



The action «Organisation of events in the Asterousia area within the framework of the Asterousia Hybrid University 2026-2027» is funded by the Regional Development Programme of the Region of Crete.



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DAILY PROGRAMME

ASTEROUSIA HYBRID UNIVERSITY 2026-2027: PHASE A 4-8 OCTOBER 2026, ASTEROUSIA BR, CRETE *Climate-Resilient Communities in Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves*



This year's University focuses on how communities in Biosphere Reserves implement measures to build resilience to Climate Change. The related lifelong ESD, which extends beyond the classroom and also covers the productive sectors, along with related methods for the effective involvement of local young people, is included in the training.

Find all places we visit throughout the event on this [Online Map](#).

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER, ARRIVALS, TRANSFER TO KAPETANIANA

Depending on arrival time, participants will be transferred in small groups from Heraklion Airport to the Traditional Eco-tourism Village [Thalori](#) (~1 hour) – Informal dinner

Free time in the Village of Kapetaniana - Informal Welcome Dinner at **Thalori**

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER - DAY 1 OF TRAINING

WHERE: CENTRE OF THE MAB ASTEROUSIA BIOSPHERE RESERVE - KAPETANIANA (ZONE C) – VASILIKI (ZONE C) – MIAMOU (ZONE C) – LOUKIA (MUNICIPALITY OF GORTYNA)

WHAT: FOCUS ON THE MAB PROGRAMME | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT | LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

TIME	SPEAKER / TOPIC
0900 - 0915	Registration
0915 -0930	Brief Welcome Remarks by UNESCO, the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve, the Heraklion Development Agency (ANI), the Greek National MAB Committee, MIO-ECSDE
0930 -1000	Getting to Know Participants (ICE-BREAK), Presentation of the Programme
1000-1015	The Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) of UNESCO: P. Pypareert , Consultant in integrated territorial planning and management (UNESCO sites)
1015-1045	Climate Change in the Mediterranean Integrated Management WEFE Nexus Approach, Prof. Emer. Prof. M. Scoullos , UNESCO Chair UNESCO NKUA, Greek MAB Committee/UNESCO
1045-1100	Rural Development and Climate Change – A Roadmap for the Revitalisation of the Asterousia Mountains, Prof. N. Nikolaidis , Director Hydrochemical Engineering & Remediation of Soil Lab (HERSLAB), School of Chemical and Environmental Engineering, Technical University of Crete
1100-1115	Together for Asterousia: Climate Adaptation as an Opportunity for Local Regeneration, E. Stylianou , Directorate of Climate Change, Region of Crete, European Climate Pact
1115-1130	Water Resilience Measures Undertaken in the Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Lebanon, H. Hassan , Shouf BR
1130-1230	QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION BASED ON THE PRESENTATIONS
1230-1330	<i>Break - Group Photo – Light lunch</i>
1330-1500	3 min Presentations by Participating Organisations (pitching) EXPECTATIONS - EXCHANGE DISCUSSION ALSO BASED ON THE QUESTIONS ON PADLET
1530	Gathering at the entrance of Thalori, with a view of the surrounding dry-stone walls. The art of dry-stone walling, M. Piperakis (Mastro-Manolis, Facebook)
1600	Departure by Bus for the visits

1600-1630	Transfer to Vasiliki Village, Municipality of Gortyna
1630-1730	Study-Visit to a local producer and bottling facility of extra virgin olive oil, Pasiphae by Kokkinakis & Olive Oil Tasting Link
1730-1800	Bus transfer to Miamou village
1800-1900	Study-Visit to the Cultural Association of Miamou Lentas, guided tour of the folklore museum EXCHANGE DISCUSSION ON THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF LOCAL PRODUCERS IN BRS
1900-2100	Dinner hosted by the Miamou Lentas Cultural Association (Wood-oven baking and tasting of local recipes)
2100-2200	Return to Kapetaniana by Bus

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER

WHERE: KAPETANIANA (ZONE C) – AG. IOANNIS (ZONE B) – KOUDOUMA MONASTERY, MUNICIPALITY OF GORTYNA (ZONE A) – PARANYMFOI (ZONE C) – ETHIA (ZONE C) – ACHENTRIAS, MUNICIPALITY OF ARCHANES-ASTEROUSIA (ZONE C)

