

NEWSLETTER #3

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 University 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



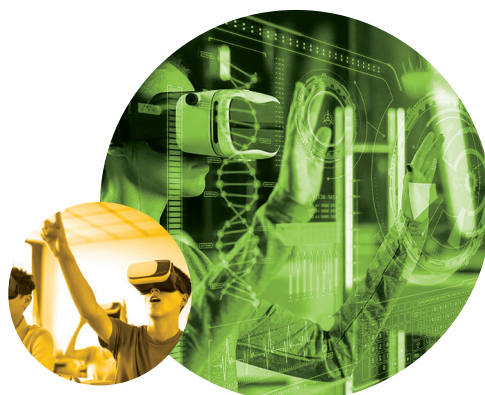
Lodz University of Technology

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. January 10, 2022

Vtech training for the academic staff of the



European University of Tirana on the use of equipment necessary for the implementation of the VR/AR into selected courses at UET.

2. January 14, 2022

For the first time in Albania, VR/AR are applied at UET, in the subjects: Human Biology and Radiology (Imagery) and Anatomy (EFS)

In the framework of the project VTECH@WBUni – “Accelerating Western Balkan University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies: an Erasmus+ Program project, co-funded by UE, UET started the first training of students on how to use 3D-Vtech technology which was held under the direction of the academic staff involved in the project and with the support of the of the IT department. The implementation started in the course of Anatomy EFS under the guidance of assistant lecturer Brunilda Mezani, and it will continue to be implemented also in the Human Biology, under the direction of the Responsible Department, Dr. Admir Jance, Diagnostic Apparatus in Imaging and Radiology, MSH-IMZH cycle, under the direction of Msc. Fluturim Nela.





3. 28 January, 2022

Students in University of Prishtina, Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering applying virtual technologies during Digital Electronics and Bio medicinal Electronics project courses, within the framework of the VTECH@WBUni – “Accelerating Western Balkan University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies” project. This is the first time that these technologies are being used as part of the teaching and learning process in University of Prishtina.

4. February 8, 2022

Meeting organized by the University of Prishtina to discuss courses selected by all partner universities and the implementation of virtual technology in them. In this meeting were present some

