



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



NEWSLETTER #2

ACCELERATING

WESTERN BALKANS UNIVERSITY

MODERNIZATION

BY INCORPORATING

VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES



Lodz University of Technology

University of Ljubljana



PROJECT DURATION:
November 2019–November 2022
Overall Budget: 867,124.00 Euro

Vtech@WBUi PARTNERS

Aleksander Moisiu Univeresity of Durrës (lead partner)



European University of Tirana



Polis University



Epoka University



University of Prishtina



University for Business and Technology



Mother Teresa University



South East European University



University of Tartu



Lodz University of Technology



University of Ljubljana



VTECH IS AN ERASMUS + CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT FOCUSING ON:

1. Capacity building of academic staff to incorporate Virtual Technologies in teaching
2. Developing teaching methodologies availing of technology and/or ICT tools
3. Equipping students with competencies to use/access tools, software and platforms
4. Increasing interaction between teachers and students
5. Increasing the level of understanding and reducing the grasping time and the effort that students need to learn information by using 3D concepts instead of 2D ones
6. Offering a better delivery of basic knowledge even for complex issues, higher learning efficiency and better learning experience by AR/VR techniques.
7. Establishing Virtual Technology HUB for developing teaching materials for basic learning courses and serve as a HUB for other HEIs
8. Fostering cooperation between academy and industry by organizing open days, joint product developments, thesis supervision etc.
9. Developing capacities for future joint research and innovative ideas with the support of Virtual Technologies.





WHAT IS THE AIM OF VTECH PROJECT?

The project general aim is to introduce for the first time at Western Balkan universities the concept of virtual technologies as a tool for accelerating university modernization, while contributing on developing knowledge-driven society. By incorporating Virtual Technologies in academic culture of universities we aim to increase the quality and level of efficiency in teaching and knowledge retention through interactive learning methods, thus contributing on skills enhancement and further building of digital society at WB countries. In the mid and long term, the project will enhance effectiveness of the higher education system in knowledge retention and application. The project direct beneficiaries are universities, schools, teachers, students, regional industries and businesses.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

1.

‘Teacher training regarding user experience guidelines for XR technologies to foster new research insights through the deployment of VR devices in their daily academic activities. The final objective is to develop a positive research agenda linking together architectural education and innovative design tools within an interdisciplinary approach. The workshop was organized by the Vtech partner University of Ljubljana.

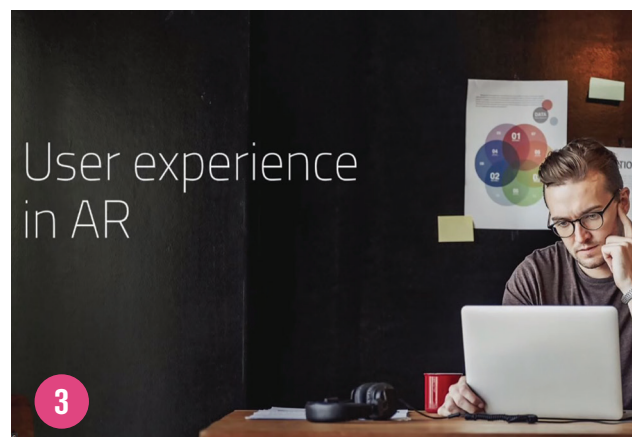
2.

The Director of Projects and Foreign Relations Dorinela Çupi, gave an interview for SCAN Television. The interview was focused on the

benefits of the European Union funded projects in terms of capacity building of staff and students and research infrastructure. Specific focus was given to the “Accelerating Western Balkans University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies - (#VTech) project by demonstrating virtual reality headsets for educational experiences. VTech project will contribute to increasing the quality and level of efficiency in teaching by using interactive methods and technologies.

3.

