



MAGNET

MANAGERIAL AND GOVERNANCE ENHANCEMENT THROUGH TEACHING

BALKANETUP

BALKAN NETWORK FOR UNIVERSITY PEDAGOGY

Volume 3

Issue 2, November 2025

NEWSLETTER

Project coordinator

Prof. Katerina Kedraka, Democritus University of Thrace

Newsletter editor

Assist. Prof. Lydia Mitits, Democritus University of Thrace

Consortium members

Democritus University of Thrace
University of Patras
University of Arts in Belgrade
University of Banja Luka
Logos University College
University of Donja Gorica
University of Sarajevo
Medical University Plovdiv
South East European University
International Business College Mitrovica
University of Prishtina



**Co-funded by the
European Union**

LOGOS University College



Open Lecture on Professional and Ethical Competences of University Lecturers – A Significant Step Toward Strengthening Academic Quality at Logos University College

As part of the MAGNET project and the activities carried out by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), on 14 November 2025, at 11:30, Logos University College hosted an open lecture titled:

“Professional and Ethical Competences of the University Lecturer”, led by Prof. Dr. Erleta Mato (Çelmeta).

The activity aimed to support early-career lecturers in developing their professional, academic, and ethical competences, offering a space for reflection and collaboration within the academic community of the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology. The primary objective was to strengthen didactic, research, and ethical skills in line with contemporary standards of university teaching.

During the lecture, two core areas were emphasized as essential for every new lecturer: Pedagogy and Psychology, forming the foundation of professional competence. Prof. Mato highlighted the importance of deep mastery of one's field of specialization, engagement in scientific research, publication of results, and continuous professional development. Equally important were recognized the didactic skills required to plan effective teaching, apply contemporary methodologies, and encourage active student participation.

A central focus of the activity was professional and academic ethics. Key topics included academic integrity, avoiding plagiarism, respect for diversity, professional honesty, and building healthy lecturer-student relationships. The importance of empathetic communication, academic support, and creating an inclusive environment that fosters critical thinking was strongly emphasized.

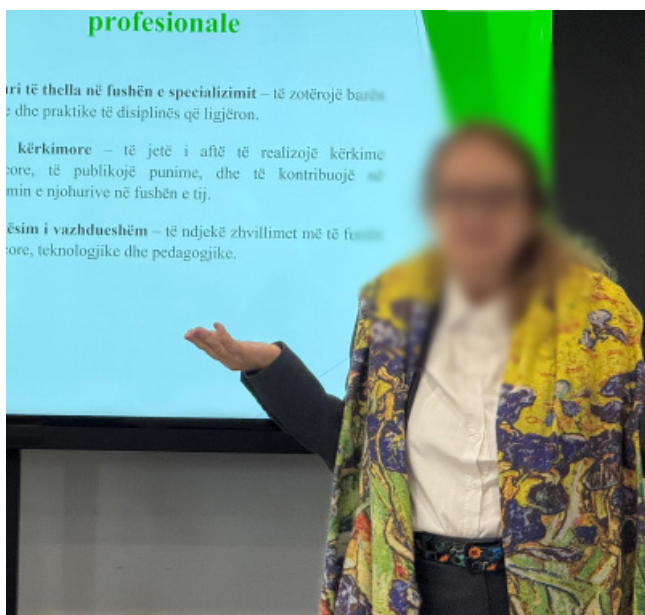
Another important aspect discussed was the lecturer's institutional role: participation in committees, projects, scientific research, and activities that strengthen the culture of collaboration within the university. Prof. Mato underlined that the lecturer's responsibility extends beyond the classroom, contributing to the community and society through ethical and civic engagement.

The session also addressed essential elements of general didactics, such as formulating course objectives, designing the syllabus, and implementing competence-based teaching strategies. From a psychological perspective, emphasis was placed on understanding learning processes, motivation, communication, and emotional management.

The lecture was conducted in an interactive format, integrating open discussions, reflective questions, and practical examples from academic life. Participants shared experiences, discussed real situations, and reflected on the daily challenges faced by early-career lecturers.