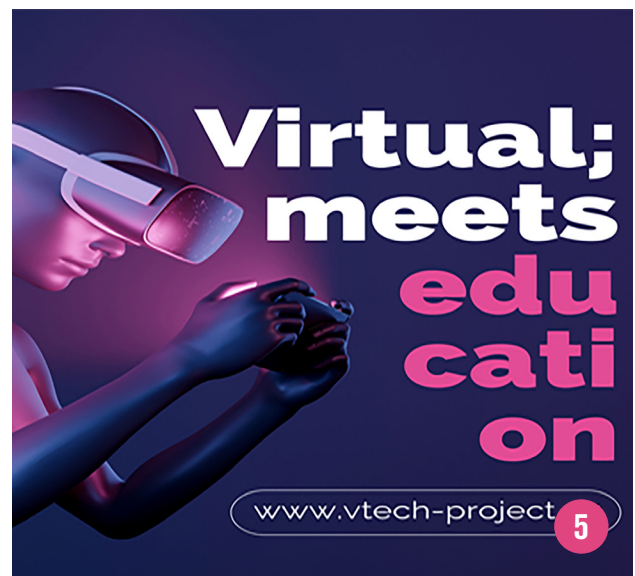


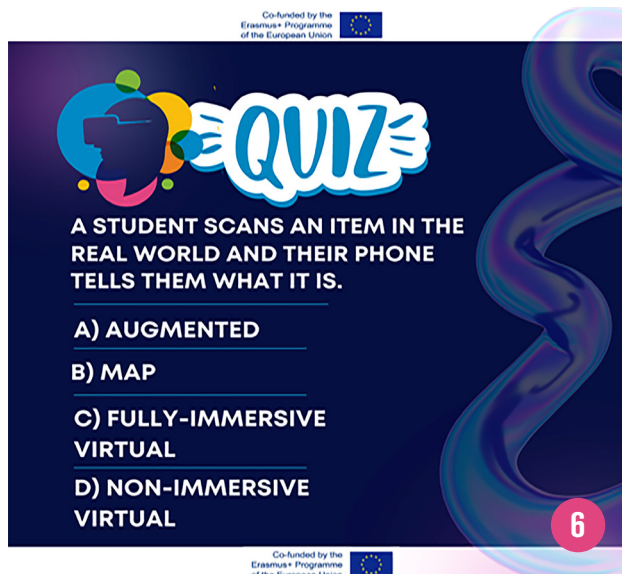
of the partners where pilot courses are held in their universities with academic staff engaged in relevant study programs. From the discussions, all partners decided to continue with the implementation of the respective courses. With the application of VR technology in these pilot courses, it is understandable that the teaching process will be significantly improved and that students will benefit greatly from this experience.

5. February 9, 2022

Virtual Meets Education

The project’s 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 soc#vr4edu .





6. February 15, 2022

VTECH@WBUni Quizz

7. February 24-25, 2022

EU Study Visit in LUT

In the framework of VTECH Erasmus+ Project, an EU study visit was held on February 24-25, 2022, at the premises of Lodz University of Technology. Members from 6 different universities had a introduction to User Experience and designing for VR/AR.

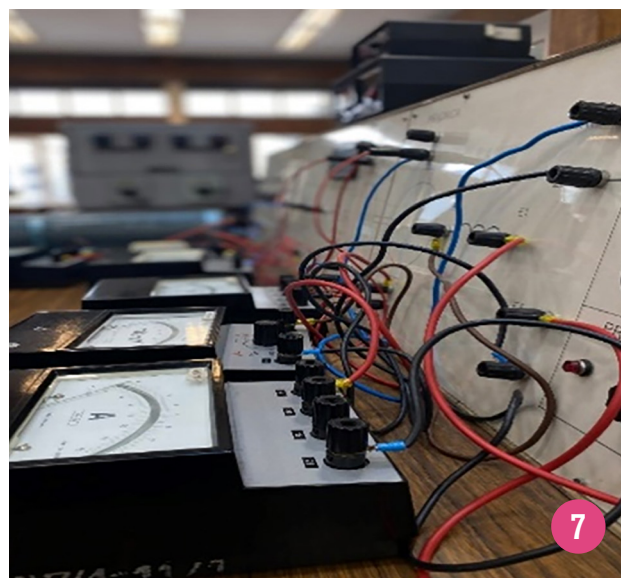
The future of VR and AR use in education is determined by better awareness around this technology, as well as improved experience for the user. VR/AR technologies have excellent prospects in explaining complex concepts in



fields such as medicine, healthcare, military, aviation, engineering, space etc., offering a unique advantage for virtual learning in higher education.

8. March 10, 2022

UAMD organized the inauguration of the Hub of Virtual Technology and Innovation (Vtech & Innovation Hub) on Thursday, March 10, at 10:00 in the premises of the University Building, Currila. This HUB is the first of its kind in the country and is supported by the Erasmus + project "Accelerating Western Balkan University modernisation by incorporating Virtual Technologies". It will help to create richer and more engaging learning experiences for students, as well as facilitate the exposure of research findings.





9. April 1, 2022

UP piloted the inclusion of virtual technologies (AR / VR) in the teaching process

Within the framework of the Erasmus + Vtech project, the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering (FECE) is implementing the inclusion of virtual technologies (AR / VR) in the teaching and learning process at UP.

According to UP students, this technology is extremely helpful, "Through these devices, we have the chance to see the world in another dimension. Virtual reality will only further take flight in science and higher education, so it is impossible to avoid the impact that technological development will have on us," stated Rina Kukaj. Regarding the Vtech Project, which made it possible to bring this technology and experience to UP, Faton Mehmeti, a master student at UP, emphasized that thanks to the mobility he had in Germany, through the Erasmus + program, he became familiar with these pieces of equipment and is now able to make a greater contribution at UP.