‘Student training regarding user interface design, user experience and VR sickness’. During these lectures, the guidelines for all participants on development of VR/AR environments are presented, focused on the user experience perspective. Best experience and best practices were being shared and practical examples and applications of 360-degree videos in VR for education are demonstrated. Venue: University of Ljubljana.



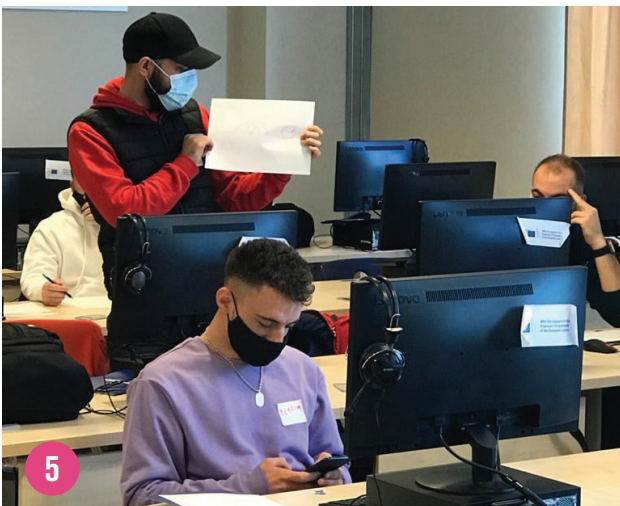


4

4. The first Virtual Reality Laboratory (VR Lab) equipment has arrived at Aleksander Moisiu University. This Laboratory will be opened within the project “Accelerating the Modernization of the University in the Western Balkans through Virtual Technology” (VTech Project), which is funded by the Erasmus + Program of the European Union.

5. On 14th, 15th, 16th of April were held trainings organized by Lodz university of technology on the topics: VR Intro, The Challenge for 3D Interaction Design, Getting familiar with 3D UIs, Spatial, Designing 3D Story Flow, Facebook Horizon, How to Wireframe 3D Interactions and Prototyping.

6. In the framework of VTECH Erasmus+ Project, where EPOKA University participates as a partner institution, the 2nd academic staff training was



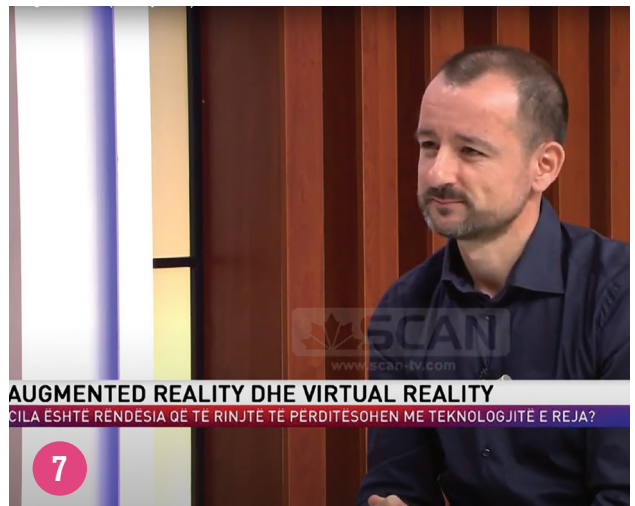
5



6

held on 19-21 April 2021 at the premises of EPOKA University, in the HyFlex format. In this staff training, members from 8 different universities were trained by representatives of the UNIVERSITY of TARTU.

7. Agim Kasaj, vice administrator and lecturer of Information Technology at UET, was invited to Scan TV to talk about two important concepts such as Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality and the need for Albanian universities to adapt to such advanced technologies. Among other things, he stressed the role that Vtech project, an Erasmus+ program project, funded by the EU, as well as other Erasmus + projects, where UET is a partner, has in the increased cooperation with European universities and the opportunity offered through this project to students during their studies, to adapt and recognize new technologies such as the virtual one, and then be able to implement them in today and tomorrow’s business.



