

# UM Magazine

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on education and research at Maastricht University

## Artificial intelligence and the law

Konrad Kollnig on how we  
can enforce laws concerning  
AI, privacy and competition

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## Not one for the spotlight

Farewell interview with  
university vice president  
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## Innocent citizens behind bars all over Europe

Jenny Schell-Leugers

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## How psychological stress leads to intestinal inflammation

An international research consortium including a number of Maastricht researchers has shown that psychological stress exacerbates gut-related health issues. This knowledge opens up avenues for new treatments for inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). The study was published in the leading journal *Cell* and summarised by NUTRIM researcher Zlatan Mujagic in the *Dutch Journal of Medicine*.

For millennia, a link has been assumed to exist between a healthy mind and a healthy body. In this case, researchers suspected that psychological stress would impact the immune system in patients with IBD, including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Previous research at the Maastricht UMC+ and Zuyderland MC had already linked intestinal inflammation with acute psychological stress. The new study confirmed the causal relationship and investigated the underlying biological mechanism. <

## Limburg launches Brightlands Startup League: a springboard for innovative startups



## Latest HBO Monitor: strong labour market position of graduates of higher vocational education

The latest HBO Monitor by UM's Research Centre for Education and the Labor Market (ROA) shows that graduates of higher vocational education (HBO) are in a strong position in the labour market. "With an unemployment rate of 2.8% in 2023, the same as in the previous year, the outlook for recent graduates remains positive," says Barbara Belfi, project manager and researcher at ROA. "What is noteworthy is that 69% of this group has a permanent job within a year and a half, a significant improvement over previous years."

The trend is particularly evident in health-care and education, where 78% and 76% of graduates secured permanent positions, respectively. A year and a half after graduation, graduates in these fields also received the highest gross hourly wages. The results show that HBO graduates are quickly and effectively employable in the labour market, especially in high-demand sectors. Nearly 25,000 graduates from the 2021/22 academic year participated in the study. <

Entrepreneurs have a new option for incubating their innovative startups in a safe, fertile environment: the Brightlands Startup League. The initiative was launched in partnership between the four Brightlands campuses, Maastricht University, LIOF and the Province of Limburg. Startups in the areas of health, sustainability, digitisation and more will receive all the support they

## Prince Friso Engineering Prize: UM wins both public prizes

Professor of Circular Plastics Kim Ragaert and the SublimeStone student team won the two public's prizes awarded during the Engineer of the Year contest. Their nomination by the Royal Netherlands Society of Engineers demonstrates that UM's Faculty of Science and Engineering, established only five years ago, is among the best of Dutch engineering research and education.

The Royal Netherlands Society of Engineers awards the Prince Friso Engineering Prize annually to engineers who stand out for their competence, innovative capability, social impact and entrepreneurship. <



need to grow and flourish. Interested parties can register via [www.brightlandsstartup-league.com](http://www.brightlandsstartup-league.com). The partners hope this springboard will help innovations find their way to the market and grow into successful Limburg companies. <