

# A Major Gathering Representing 900 Universities Across Europe Is Taking Place in Istanbul at Yeditepe University

*The EUA Annual Conference, a key platform shaping higher education, is being held in Türkiye for the first time, hosted by Yeditepe University.*

ISTANBUL, TURKEY, April 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A Major Gathering Representing 900 Universities Across Europe Is Taking Place in Istanbul at [Yeditepe University](#)

The Annual Conference of the European University Association (EUA), widely regarded as one of the most influential platforms shaping strategic decisions in higher education and representing approximately 900 universities across Europe, is being held in Türkiye for the first time in its history.

Hosted by Yeditepe University, the 29th edition of the conference brings together approximately 500 participants in Istanbul, including rectors, university leaders, policymakers, and experts from 260 institutions across 41 countries.



EUA Annual Conference hosted by Yeditepe University



Rector Prof. Dr. Mehmet Durman

Prof. Dr. Garrell: Diversity and Pluralism Are at the Core of EUA's Identity  
Speaking at the opening of the conference, held under the theme "Inter-University Cooperation in Changing Contexts," EUA President Prof. Dr. Josep Maria Garrell highlighted that participants

from 41 different countries are attending the conference, stating:

“These diverse perspectives will significantly enrich and guide our discussions over the next two days. Diversity and pluralism are integral to EUA’s identity as an organization.”

“Cooperation Lies at the Heart of Universities”

Emphasizing that cooperation is central to the very existence of universities, Prof. Dr. Garrell continued:



EUA President Prof. Dr. Josep Maria Garrell

“This year, we will address a topic that lies at the very core of universities: cooperation. Working together across institutions, sectors, and borders—in education, research, and innovation—is an essential part of what universities do. Throughout the conference, we will explore inter-institutional collaboration, partnerships with the public sector, industry, and other stakeholders at local, national, and international levels. We will also examine the innovative methods and tools universities use to develop and sustain these partnerships.”

**Prof. Dr. Durman: Inter-University Cooperation Is Indispensable**

Yeditepe University Rector Prof. Dr. Mehmet Durman noted that hosting the conference in Istanbul—a city with a 6,000-year history as a meeting point of civilizations, cultures, and intellectual traditions—is highly meaningful. He stated:

“Today, universities assume a similar mission: bringing together people, disciplines, institutions, and ideas across borders, and transforming diversity into a source of strength, creativity, and shared progress.”

Highlighting that higher education is undergoing a profound transformation, Prof. Dr. Durman added:

“Digitalization, artificial intelligence, changing skill demands, global uncertainties, and complex societal challenges are reshaping not only what universities do, but also how they position themselves in relation to society, knowledge, and one another. In such an environment, inter-university cooperation is no longer merely beneficial—it is indispensable. The more sincere and strategic our collaborations are, the greater our capacity to contribute to society.”

**From Education to Digital Transformation: Key Topics on the Agenda**

The two-day conference addresses critical topics that concern not only universities but also education policies, the future of young people, and the competitiveness of nations. It provides a

comprehensive platform to discuss how European universities will shape their future strategies, collaborate across key areas, and adapt to evolving global conditions.

Through sessions covering a wide range of issues—from the future of education programs and joint research and innovation initiatives to university–industry collaboration and the changing expectations of young people—the conference offers in-depth discussions on the evolving role of universities. The impact of digitalization on education and research, as well as how universities can adapt to these transformations, also feature prominently on the agenda.

#### EU Higher Education Strategy in Focus

The conference also addresses the European Union's new funding and support programs for higher education, along with key issues such as public trust, and the relationship between universities. The role of universities in tackling global challenges—including sustainability, climate change, and societal transformation—is among the key themes discussed.

The European University Association (EUA) Annual Conference

Yeditepe University

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