7



8. On June 1st, UET inaugurated the VR / AR Laboratory, which is enabled by two Erasmus + program projects funded by the European Commission, where UET is a partner, respectively the Vtech and ValueX projects. Both projects aim to increase the cooperation with European universities and provide numerous opportunities for students to learn about new virtual technologies and then be able to apply them, not only during their studies, but also in their future work. Present at this inauguration were UET leaders, representatives of various businesses and industries with which UET collaborates, local and international academic staff, as well as UET students.

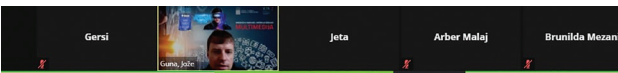
9. On June 8th, on behalf of Vtech project, University of Ljubljana organized the Workshop on General



UCD guidelines which included Introduction to UX,UCD Implementation and UCD Evaluation.

10. At Aleksander Moisiu University was held a Vtech project presentation for the academic staff at the Faculty of Information Technology. They got introduced with Vtech project implementation at Aleksander Moisiu University and coming up activities and training for staff and students.

11. Workshop “Teacher training – designing User Interfaces with Adobe Xd – from idea to online interactive mock-up”. On behalf of Vtech project, University of Ljubljana has organized the Workshop of staff and students training at the premises of “Aleksandër Moisiu” University which included developing ideas for interactive mock-up and designing User Interfaces with Adobe Xd.



Final solution: Landing page design

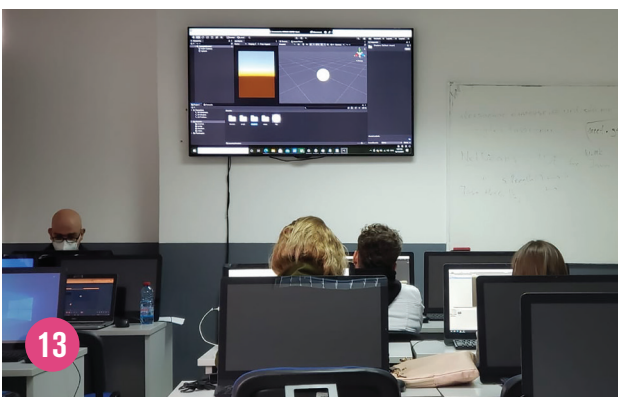




12.
Vtech Project (Accelerating Western Balkans University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies) organized “SUMMER SCHOOL” on 5-9 July 2021. The main topics of summer school included: The Practical Guide to Usability, 3D modeling, Interior creation in VR, and Interaction in VR.

13.
At MTU was organized 2-day Workshop within ERASMUS+ ‘UNITY 3D programming in creating Virtual Reality apps for Education’. At the premises of University Mother Teresa third floor, classroom 303 on October 12,13 (Tuesday and Wednesday) from 09-15h was organized in hybrid model (physically and online) 2-day training workshop in ‘UNITY 3D programming in creating Virtual Reality apps for Education’ held from Prof. Dr. Bekim Fetaji who made an Introduction to UNITY Implementation in Real Project also Asst. Prof. Dr. Stojan Kitanov presented Unity Design aspects.

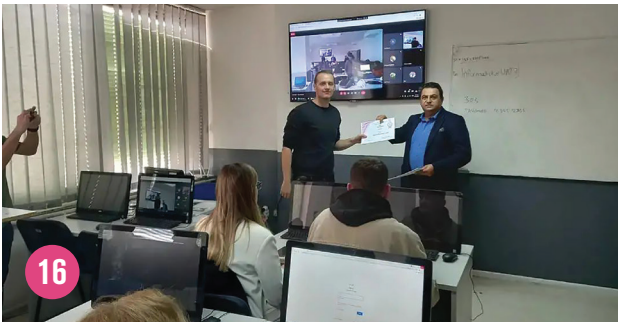
14.
We are very happy that Xhulia one of UAMD students from @uamdoofficial part of #VTECHPROJECT won the second prize in the world in a competition held in Germany. Left without internet on the phone and do not