WHAT: WE DISCOVER ASTEROUSIA BR THROUGH HIKING, STUDY-VISITS AND MEETINGS WITH LOCALS

TIME	WHAT
0800-0830	Transfer by 4X4 Jeeps from Thalori to Ag. Ioannis
0930-1130	Introduction to Asterousia Trails – Link Hiking route from Ag. Ioannis to Koudouma Monastery (4 Km): We combine a trail of religious interest with exploration & interpretation of the local ecosystem (flora and fauna). Along the route we come across caves, water channels, terraces with dry-stone walls, etc. Our hiking route in Asterousia Trails Trail guides: Stavros Xirouchakis, Biologist & Ornithologist, University of Crete, Link Giorgos Makrygiannakis, Local Mountaineer
1130	Arrival at Koudouma Monastery – Link
1200-1230	Welcome by the Abbot of the I.M. Koudouma - An example of religious tourism Short guided tour by Mrs Popi Gkalanaki , Archaeologist
1230-1400	<i>Light lunch at the Monastery – Free time</i>
1400-1500	Transfer by JEEP to Paranymfoi Municipality of Archanes-Asterousia
1500-1530	Short stop at the entrance of the Amba Gorge Link
1530-1630	Short stop at the Folklore Museum - Events Hall of the Paranymfoi Cultural Association Link EXCHANGE DISCUSSION ON THE ROLE OF THE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION AS A HUB FOR STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION
1630-1700	Transfer by Jeep to Ethia (A settlement restored by its residents).
1700-1730	Short stop at the tomb of Ag. Efmenios – An example of religious tourism
1800	Arrival at the restored settlement of Achentrias Municipality of Archanes-Asterousia

1800-2030	Getting to know the Cultural Association and the Local Community of the settlement, with traditional dishes cooked live by local women (dinner). EXCHANGE DISCUSSION ON THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN A BR
2030-2130	Return by 4X4 Jeeps (Achentrias – Kapetaniana 1h)

WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER

WHERE: KAPETANIANA (ZONE C) - VAGIONIA (MUNICIPALITY OF GORTYNA) – KASTELLIANA (MUNICIPALITY OF MINOA PEDIADAS)

WHAT: FOCUS ON EDUCATION / LIFELONG LEARNING & YOUNG PEOPLE

TIME	WHAT
0900-0930	Transfer by Bus from Thalori to the Junior High School of Vagionia, Municipality of Gortyna
0930-1100	- The cooperation between TEDA, the Regional Directorate of Education of Crete and the National Network of UNESCO ASP-Net Schools, Mr Manolis Kartsonakis, Regional Director of Education of Crete - The project «Geropotamos», presented by the responsible teacher, Head of the Vagionia Junior High School Mr Prokopis Angeletos and the 25 students Link EXCHANGE DISCUSSION WITH TEACHERS, PARENTS & STUDENTS ON THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN BRs - Introduction to GORTYS Extra Virgin Olive Oil Production by Mr Askoulakis
1130-1300	Visit & guided tour of the model Olive Grove GORTYS of Mr Arkoulakis , which combines biodiversity, sustainability and cultural heritage. Link
1300-1345	<i>Picnic in the Groove, or Light Lunch or on the way</i>
1345 - 1415	Transfer from the Olive grove to Pompia: 30''
1415 - 1430	Welcome from representative of the Pompia Cultural Association and Local Authorities, Link
1430-1530	Hall of the Cultural Association of Pompia Workshop: Conservation or Development? Rethinking trade-offs in Mediterranean protected areas, Zenepe Dafku , Assist. Prof. Agricultural University of Tirana
1530-1630	Workshop: Education & Popularisation, through films intertwining ecology and folklore with folk tales & legends about the local wildlife, "Chervenata stena" BR, Alexander Petrov , Perperitsa Association
1630-1645	The Asterousia Youth Group, Mrs Katerina Mantadaki , Coordinator of the Asterousia Youth Group / Greek National Focal Point for the MAB/UNESCO
1645-1730	EXCHANGE DISCUSSION BASED ON THE INITIAL QUESTIONS, LESSONS LEARNED, PARTICIPANTS' RECCOMENDATIONS – INFORMAL EVALUATION
1730	Closing of Phase A of the Hybrid University
1730-1815	Return to Kapetaniana (45')
2000	<i>Farewell Dinner with music at Thalori</i>

SPONSORS | CO-ORGANISATION | PARTNERS

Funded by:



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The **main organisers** & sponsors of the Hybrid University are:

- Region of Crete
- Heraklion Development Agency (HDA) - Asterousia Biosphere Reserve (TEDA)
- Association for the Protection of Asterousia
- UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (Venice Office)
- UNESCO Chair & Network for Management and Education for Sustainable Development at NKUA
- Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) through the initiative MEDIES

Other contributors: The Hybrid University will bring together a range of organisations within and around the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve, such as:

- Municipalities of the MAB region
- Local Cultural Associations
- Koudoumas Monastery
- Local Businesses
- Regional Directorate of Education of Crete & Vagionia High School
- Natural History Museum of Crete
- Voluntary Civil Protection Group "Filios Zeus"

Under the auspices of:

- Mediterranean Committee for Education for Sustainable Development (MCESD)

