

NEWS

LETTER

April 2026

ETECH CONFERENCE MARKS ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY



On 22–23 April 2026, EKA organised the 10th anniversary edition of the International Scientific Conference “Emerging Trends in Economics, Culture and Humanities” (etECH2026).



The conference was organised in cooperation with strategic national and international partners: Alberta College, Ferris State University, Sumy State University, the Baltic Circular Eco-System Association, the European Marketing and Management Association (EUMMAS), the European Digital Learning Network (Dlearn), the New Door Social Entrepreneurship Accelerator, and the Latvian Association of Economists.

ETECH2026 KEYNOTES PRESENTATIONS

The **plenary session** featured three keynote presentations, highlighting the interdisciplinary spirit of etECH and connecting digital society, ethics, media, economics and future-oriented research.



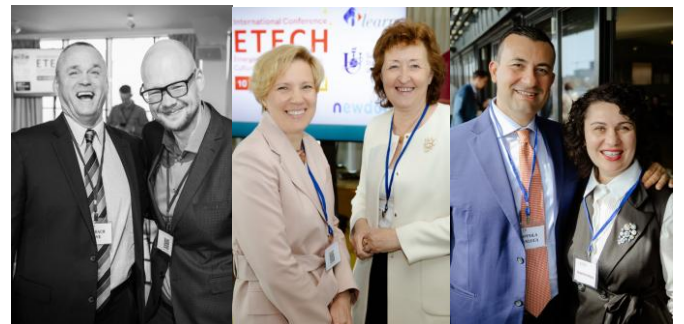
Dr. José P. Zagal, Professor at the Division of Games, University of Utah, USA, discussed “**Games as Cultural Artifacts: Learning, Ethics, and Design**”.

Prof. Dr. Baiba Rivža, Academician of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, delivered the keynote “**Engagement as a Priority for Social Media Platforms and the Risk of Fake News and Hate Speech**”.

Dr. Andrei Rădulescu, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for World Economy of the Romanian Academy, Romania, presented “**The Transformation of Europe – A Vision from the East**”.



This year’s conference brought together **more than 250 participants** from all over the world – Europe, Asia, Africa and North America – strengthening etECH as an international platform for presenting research results, exchanging ideas and building academic cooperation.



[etECH2026 PROGRAMME](#)
[etECH2026 recording](#)

RESEARCH DIALOGUES AND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The second part of etECH2026 was dedicated to eleven **parallel research sessions**, covering economics, sustainability, circular economy, human resource management, business, law, education, digitalisation, culture studies, creative industries, arts, design, digital games, gamification and virtual reality.



The conference continued with a festive **Gala Dinner at the House of the Blackheads**, marking the 10th anniversary of etECH and celebrating its role as a meeting point for interdisciplinary research, academic exchange and international collaboration.



BAFF-SUPPORTED EXPERTISE IN GAME STUDIES

With the financial support of the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BAFF), EKA welcomed Dr. José P. Zagal, Professor at the Division of Games, University of Utah, USA.



Dr. José P. Zagal is Professor in the Division of Games at the University of Utah, USA. He holds a PhD in Computer Science from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and his research focuses on game studies, game design, role-playing games, videogame ethics and games education. He is the author and editor of several influential books, including “Seeing Red: Nintendo’s Virtual Boy, The Routledge Handbook of Role-Playing Game Studies, and Fifty Years of Dungeons & Dragons”. His contributions have been recognised by the Higher Education Videogame Alliance and the Digital Games Research Association.

Baltic-American
Freedom Foundation



During his visit, Dr. Zagal delivered the **etECH2026 keynote presentation** “Games as Cultural Artifacts: Learning, Ethics, and Design”. He also co-chaired the **research session** “Digital Games, Gamification, Virtual Reality” and, together with Vaidas Gecevičius from Lithuania, led the **workshop “Game Showcase & Expert Review”**, offering participants expert feedback on game design.