even have WiFi? Do not worry! UAMD student Xhulia Kurti is finding a solution! It has just won second place in the prestigious IAA mobilitython competition, which this year took place in Munich, under the auspices of the German Ministry of Technology and Infrastructure. Organized by the impact.farm this is the biggest event of this nature in the field of infrastructure in Germany. Xhulia introduced an important project, which supports technology without WiFi. For the final stage the organizers selected 26 competitors, of which only two projects were declared winners. Among them is that of Xhulia. The purpose of the prototype is simple: the moment you run out of WiFi and you have to use any program / application, Xhulia enables the connection through the server system of the product she has already produced. But Julia’s dream does not end here. Soon a presentation awaits him in front of big German and European sponsors.

15.
ERASMUS DAYS 2021 Universiteti Europian i Tiranës - The Vtech project was promoted in the Projects’ Fair, organized at UET during the Erasmus Days. UET’s management and the head of office for project development and internationalization, Ketrina Cabiri Mijo, congratulated the successful implementation of VTECH.





16.

HACKATON VR/AR CONTEST IN CREATION OF 3D VIRTUAL PROGRAMS USED IN EDUCATION - HACKATON Vr/Ar contest in creation of 3D virtual programs used in Education was organized within the Erasmus + VTECH Project project “Accelerating Western Balkans University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies (VTech@U)” The host of the HACKATON was Mother Teresa University (UMT), Skopje, North Macedonia, that in collaboration with ERASMUS + and all partner Universities in this project, organized the event with host organizer Prof.Dr. Bekim Fetaji, Faculty of Informatics, UMT. The competition HACKATON VR / was hold on October 22, Friday, from 09-16h physically in computer laboratory 303 and could be seen online at the same time at the Google Meet Video link: <https://meet.google.com/etp-marg-jyt> . The HACKATON in VR / AR was open to all students from all partner Universities and other Universities and other interested individuals, or employees of companies from the region had the right to participate. The Jury commission selected the 3 most successful projects and determine the winner and distribute prizes. All participants received a Certificate from ERASMUS + and the winners will receive the awards and will be notified by email with details within the next week. The event again will be organized next year in one of the partner Universities.

17.

“I am proud of you! I am happy that through the tools and opportunities it is offering, the European Union is making a difference in Albania.” - This is



what the Rapporteur for Albania in the European Parliament, Mrs. Isabel Santos said in a meeting at Aleksander Moisiu University accompanied by representatives of the EU Delegation in Tirana, Mrs. Santos and the accompanying team expressed happiness for visiting a university that is a leader in two EU projects, as well as providing administrative assistance for future applications. Footage of Mrs. Santos trying VR Equipments funded by EU as part of VTECH project

18.

‘3D Object Creation for VR through Photogrammetry’. At the premises of Epoka University on November 22,23 (Monday and Tuesday) from 09-15h was organized in hybrid model (physically and online) 2-day training Staff Training by SEEU in ‘3D Object Creation for VR through Photogrammetry’. In this lecture, we demonstrated a hands-on approach on creating 3D objects from real objects through the process of photogrammetry. We saw how we can scan real objects using out of shelf cameras and how these scans can be converted to high quality 3D objects. We will further demonstrate scanning of large buildings, importing the scans to 3D CAD tools and deploying solutions to a VR environment.

19.

Two-day workshop for students related to Virtual Technologies. Collaboration of the Faculty of Contemporary Sciences and Technologies and the company Outerlynx.



CONTACT:

Albana Ndreu Halili
Aleksander Moisiu University
Tel: + 355 052 239 161
Mobile: + 355 69 974 44 44
E-mail: ndreualbana@yahoo.com



FOLLOW US ON:

Website: <https://vtech-project.eu/>
linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/vtech-project>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vtechproject>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/vtech.project/>

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

