 7, 01131 Vilnius

Dress code: Business formal

Friday 16 October 2026

Ceremony for the Signature of the Magna Charta Universitatum MCU 2020

Vilnius University
Universiteto st. 3
Aula Parva

10.00 Arrival of participants

10.30 **Ceremony for the signature of the MCU2020**

Opening remarks
Rimvydas Petrauskas
Rector, Vilnius University
Giovanni Molari
President, Magna Charta Observatory,
Rector, Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna

Keynote
Andrius Kubilius
European Commissioner for Defence and Space

Signature of the Magna Charta Universitatum

Words of thanks on behalf of Signatories

Signature of a Memorandum between the Magna Charta Observatory and the European Women Rectors Association
Remarks by
Inga Žalėnienė
Member of the Board of Directors
European Women Rectors Association, EWORA

Concluding remarks
Liviu Matei
Vice-President of the MCO Governing Council
Professor at King's College London, United Kingdom

The ceremony will be held in English

12:00 Closing buffet Lunch
Grey Restaurant
Pilies Str. 2, Vilnius

15:00 Cultural tour
The guided walking tour will introduce participants to the main highlights and historical landmarks of Vilnius Old Town.
The tour will be conducted in English.
Approx duration: 2 hrs