

EWORACONFERENCE2026

Women's Leadership in Academia in Times of Rising Geopolitical Tensions



EUROPEAN
WOMEN
RECTORS
ASSOCIATION

10 June, 2026

Brussels, **Belgium** (Rubens Room, Palace of the Academies)



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2026

PROGRAM

08:30 – 09:30 Registration and Welcome Coffee

09:30 – 10:00 Opening Session

Kerstin Tham, President, European Women Rectors Association (EWORA)

Ekaterina Zaharieva, Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation, European Commission (*video message*)

Gülsün Sağlamer, Founding Honorary President, EWORA

10:00 – 10:30 Keynote Session 1

Chair: **Pamela Gillies**, Former Vice-Chancellor, Glasgow Caledonian University

Carlien Scheele, Director, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee Break

10:45 – 12:00 Plenary Panel 1: "Universities at the Crossroads: Challenges for Higher Education Leaders"

Chair: **Isabel Capelo Gil**, Rector, Universidade Católica Portuguesa

Fadime Üney Yüksektepe, Rector, Istanbul Kültür University

Silja Bára R. Ómarsdóttir, Rector, University of Iceland

Ulrike Beisiegel, Former President, University of Göttingen

12:00 – 12:30 Keynote Session II

Chair: **Kerstin Tham**, President, EWORA

Annick Castiaux, Rector, University of Namur

- 12:30 – 13:30** **Lunch**
- 13:30 – 14:00** **Featured Address**
Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the ITRE Committee, and Member of the FEMM Committee
- 14:00 – 15:15** **Plenary Panel 2: "Values-Based Leadership and Global Responsibility"**
Chair: **Inga Žalėnienė**, Rector, Mykolas Romeris University
Malin Ideland, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Doctoral Education, Malmö University
Vanessa Castejon, Board Member, AFDESRI
Lucyna Woźniak, Vice-Rector for International Relations, Medical University of Lodz
- 15:15 – 15:45** **Coffee Break**
- 15:45 – 16:15** **Keynote Session III**
Chair: **Birgit Riegraf**, Former President, Paderborn University
Oliver Günther, President, University of Potsdam
- 16:15 – 17:30** **Plenary Panel 3: "Academic Freedom, Democracy, and Human Rights"**
Chair: **Sondan Durukanoğlu Feyiz**, Former Rector, Kadir Has University
Hanne Leth Andersen, Former Rector, Roskilde University
Katarína Slobodová Nováková, Rector, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Eva Åkesson, Former Vice-Chancellor, Uppsala University
- 17:30 – 18:30** **Closing Session**
Chair: **Kerstin Tham**, President, EWORA
Sondan Durukanoğlu Feyiz, Vice President, EWORA
Birgit Riegraf, Former President, Paderborn University
Inga Žalėnienė, Rector, Mykolas Romeris University
Pamela Gillies, Former Vice-Chancellor, Glasgow Caledonian University
Eva Åkesson, Former Vice-Chancellor, Uppsala University
- 18:30** **Cocktail Reception**