

**EC2U Forum 2026**

18–21 May 2026

University of Turku

**Session description****Thursday 21 May 2026****Time: 9:00 – 10:30****Place: MED D Alhopuro lecture hall****10<sup>th</sup> EC2U HIGHER EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE****Bridging Education and Skills: Challenge-Based Education, Quality Jobs and Talent Retention**

The EC2U Higher Education Roundtables are designed to tackle shared strategic priorities and explore the challenges and opportunities facing the EC2U Alliance, particularly as Europe faces a shortage of skilled graduates and struggles to attract and retain talent. Aligned with the European Commission's Union of Skills and Quality Jobs Roadmap, this session aims to emphasize the importance of challenge-based education, interdisciplinary learning, and university-enterprise collaboration to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and employer demands. While the EC2U Alliance has reaffirmed its commitment to these goals, especially in upskilling, reskilling, and fostering future-oriented skills, practical implementation remains an ongoing discussion. Key questions persist: Is the labor market ready to absorb graduates with new skill sets? What collaborative measures can EC2U regions adopt to retain talent? With a diversity of experts and perspectives (students, businesses and alliances), the roundtable seeks to explore how challenge-based education and partnerships can equip learners with relevant skills, ensure access to quality jobs, and promote inclusive growth across Europe.

## Agenda:

9:30–9:40 Welcome & Introduction by **Ludovic Thilly**, EC2U Coordinator General

9:40–10:10 Keynote Speech

10:10 – 10:50 Panel discussion moderated by Vice Rector **Maija S. Peltola**, Strategic Engagement and Impact, University of Turku.

10:50–11:00 Conclusion and way forward

## Speakers:

EC representative (Keynote Speech)

Ella Keinonen, EC2U Student Alumni

Meyer Turku

Åbo Academy/CHARM EU