



University of Crete: among the best young universities

University of Crete is ranked **#51** in the 2015 *Times Higher Education* 100-Under-50 ranking of the world's best young universities under the age of 50, now in its 4th edition. The ability of the University to maintain its position in the 100-Under 50 ranking for the fourth year running is a significant achievement in itself. In the face of worsening recession conditions, which have been impacting heavily on higher education institutions and other public research organizations in Greece, it is an impressive performance that reflects well on the academic community in Crete.

The THE 100 Under 50 complements the annual THE World University Rankings. It uses the same 13 performance indicators covering the whole range of a university's mission (teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook) but reflects the profiles of younger universities. That is, it gives less weighting to the subjective indicators of academic reputation – closely associated with heritage and endowment wealth – which favour the traditional elite of old universities. As Phil Baty, the THE 100 Under 50 editor, notes: *'While young universities may lack the advantages bestowed by history and have yet to reach the upper echelons of the traditional world university rankings, perhaps it is their youth which offers them their greatest opportunity'*.

Released on 30 April 2015, the results coincided with the sudden loss of Crete's visionary Professor of Computer Science and former Rector (1999-2004), Christos Nikolaou (1954-2015). He was very proud in previous years and would be particularly pleased again with the fact that Crete has been ranked in this prestigious grouping of young HEIs every year since the THE 100-Under 50 was first published in 2012, as this reflects the outward looking dynamic and confidence as a research-intensive University which he did so much to promote. As commentary on the 2015 results notes:

'Young universities are unhampered by tradition and outdated modes of operation. They tend to be agile, dynamic and keen to adopt modern organizational practices. ..Moreover, such institutions attract leaders who wish to make a difference rather than simply maintain the status quo.'

(Brian MacCraith, President Dublin City University in THE 100-Under-50 Supplement April 2015)

Christos Nikolaou was indeed one such leader, and it is a tribute to his energy, confidence and innovative approach which made Crete the first among Greek HEIs to seek the benefits of independent institutional evaluations.

The University strives for the autonomy to build on this legacy and to act on the advantages attributed to young universities of being responsive to societal and economic developments nationally and globally, so as to realize its mission through high quality and innovative teaching and research.

For more information on the *Times Higher Education* 100 Under 50 rankings see the *Times Higher Education* website <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/> and <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2015/one-hundred-under-fifty>