



**Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS)**  
**(ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE-STRAND-1)**  
**Managerial And GoverNance Enhancement through Teaching**  
**(101083006 —MAGNET)**



**MAGNET**  
Managerial And GoverNance Enhancement through Teaching

*<BalkaNetUP - (Balkan Network for University Pedagogy) Platform>*

*<D3.1 / D9>*

*DIMOKRITIO PANEPISTIMIO THRAKIS (1-DUTH)*



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# Introduction

*Higher education institutions (HEIs) must adapt to a dynamic socio-economic and cultural landscape by aligning teaching practices with labor market demands and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. A student-centered teaching model, emphasizing shared responsibility and collaboration, is critical to equipping graduates with skills for an evolving workforce. This necessitates transforming academics into lifelong learners with strong pedagogical competencies. Faculty development, integration of innovative technologies, and quality assurance are essential for modernizing University Pedagogy and preparing students for societal challenges. Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) play a pivotal role in supporting this transformation by cultivating active, student-centered learning environments. In the Western Balkans, the MAGNET project aims to enhance higher education by establishing CTLs and fostering the BALKANETUP network. These initiatives address challenges in university teaching, promoting pedagogical innovation and regional collaboration.*

*A significant initiative of the MAGNET project is the establishment of the Balkan Network for University Education (BALKANETUP). This network aims to foster synergies, share best practices, and establish joint research initiatives to enhance policies and practices for the development of university education in the Western Balkans -and internationally. The BALKANETUP network connects HEIs, CTLs, scholars, and experts to advance teaching practices through shared resources, training, and research. BALKANETUP is a learning community for academics and scholars. By leveraging digital tools and fostering professional development, it supports educators in integrating modern techniques into their teaching. Ensuring its sustainability relies on expanding membership, forming partnerships, and maintaining a commitment to continuous improvement, positioning the BALKANETUP as a key driver of educational innovation in the region.*



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# **BALKANETUP: A LEARNING COMMUNITY TO ENHANCE NET-BASED SUPPORT FOR ACADEMICS IN THE WEST BALKANS AREA**

Learning communities are groups of people who meet and collaborate on a common goal: the enhancement of knowledge for all their members. They meet to share thoughts, opinions, knowledge, experiences and practices and operate in online forums, face-to-face meetings or even as informal groups of friends or colleagues who are interested in a particular topic. Learning communities can be very effective for a number of reasons. Either because they provide a supportive environment where members can feel comfortable, or because when people learn together, they encourage and support each other in the learning process. Learning communities can provide better access to a wider range of resources and perspectives which would be possible for an individual learner. A learning community can be a valuable tool for anyone who wants to learn something new. By participating in a learning community, all members can take advantage of the support, motivation, and resources that the community provides, ultimately helping them achieve their learning goals more effectively, more easily, or even faster. The BALKANETUP (<https://magnet-project.eu/balkanetup/mission>) is a collaborative network, a learning community for academics, that brings together HEIs, CTLs, scholars, academic staff, higher and adult education experts, and organizations working in University Pedagogy, Adult Education, and Lifelong Learning. Its focus lies in enhancing teaching and learning within higher education across the Western Balkans. The initiative's mission is to strengthen relationships among its members to enable the exchange of effective teaching practices. This includes supporting the adoption of contemporary, evidence-based, competency-oriented, and student-centered teaching strategies within HEIs to improve educational outcomes.

The **BALKANETUP** aims to create a supportive environment where members can share knowledge, experiences, and best practices, fostering collaboration that enhances both individual and collective professional development. By encouraging cooperation among educators, the network seeks to promote academic staff development using sustainable and practical actions that address both general and discipline-specific needs across scientific domains. These actions are designed to improve pedagogical skills, encourage innovation and creativity in teaching methodologies, and provide resources to help educators address the challenges they face in their roles. The BALKANETUP also aims at facilitating ongoing opportunities for professional training and advocates for a culture of continuous learning and improvement among academic staff.

**BALKANETUP** organizes various educational activities tailored to the needs of academic staff. These include conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, and counseling sessions, all of which focus on topics related to higher education pedagogy. The network also undertakes research, disseminates findings, and shares examples of effective practices and teaching materials applicable to a range of disciplines. By facilitating access to these resources and fostering knowledge exchange, the network seeks to provide practical support to educators, enabling them to enhance their pedagogical skills and adapt to the evolving needs of higher education. Different faculty groups require tailored professional development to meet their specific needs. For instance, newly recruited faculty may benefit from initial training, either before starting their teaching responsibilities or during their first year. Conversely, full-time faculty may require support to adapt to changing workloads and the integration of emerging technologies into their teaching practices.