From the academic staff perspective, this project is considered an important step toward increasing the quality of teaching. "I believe that this technology will have a huge impact on the quality of teaching and in the way of helping students achieve a clear understanding of technology concepts," said Jeta Dobruna, a teaching assistant at FECE.

Vice-Rector for Teaching and Student Affairs, Prof. Asoc. Dr. Mimoza Ibrani, participated in several activities which explored the possibilities of including virtual technologies in the teaching process at UP. She highlighted that piloting virtual technologies encourages both innovative and active learning. A step like this contributes to achieving the objectives set out in the strategic plan of the university.

VTECH project's general aim is to introduce the concept of Virtual Technologies to Western Balkan universities for the very first time. These technologies are meant as a tool to help accelerate university modernization while contributing to developing a knowledge-driven society.





10. April 1, 2022

UP piloted the inclusion of virtual technologies (AR / VR) in the teaching process

Within the framework of the Erasmus + VTECH project, the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering (FECE) is implementing the inclusion of virtual technologies (AR / VR) in the teaching and learning process at UP. VR technologies are being applied in different courses in Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering in University of Prishtina. These technologies are being used within the Fundamentals of Electrical Engineering course for visualizing electric and magnetic fields. For more information please visit: www.uni-pr.edu

11. April 13, 2022

Today at the UAMD premises was held an interview with the project coordinator of the VTECH Project, Assoc. Prof. Dr Albana Halili, which



was conducted by the Multimedia students to promote the VTECH & INNOVATION HUB!

12. April 29, 2022

Three intense days at @universityofljubljana! From Steering Committee Meetings to Trainings, partners from Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Estonia, Poland and Slovenia had the chance to meet and discuss next steps that our VTECH project will take during the upcoming months. The visit started with a training in 360 Video Production and also an introduction to the 3D Vista software, continuing with deliverables reporting, quality improvement plan for management, course development and to finalise it in the third day, project members discussed about project financial issues, budget and cost effectiveness. The team visiting Ljubljana, had the chance to visit the Technology Park and the newest XR Lab, making the visit even more interesting!





13. April 29, 2022

At the premises of European University of Tirana was organized the Info Day "University-led Development through Virtual Technologies", in the framework of Erasmus+ Vtech@WBUni Project "Accelerating Western Balkans University Modernization by Incorporating Virtual Technologies" co-financed by the European Commission. The event hosted representatives from partner Universities like UAMD, POLIS and EPOKA, as well as companies and stakeholders in the field of technology, such as: Mr. Fatjon Gjata, Outerlynx Company; Dr. Erjon Curraj, Tech360 - Smart Solutions / Jean Monnet Module Coordinator; Mrs. Denisa Rrushi, Director of Human Resources, American Hospital; Mr. Gjergji Mulla, Helius Systems; Mr. Brian Shkodrani, Startup Company.



14. May 16, 2022

Founder and CEO of "Tikkun Olam Makers" (TOM), Mr. Gidi Grinstein, Director for Israel Yael Rogers, in the presence of the Minister of State for Youth and Children, Mrs. Bora Muzhaqi, were received on Sunday in a meeting by the Rector of @uamdoofficial Prof. Dr. Kseanela Sotirofski. She and the accompanying staff informed Mr. Grinstein on the university's academic profiles, its growth in recent years, and priority projects. The guests had the opportunity to visit "Vtech & Innovacion Hub", as the newest unit created in UAMD. Mr. Grinstein explained TOM's philosophy for providing innovative solutions to social problems through research tools and technology. @uamdoofficial expressed its readiness to intensify cooperation with TOM and make available its technological assets to enable the provision of innovative solutions with social impact.





15. May 18, 2022

VTECH Laboratory inauguration

A new VTECH Laboratory at EPOKA University, complete with AR and VR headsets was inaugurated on April 18, 2022. The VTECH Laboratory is founded by VTECH Erasmus+ Project, where EPOKA University participates as a partner institution.

