



PRESS RELEASE

Kalamata, 2 December 2025

Event: “Access Accepted: A New Era of Barrier-Free Education”

On Tuesday, 2 December 2025, the event titled “**Access Accepted: A New Era of Barrier-Free Education**” was successfully held at the premises of the School of Humanities and Cultural Studies of the University of the Peloponnese in Kalamata. The event was organized by the University’s Centre for Children’s Rights, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December).

Greetings were delivered by the Rector of the University, **Professor Athanasios Katsis**, the Vice-Rector for Administrative Affairs, International Relations and Outreach, and Coordinator of the Centre for Children’s Rights, **Professor Efthalia Chatzigianni**, and the UNICEF Representative in Greece, **Dr. Ghassan Khalil**.

The event focused on issues related to strengthening inclusive education and the social dimension of disability, as well as on presenting initiatives of the University of the Peloponnese that promote accessibility and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in higher education, both in general and within the University of the Peloponnese specifically. Particular emphasis was also placed on the experiences and perspectives of persons with disabilities in the field of sports, highlighting the role of sports as a means of empowerment and social cohesion.

The event’s panel featured:

- **Professor Athanasios Stryngas**, Department of Sports Organization and Management, who underscored the importance of equal access to education and the institutional framework needed to support persons with disabilities.
- The **Deputy Mayor for Sports and Tourism of Kalamata** and **President of the Sports’ Association for People with Disabilities “DIAFOROZO”**, Georgios Lazaridis, who presented the vision and actions of the local authorities for a city accessible to all, as well as the Association’s initiatives that support inclusion through sports.
- Athletics athletes of the “DIAFOROZO” Association, **Giannis Charalampopoulos** and **Georgia Papadea**, who shared their personal experiences as persons with disabilities and active athletes, offering a deeply experiential dimension to the discussion.
- **Panagiota Tsiala**, PhD Candidate in the Department of Sports Organization and Management and President of the Social Cooperative Enterprise **Thera Plus**, who addressed the topic “**Body Image and Disability**” and presented actions and initiatives of Thera Plus currently implemented in the city of Kalamata.

The event concluded in a spirit of collaboration, exchange of views, and a shared commitment to further strengthening initiatives that promote accessibility, social participation, and the rights of persons with disabilities.