The activity received highly positive feedback. Attendees valued the clarity of presentation, the rich theoretical content, and the strong practical relevance of the topic. New lecturers highlighted the lecture's contribution to strengthening professional awareness, communicative and didactic competences, and their understanding of the lecturer's role toward students and the institution.

This open lecture represents an important contribution to the mentoring and professional development of early-career lecturers and serves as a model of collaboration between experienced academic staff and the new generation of university educators. Such initiatives help cultivate an academic culture grounded in ethics, collaboration, and innovation—fully aligned with the mission of the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology and the standards of Logos University College.



University of Donja Gorica



Powered by
Arizona State University

Revitalization of Studies and the 2025 Reaccreditation Process

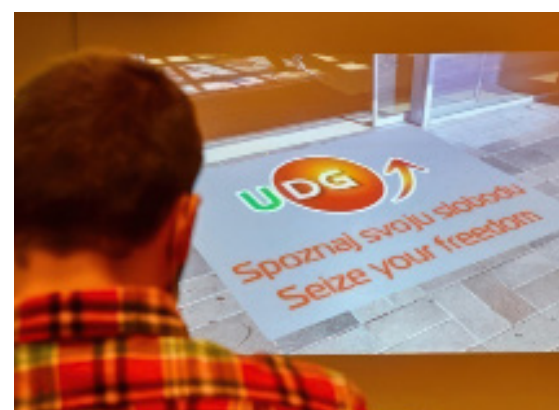
A cornerstone of UDG's ongoing development is the "Revitalization of Studies at UDG" project, supported by the CTL. This initiative employs a strong philosophical and methodological framework aimed at improving the quality and relevance of university education. The project is directly linked to the finished reaccreditation process scheduled for 2025, with MAGNET activities playing one of a crucial role.

As part of the "Revitalisation of Studies - Class as a Work of Art" initiative, the university organizes "Curious Fridays" seminars, which feature work-

shops and innovation-focused meetings every Friday:

- **First Friday of the month:** Project "1 on 1" – a one-on-one mentoring session. Goal is for each associate to delve into the roots of their spirit, to truly get to know themselves. Those who do not know themselves will find it difficult to truly know others. We work with students, and in order to help them, we need to be capable of "reading" them.
- **Second Friday:** "Arts and Crafts" – collaborative efforts from students and staff to visualize ideas and foster dynamic thinking.
- **Third Friday:** "Self-Education" – a seminar for discussing books, articles, and research papers, aiming to develop critical and imaginative thinking.
- **Fourth Friday:** 4I (Research, Innovations, Initiatives, Information) – a forum for sharing research results, building international networks, and involving students in research processes.
- **The University of Donja Gorica (UDG)** organized several seminars - **The 'Svjesnoumlje' ("Conscious Mindset") Conference** - idea creator prof. Veselin Vukotic for all associates and professors - we are promoting a change in mindset, a change in worldview, and a different understanding of reality, especially among professors and, in particular, associates at UDG.

This comprehensive model ensures the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, laying the foundation for the development of well-rounded individuals ready to meet the challenges of modern society.





CTL AT UDG AWAKENING OF STUDENT'S VISION „From Wonder to Miracle“ professor Veselin Vukotic, idea creator

The **University of Donja Gorica (UDG)** has successfully started the new academic year with an innovative project called **“Awakening of students Vision 2025”** idea creator Rector, prof. dr Veselin Vukotic, designed for new enrolled generation to enable them to develop their potential regardless of their field of study.

This unique project, held from **September 8 to 13th 2025**, brought together over **100 collaborators, colleagues, professors, and instructors from across the region**, including numerous successful professionals from academic and practical backgrounds, who shared their knowledge and experiences with students. and most importantly over **1412 new students**.