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To support its activities, the **BALKANETUP** utilizes an e-platform initially developed through the MAGNET project ([www.magnet-project.eu/](http://www.magnet-project.eu/)), enabling members to engage in staff training, conduct research, and share resources. The platform also serves as a space for networking and communication, supplemented by online forums (<https://magnet-project.eu/balkanetup/register>), social media, and newsletters (<https://magnet-project.eu/index.php/project/newsletter>). A focus on digital technologies underpins the network's efforts, with specific training provided to help academic staff integrate digital tools and innovative strategies into their teaching. These initiatives are designed to address the increasing digitization of higher education and the corresponding demands on educators.

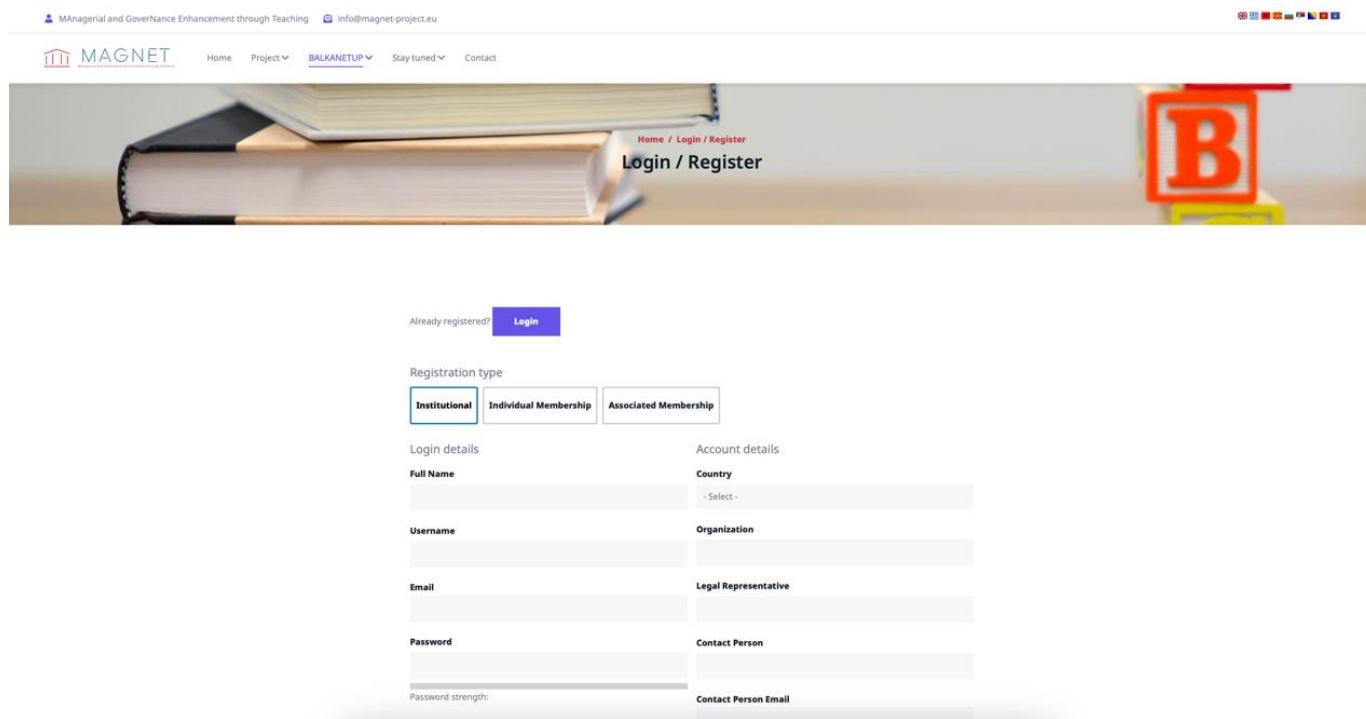


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# BALKANETUP Platform

The platform was created for the need of BALKANETUP Network. Is accessible through the website of the project (<https://magnet-project.eu>).



