

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Daughters of Penelope and Thetis Brussels Chapter Co-Host Europe & Australia Chapter Leadership Conference

BRUSSELS (January 31, 2026) -- The Daughters of Penelope (DOP) and Thetis Chapter No. 439 of Brussels, Belgium, co-hosted the 6th Europe and Australia Chapter Leadership Conference at the legendary Steigenberger Icon Wiltcher's Hotel in Brussels, January 31, 2026.

The conference began with a welcome by Thetis 439 Brussels Chapter President Eleni Maglara followed by greetings from Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia Vassiliadou, Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zachariades, and First Counselor of the Greek Embassy in Belgium Mr. Dimitrios Velissaroulis.

Conference Presentations and Messages

Presentations by Daughters of Penelope National Officers included "Leadership Strategies" by Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zachariades, "2025-2026 Growth and Expansion Program – Mosaic" by Grand Vice President Gretchen Holtsinger, "DOP National Projects" by Grand Secretary Patty Didik, "Team Building & Treasury" by Grand Treasurer Effie Kirkiles, "DOP Educational Scholarships" by DOP Foundation, Inc. President Robbie Jackson, and "A Guide to Headquarters and the Daughters of Penelope" by Executive Director Elena Saviolakis. A presentation on "Maids of Athena, the Youth Order of DOP" was also given by member of the Maids of Athena Advisory Board, Anna Goritsa.

Greetings were given by Region Governor of Greece Maria Sofianou, Region Governor of Cyprus Margaret Pitiris, Europe Chapter Presidents including Niki Kalogera of Phaetuse 437 (Paris), Eleni Maglara of Thetis 439 (Brussels), Eleni Alexandridou of Eleni 440 (London), Dr. Dimitra Potsi of Eurynome 454 (Stuttgart), Althea-Maria Papoulias of Pallas-Athena 459 (Vienna), Athina Kapsali of Kallirrois 467 (Ulm, Germany), and Angeliki Katsiadaki of Helena Altea 469 (Rome).

Video greetings were given by Secretary General for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic Ms. Maira Mirogianni, Member of the European Parliament Eliza Vozemberg, AHEPA Supreme President Chris Kaitson, AHEPA President of Canada Anastasios Moussas, and Maids of Athena Grand President Stephanie Owens followed by messages via zoom from DOP Past Grand President Margaret Dritsas, Hellena Chapter President No. 452 Celestina Sescu of Bad Kissengen, Germany, Atalanti Chapter President No. 461 Angela Jordan of Lyon, France, and Ariadne Chapter President No. 435 of Melbourne, Australia.

Establishment of New Chapter in Rome, Italy

At the conference, new members from several of the chapters within Europe were initiated in addition to the establishment of the Daughters of Penelope Chapter in Rome, Italy - Helena Altea Chapter No. 469.

Organizational Awards

Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zachariades had the pleasure of presenting the 2026 Daughters of Penelope Service Award to Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia

Vassiliadou in appreciation of her ten years of distinguished service and unselfish contribution as Region Governor of Europe and Australia.

Special thanks were given to the Europe and Australia Chapter Presidents, Officers, and Members for traveling to Brussels for the conference. Heartfelt thanks were also given to Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia Vassiliadou, Thetis Chapter President Eleni Maglara, and the Thetis Chapter Sisters of Brussels for not only their hard work and dedication to make the weekend and conference a success but also their hospitality as hosts of the 6th Europe and Australia Chapter Leadership Conference.

"It was a pleasure and honor to be in Brussels with the leadership in Europe to discuss our goals and projects and to engage in thought-provoking dialogue about how we can further empower and inspire women to become future leaders via our mission statement," said Grand President Marousis Zachariades.

About the Daughters of Penelope

Founded in San Francisco in 1929, the Daughters of Penelope (DOP) is the first women's organization of its kind established in the United States. It is an affiliate organization of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (Order of AHEPA).

The mission of the DOP is to promote the ancient Greek ideals of Hellenism, Education, Philanthropy, Civic Responsibility, and Family and Individual Excellence.

For more information about the DOP, or any of its programs or projects, please visit www.daughtersofpenelope.org.

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Daughters of Penelope 6th Europe and Australia Chapter Leadership Conference in Brussels



Left to Right: Daughters of Penelope Executive Director Elena Saviolakis, Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia Vassiliadou, First Counselor of the Greek Embassy in Belgium Mr. Dimitrios Velissaroulis, Grand Secretary Patty Didik, Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zachariades, Her Excellency the Ambassador of Greece to Belgium Ms. Sofia Grammata, Grand Vice President Gretchen Holtsinger, Thetis Brussels Chapter President Eleni Maglara, Grand Treasurer Effie Kirkiles, Past Grand President Demi Thomas, DOP Foundation, Inc. President Robbie Jackson, and Region Governor of Cyprus Margaret Pitiris.



Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia Vassiliadou (center) with DOP Europe Chapter Presidents including (left to right) Althea-Maria Papoulias of Pallas-Athena 459, Niki Kalogera of Phaetuse 437, Eleni Maglara of Thetis 439, Dr. Dimitra Potsi of Eurynome 454, Angeliki Katsiadaki of Helena Altea 469, Eleni Alexandridou of Eleni 440, and Athina Kapsali of Kallirroï 467.



Left to Right: Grand Treasurer Effie Kirkiles, Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zacharaidis, Grand Vice President Gretchen Holtsinger, and Grand Secretary Patty Didik presenting the 2026 Daughters of Penelope Service Award to Region Governor of Europe and Australia Athanasia Vassiliadou in appreciation of her ten years of distinguished service and unselfish contribution as Region Governor of Europe and Australia.



Left to Right: Grand Secretary Patty Didik, Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zacharaidis, Grand Vice President Gretchen Holtsinger, and Grand Treasurer Effie Kirkiles inside the Chamber of the European Parliament where the 720 Members of the European Parliament meet.



Daughters of Penelope Europe Conference Attendees at the European Parliament



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