



Universidad de Granada

## The UGR, European Parliament and European Commission to hold joint conference on European project

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University news & events

The conference “Europa, ¿para qué?” (‘Europe: what for?’), which has been jointly organised by the Vice-Rectorate for Student Services and Employability, the European Parliament and the European Commission, will be held today Tuesday 12 March at the UGR’s School of Civil Engineering. The event has been conceived within the framework of the [thistimeimvoting.eu](http://thistimeimvoting.eu) campaign.



The conference will focus on three core topics:

- Making society, and especially young people, aware of the importance of the European project by reflecting on its virtues, while also identifying inefficiencies within the system
- Improving society’s knowledge of democratic institutions and public decision-making processes
- Understanding how European institutions and policies affect universities and what Europe is doing in this regard.

The inauguration ceremony will be chaired by the Rector of the University of Granada, Pilar Aranda, and will include a speech by José Antonio Naranjo, the Vice-Rector for Student Services and Employability, who will also chair the debate titled ‘Participation in the European elections: why and what for?’.

### **Colloquium 1: ‘Participation in the European elections: why and what for?’**

#### **Participants:**

- María Andrés Marín, Director of the European Parliament Office in Spain

<http://www.ugr.es/>

- Juan Luis Ballesteros, Political Reporter for the European Commission Representation in Spain
- Gabriel Colomé García, Lecturer in Political Sciences at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and founder and former Director of the Opinion Studies Centre (CEO)
- Giselle García Hípola, UGR Lecturer, Doctor of Political Sciences, and expert in political communication and electoral processes

## **Colloquium 2: ‘What does Europe do for universities? Current context and where we are headed’**

### **Participants:**

- Rolf Tarrach, President of the European University Association and Professor at the University of Luxembourg
- Salustiano Mato, Assistant Vice-President of the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE)
- Dorothy Kelly, Vice-Rector for Internationalization at the UGR and former Chair of the Executive Board of the Coimbra Group
- Pablo Alcaraz Martínez, President of the Coordinator of Student Representatives of Spanish Public Universities (CREUP)
- Moderator: Gorka Martín Terrón, Director for Student Information, Participation and Societies (University of Granada)

The conference organisers point out that there is growing disaffection with politics in Europe. An increasing number of citizens feel that rather than alleviating their problems, political institutions are in fact exacerbating them. Accordingly, the current context calls for transversal and two-way communication between these institutions and society if we are to restore faith in politics as an effective means of achieving peace and progress.

The 2016 Spanish general elections saw a drop of over 13% in turnout levels compared with the maximum levels ever reached in the 1980s. Meanwhile, the turnout rate during the last European elections dropped below 50%, revealing a worrying lack of interest among citizens with regard to the European project.

The event organisers stress that the University of Granada firmly believes that improving awareness in society will bring about greater turnout levels. And broader participation, in turn, will bolster the foundations of democracy.

Furthermore, the coordinators highlight the importance of running activities such as today’s conference — especially at universities, where debate and non-linear thinking are fundamental.

## **Registration**

Admission is free of charge but we advise you to register if you wish to attend the event.

<https://ve.ugr.es/informacion/congreso-europa>

**Date and time:** Tuesday 12 March at 17.00

**Venue:** School of Civil Engineering (E.T.S. de Ingeniería de Caminos, Canales y Puertos)