

Hellenic Republic



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

Address: 75 Iera Odos Str, GR-118 55, Athens, Greece

Information: Katerina Mavragani, Eleni Kotsara

Tel.: (+30) 210 5294841, 210 5294845

e-mail: public.relations@aua.gr

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PRESS RELEASE

Recognition for the Agricultural University of Athens: Joint European Degree Label for the EU-CONEXUS Joint Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology

The Agricultural University of Athens, a founding member of the EU-CONEXUS European University Alliance, marks another significant European achievement: the Joint International Inter-Institutional Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology, in which the University actively participates as a partner in academic design, joint governance and educational delivery, is now among the first programmes developed within a European University Alliance to receive the Joint European Degree Label.

The award was presented on 15 July 2026, at a special ceremony hosted by the European Commission in Brussels, recognizing **the Programme's high academic quality, its integrated European structure, and the close cooperation between universities from different European countries.** The Joint European Degree Label is awarded to transnational study programmes that are jointly designed, governed and delivered by Higher Education Institutions from at least two EU Member States or EEA EFTA countries, provided they meet common European criteria in areas such as academic integration, mobility, multilingualism, sustainability, digital learning, and the promotion of shared European values. The Programme was assessed by AQU Catalunya in cooperation with the UNIBASQ Quality Agency, with AQU Catalunya recognised at the Brussels event as the first quality assurance agency to award the Label.

The awarding of the Label confirms that the Programme's students do not simply spend part of their studies abroad, but take part in a truly unified European programme, jointly designed and delivered by the partner universities of the EU-CONEXUS Alliance.

The Programme brings together the **Catholic University of Valencia in Spain, the University of La Rochelle in France, the Agricultural University of Athens in Greece, the University of Zadar in Croatia, Klaipėda University in Lithuania, and the Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest in Romania.**

Through their studies and mobility between different European universities, students gain international academic experience and specialised knowledge in an interdisciplinary field where

marine science, biotechnology and the sustainable use of marine biological resources come together.

Students choose one of four specialisation tracks:

- Innovative Bioproducts for the Future
- Blue Biomass
- Marine Biorefinery
- Aquaculture Biotechnology

The curriculum covers applications in health, cosmetics, agri-food and aquaculture, while bringing students into direct contact with researchers, businesses and public organisations. In this way, it prepares them for research and professional careers in marine biotechnology and the blue bioeconomy. The graduating class of 2026 will be the Programme's first cohort to receive certificates bearing the Joint European Degree Label.

At the Brussels ceremony, Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness, stressed that Europe's future competitiveness depends on its ability to educate talented graduates who can work and collaborate across scientific disciplines, professional sectors and national borders. As she noted, the recognised programmes show how European universities can join forces to prepare the new generation of scientists, innovators and leaders that Europe needs.

This European recognition comes alongside **another major success for the Programme. Following a highly competitive evaluation process, the European Commission approved funding of €4.6 million under the 2026 Erasmus+ Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters call.**

This marks the second consecutive Erasmus Mundus grant secured by the Programme, underlining its consistent quality, international appeal and sustainability. The funding will support new scholarships for students from Europe and beyond, the continued delivery of the joint curriculum, and closer cooperation with researchers, businesses and organisations active in marine biotechnology and the blue bioeconomy.

The award of the Joint European Degree Label, together with the new Erasmus Mundus funding, confirms the dynamic and internationally recognised trajectory of the EU-CONEXUS Joint Master's Programme in Marine Biotechnology. At the same time, it highlights the contribution of the Agricultural University of Athens to the internationalisation of higher education, the strengthening of European university cooperation, and the training of a new generation of scientists in a field of strategic importance for Europe's sustainable development.