This project is organised with the financial support of BAFF – the **Baltic-American Freedom Foundation**. BAFF supports educational and professional exchange between the Baltic States and the United States, strengthening international cooperation and knowledge sharing.

More about [BAFF](#)

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC WEEK CONNECTS GLOBAL PARTNERS

From 20 to 24 April 2026, EKA hosted **International Academic Week 2026**, bringing together students, academic staff and international partners for five days of academic exchange, professional dialogue and networking.



This year, IAW2026 welcomed **55 participants from 14 countries**, creating a truly international environment for sharing knowledge and building new connections.

The programme included 28 lectures and workshops on topics such as intercultural communication, business statistics, human capital management, EU enlargement, artificial intelligence, neuromarketing, project management, financial literacy, consumer protection, public speaking, financial modelling, innovation, branding and financial technologies.

A special focus was placed on strengthening international partnerships, including presentations of partner universities within the **Erasmus+ KA171 project** and discussions on future cooperation opportunities. Participants also joined “Quick Dating” and “Slow Dating” networking sessions, the opening events of etECH2026, a Riga sightseeing tour and informal networking activities.



IAW2026 became a platform for connecting people, ideas and institutions, strengthening international cooperation beyond the event week.

[IAW2026 AGENDA](#)

TEACHING MOBILITY AT ALTE UNIVERSITY

From 27 April to 1 May 2026, EKA lecturer **Imants Ļaviņš** participated in an Erasmus+ teaching mobility at **ALTE University** in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The visit took place during **International Staff Week 2026**, focused on data-driven internationalisation and innovation. Participants discussed higher education development, institutional rankings, self-assessment tools, innovation and entrepreneurship centres, quality assurance, research culture and internationalisation of research.

Imants Ļaviņš delivered lectures on **cultural heritage tourism** and **gastronomy tourism in the Baltic States**, introducing students and staff to the development, opportunities and challenges of cultural tourism in the Baltic region.



The mobility was funded by the **Erasmus+ KA171 programme**.

Read more: [ALTE University mobility](#)

CONGRATULATIONS TO PROF. DR. JEĻENA TITKO



We are pleased to congratulate **Prof. Dr. Jeļena Titko**, Vice-Rector for Science and International Relations at EKA University of Applied Sciences, on being elected for the **second term as Full Professor**.

On 14 April 2026, the Joint Professor Council of RISEBA University of Applied Sciences, Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, and Ventspils University of Applied Sciences positively evaluated qualification and experience of Prof. Dr. Jeļena Titko for the position of Full Professor in the field of Economics and Entrepreneurship, including Management Science.

This recognition confirms Prof. Titko's important contribution to research, academic leadership and the development of higher education.

We warmly congratulate Prof. Titko and wish her continued success, inspiration and new achievements in her academic and professional work!

ACADEMIC EXCHANGE AT GEORGIAN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

From 27 April to 1 May 2026, EKA lecturers **Zane Veidenberga**, **Larisa Turuševa** and **Elza Sípola** visited **Georgian American University (GAU)** within the Erasmus+ teaching mobility.



The teaching activities focused on business communication, language and cultural differences in the business environment, financial planning and investment analysis in companies. The mobility took place alongside **GAU International Week**.

The visit supported academic exchange, new professional contacts and future cooperation opportunities between partner universities, including possible joint research initiatives.

The mobility was funded by the **Erasmus+ KA171 programme**.

Read more: [GAU teaching mobility](#)

STUDENTS EXPLORE DECISION-MAKING IN PRACTICE

On 24 April 2026, students of Management and Law visited the **Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia** together with lecturer **Dr. oec. Ilona Lejniece**.

During the visit, students learned about the history of the Cabinet building, the organisation of government work and the procedures of ministerial meetings.

The visit enriched the study process by connecting theoretical knowledge with real institutional experience. From a research perspective, such activities strengthen students' understanding of public administration, decision-making processes and the practical context in which legal, managerial and policy-related knowledge is applied.



Read more: [augstskola.lv](#)