By incorporating Virtual Technology in the academic culture of universities, this Laboratory aims at increasing the quality and level of efficiency in teaching and knowledge retention through interactive learning methods, thus contributing on skills enhancement.

16. May 18, 2022

At the "Vtech & Innovation Hub" of UAMD ninth-grade pupils visited us to see up close virtual technologies, this visit was organized by Albanian Skills where thanks to the 8th edition



of the Albanian Skills Week the theme was Green Transition.

The goal was obviously awareness through virtual technologies and applications, VR and AR can visualize climate issues so that people can see what is really happening. The impacts of these technologies are both direct and indirect. Students designed idea applications that were closely related to the rise in awareness.

17. May 19, 2022

The Vtech courses that are being offered from Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering in University of Prishtina and implementation of VR technologies in teaching and learning process are presented to the "Xhevdet Doda" high school graduates in Prishtina. Different students' projects were presented, and VR technologies were very welcomed and seemed very attractive and useful from the potential future students.





18. May 19, 2022

The Vtech courses offered by the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Prishtina and the implementation of VR technologies in the teaching and learning process are presented to the “Sami Frasheri” high school graduates in Prishtina. The implementation of these technologies in the “Fundamentals of Electrical Engineering” course was presented to potential future students. Students had the chance to see the electrical and magnetic fields through VR technologies.

19. May 24, 2022

Within the framework of VTECH Project, the POLIS University held the open days event, entitled “Networking Event”, on date May 24th, 2022. The event hosted representatives of the partner universities from Albania and Kosovo and industries the various issues and challenges of cooperation with industry.



20. June 2, 2022

The VR technologies that are being used in different courses at the University of Prishtina were promoted in a TV story report by the T7 TV station. During the interviews, the students shared their learning experiences with these technologies.

21. June 8-10, 2022

The consortium of the Erasmus+ KA2 VTECH Project organized an EU Study Visit and Training and a Consortium Meeting at the premises of the EU partner University of Tartu, Estonia, on June 8-10th, 2022. During the visit representatives from 6 different universities received trainings in the use of Blender for 3D content generation and modification. Project coordinators from each institution had a discussion on the progress in the development of partners’ VR solutions and their evaluation. Moreover, they finalized dates for upcoming events and some final reporting aspects.





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22. June 18-21, 2022

In the framework of #VTECH Erasmus+ Project, open days were held on July 18-21, 2022, at the premises of University for Business and Technology, Kosovo.

In these open days, a presentation was made by #UBT on the EON-XR platform within a demonstration of assets and library creation. The days continued with basic navigation and functionalities also User experience with Virtual Reality content, the attendees were introduced to the way of creating new courses and add annotations, voiceovers, videos, and activities, as well as how to best use interaction recording and collaborative sessions.

At the end partners had a discussion about VR content creation with the EON-XR platform.

23. June 23, 2022

The first student from the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering completed his master's studies with thesis' topic realized by



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VR/AR technologies. The thesis with the title "Assisted Living supported by Smart Home and AR Technology" provides solutions for making life easier for older people by using augmented reality. The student work was highly evaluated by the evaluation committee.

24. June 29-30, 2022

The EU guest lecturers from the Lodz University of Technology (LUT), University of Tartu (UT), University of Ljubljana (UL) and Mother Teresa University (MTU) started the trainings of the representatives of the Aleksandër Moisiu University of Durrës (UAMD), European University of Tirana (UET), Polis University (U_Polis) and the Epoka University (EPOKA) at the premises of the Aleksandër Moisiu University of Durrës (UAMD), the coordinator university of the V-TECH Project. The training activities will continue during the dates 29/06 and 30/06 at VTECH & INNOVATION HUB , room 401, near the main building, Currila, of the Aleksandër Moisiu University of Durrës (UAMD).



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CONTACT:

Marsida Ibro
Aleksander Moisiu University
Tel: + 355 052 239 161
Mobile: + 355 67 200 12 44
E-mail: ndreualbana@yahoo.com

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Website: <https://vtech-project.eu/>
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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