The screenshot shows the BALKANETUP Platform login/register page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the MAGNET logo and links for Home, Project, BALKANETUP, Stay tuned, and Contact. Below the navigation bar is a banner image featuring a stack of books and a red letter 'B' block. The main content area has a heading 'Login / Register' and a 'Login' button for already registered users. Below this, there are three tabs for 'Registration type': 'Institutional' (selected), 'Individual Membership', and 'Associated Membership'. The 'Institutional' tab is active, showing a form with two columns: 'Login details' and 'Account details'. The 'Login details' column includes fields for 'Full Name', 'Username', 'Email', and 'Password', along with a 'Password strength' indicator. The 'Account details' column includes fields for 'Country', 'Organization', 'Legal Representative', 'Contact Person', and 'Contact Person Email'.

Reaching out beyond the initial partnership is a key priority for the MAGNET project, via **BALKANETUP** which will use the platform created by MAGNET. The impact and sustainability of the MAGNET project is strongly linked to the platform, and it will be unlimited, thus communication and sharing/exchanging of experience and good practices for the participating learners (professors / educators) will continue after the end of the project, since the leader HEI (DUTH) will maintain its function using its own resources. This platform will be open accessed for all HEI in the West Balkans which are interested in becoming a member of this network, therefore, the training contents and other resources will be available to stakeholders and to the **BALKANETUP** for University Pedagogy community, which hopefully, will continue to expand. Therefore, it will be a necessary tool for the long-term networking of HEI in the West Balkans -especially focused on teaching and learning issues.



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BALKANETUP

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Replies

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Ποια είναι η εμπειρία σας με την τεχνητή νοημοσύνη;

Category One

9

24

15d

Search for partnerships

Category One

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Dec 2024

Best Practices in ESP (English for Specific Purposes)

Category One

0

11

Dec 2024

In Turkey, March 20-23: for Higher education: first-ever Molecular Life Sciences Education in Europe

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Terms of Access and Use of Members

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General

Ποια είναι η εμπειρία σας με την τεχνητή νοημοσύνη;

Category One

This is the first time lmitits has posted — let's welcome them to our community!

lmitits

17d

Περιγράψτε σε μια σύντομη παράγραφο εάν και πότε χρησιμοποιείτε τα εργαλεία TN.

Αναφέρετε ποια χρησιμοποιείτε πιο συχνά.

Εάν δεν χρησιμοποιείτε την TN, γιατί όχι;

1 Reply

Reply

24 views

10 users

This is the first time annastav1 has posted — let's welcome them to our community!

annastav1

16d

Εδώ και ένα περίπου χρόνο χρησιμοποιώ την τεχνητή νοημοσύνη. Είμαι εκπαιδευτικός και ξεκίνησα να τη χρησιμοποιώ έπειτα από ένα σεμινάριο ΤΠΕ στο οποίο συμμετείχα. Εκεί γνώρισα το chatgpt, το perplexity, το canva, το gamma και άλλα αντίστοιχα προγράμματα τεχνητής νοημοσύνης που χρησιμοποιώ ακόμη και σήμερα. Ο κυριότερος λόγος που τη χρησιμοποιώ είναι

Jan 5

1 / 10

Jan 5

15d ago

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# Conclusion

**BALKANETUP** emphasizes the importance of higher education and the role of academics in shaping the future, seeking to enhance their contributions to regional development. Through HEIs efforts, the **BALKANETUP** aspires to strengthen teaching and learning practices, while building a cohesive academic community that supports the evolving demands of higher education in the region. Members of the **BALKANETUP** are expected to contribute actively to the network's goals by participating in activities, sharing knowledge, and adhering to ethical standards that promote mutual respect and collaboration. The network emphasizes a commitment to continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices, fostering a culture that values evidence-based approaches and student-centered pedagogy. While the network originated as part of the MAGNET project, it has since expanded its membership to include HEIs, CTLs, and educational organizations across the Western Balkans and beyond, creating opportunities for broader collaboration and engagement.

The **BALKANETUP** also establishes connections with existing European networks and seeks partnerships to align its activities with international standards and practices. By facilitating communication and collaboration among its members, the network hopes to provide a framework for collective efforts to address the challenges of higher education in the region. Its emphasis on structured governance, targeted professional development, and shared resources reflects its commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning in a manner that is sustainable and inclusive.



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# ANNEX 1 - BALKANETUP Agreement (PRINCIPLES AND ISSUES)



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