

Hellenic Republic



**Agricultural University of Athens
Department of Public Relations,
Communication and Events**

Information: Katerina Mavragani, Eleni Kotsara
75, Iera Odos Str, GR-118 55, Athens, Greece
Tel.: (+30) 210 5294841, 210 5294845
e-mail: public.relations@aua.gr

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PRESS RELEASE

The Agricultural University of Athens Hosted the Graduation and Diploma Awarding Ceremony for the Graduates of the Joint Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology

On Friday, 10 July 2026, the **Graduation and Diploma Awarding Ceremony for the 3rd cohort of the EU-CONEXUS Joint Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology** was held in the **Ceremony Hall of the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)**, celebrating the achievements of the programme's graduates.

The objective of the Joint Master's Programme is to provide high-level education, equipping graduates with a strong scientific background and expertise in specialized fields related to Marine Biotechnology. This Program brings together leading European Universities and offers specialized training in areas including Aquaculture Biotechnology, Marine Biorefineries, Blue biomass, and Innovative marine Bioproducts.

The **participating universities** are:

- **Catholic University of Valencia (Spain)**
- **La Rochelle University (France)**
- **Agricultural University of Athens (Greece)**
- **University of Zadar (Croatia)**
- **Klaipeda University (Lithuania)**
- **Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest (Romania)**

The ceremony was attended by representatives of the Rectorate Authorities of the EU-CONEXUS partner universities. **AUA was represented by the Rector, Professor Spyridon Kintzios; the Academic Coordinator of the Programme at AUA and Vice-Rector for the European University, Internationalisation and Student Affairs, Professor Eleni Miliou; and the Vice-Rector for Research, Finance and Development, Professor Thomas Bartzanas.**

Also present were the **Head of the Department of Animal Science, Professor Georgios Papadomichelakis**, and the **Dean of the School of Applied Biology and Biotechnology and Head of the Department of Biotechnology, Professor Eleni Ntouni.**

The **EU-CONEXUS partner universities** were represented by **Professor Francisco Javier Sancho Pelluz, Vice-Rector of the Catholic University of Valencia; Professor Zvezdan Penezić, Vice-Rector of the University of Zadar; Professor Valérie Thiéry, representative of the Rectorate of La Rochelle University; and Professor Rasa Grigolienė, Vice-Rector of Klaipėda University**. In their addresses, they congratulated the graduates and highlighted the significant value of European cooperation in higher education and research.

During the ceremony, Master of Science Diplomas were awarded to **32 graduates** from **20 different countries**.

The keynote address of the event was delivered by the Rector of AUA, Professor Spyridon Kintzios, leaving a profound impression on the graduating class, their families, and the attending faculty. After extending his warmest congratulations to the new graduates, the Rector commented on the numerous benefits arising from their integration into the EU-CONEXUS European University Alliance, while emphasizing the deeper significance of European integration. Following the Rector's address, graduate representatives took the floor, enthusiastically sharing their experiences from their studies. They strongly highlighted the unique opportunity for advanced postgraduate studies made possible through the Erasmus Mundus scholarships, while also reflecting on the close friendships, fruitful collaborations, and lasting personal bonds forged during their studies. Special mention was made of the international and multicultural nature of the program, which was key to shaping a rich academic and social experience.

The ceremony concluded with a musical performance by the AUA Music Club, which presented a selection of songs from the international repertoire under the direction of Associate Professor Panagiota Koutsouli.

The graduation Ceremony was the crowning achievement of a series of important academic and celebratory events that took place throughout the week. On July 6 and 7, 2026, the postgraduate students of the 3rd cohort presented their Master's theses before three-member examination committees composed of Professors from all Partner Universities. On July 8, 2026, representatives of all Partner Institutions participated in a visit to the island of Spetses, an activity designed to strengthen professional relationships and promote team building among the consortium members. On July 9, 2026, the Blue Innovation Day event brought together graduates and experienced researchers, entrepreneurs and shareholders, providing valuable opportunities for networking, research guidance, and career development discussions.

On the same day, the Programme Board Members of the Master's Programme and the External Advisory Board Members met to review the Programme's progress and discuss future actions for this flagship Erasmus Mundus programme.

Taken together, the week's events celebrated the graduates' achievements, strengthened connections among students, academics and institutional representatives across the Alliance, and highlighted the continued success of the EU-CONEXUS Joint Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology.



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