During the six-day program, freshmen had the opportunity to attend a series of lectures and hear inspiring stories and ideas from the fields of economics, entrepreneurship, art, literature, modern technologies, artificial intelligence, cy-



bersecurity, synthetic biology, mathematics, Chinese studies, and many other disciplines. These lectures were not only theoretical but also conveyed strong life messages, motivating students to develop critical thinking, a spirit of inquiry, and personal initiative.

This unique project, held from **September 8 to 13th 2025**, brought together over **100 collaborators, colleagues, professors, and instructors from across the region**, including numerous successful professionals from academic and practical backgrounds, who shared their knowledge and experiences with students.

This innovative model in one part has been done through support of Center for Teaching and Learning UDG.

The program also included a variety of extracurricular activities aimed at fostering social interaction and team spirit. In the sports and recreational segment, students could participate in teqball, chess, table tennis, e-sports competitions, and self-defense workshops, as well as many other activities. Special emphasis was placed on creative and laboratory workshops, ranging from 3D technologies and urban gardens to film and art sessions, “escape room” challenges, and discussions with alumni.

The key message delivered to freshmen was that studies should not be understood merely as a race for grades and averages, but as a process of exploration, questioning, exchanging ideas, and learning through mistakes. A diploma, they were told, should reflect not only knowledge but also courage, perseverance, and the experiences gained throughout their academic journey.

A significant academic achievement includes the acceptance of a paper titled “Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Learning” for publication of UDG MAGNET team authors. This work explores how AI can be responsibly integrated into education, emphasizing the importance of preparing both teachers and students for meaningful engagement with AI tools.



Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Learning: Philosophical Reflections and an Innovative Case-Based Approach

Ivan Nisavic¹, Stevan Cakic², Bojana Malisic³

¹(Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade)

ivan.nisavic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs;

²(University of Donja Gorica)

stevan.cakic@udg.edu.me;

³(University of Donja Gorica)

bojana.malisic@udg.edu.me;

ABSTRACT:

This paper explores the complex intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and education through a philosophical lens, presenting a case study of an innovative approach and course titled 'Artificial Intelligence in Education.' at University of Donja Gorica developed within MAGNET project. It reflects on the epistemological, ethical, and pedagogical implications of integrating AI into contemporary learning environments, drawing on classical pedagogical theories (Plato, Rousseau) and contemporary research. The study examines AI's impact on knowledge transmission, student autonomy, and the role of educators, while also addressing concerns about bias, equity, and the potential for algorithmic control. Ultimately, it argues for a balanced approach that leverages AI's potential for personalized learning and efficient knowledge delivery while safeguarding humanistic values and fostering critical thinking, creativity, and ethical awareness. This research is part of project MAGNET - Managerial and Governance Enhancement through Teaching funded by European Commission.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, MAGNET, education, philosophical lens, innovation

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECONOMY- TRADITION SINCE 2002

The creator, founder and editor in chief: Prof. dr Veselin Yukotić



International Business College Mitrovica

Training and workshop sessions were delivered to IBCM academic staff on teaching approaches and learning styles. The sessions were delivered by a US professor through the Fulbright Specialist program in cooperation with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

Furthermore, IBCM academic staff also received another training on research-based teaching with practice relevance through a collaboration of CTL and University of Economics and Business Vienna.

CTL is a product of the MAGNET (Managerial and Governance Enhancement through Teaching) project, a consortium of 12 HEI partner institutions from 8 Western Balkan countries. MAGNET aims to develop a network for University Pedagogy in the Western Balkans through know-how transfer, the establishment of CTLs, the production of educational material, and the creation of the sustainable network BALKANETUP. The training provided an introduction to digital platforms, with a focus on how Learning Management Systems (LMSs) can support the administration, documentation, and delivery of educational programs.





“Aleksandër Moisiu” University of Durrës

The “Aleksandër Moisiu” University of Durrës, Albania, as one of the partners of the MAGNET Project, has actively participated in all the activities carried out throughout the project. In the final months of the project, several important activities were organized.



On June 25, a training session was held on the topic “Technological Platforms in Teaching.” This training focused on increasing the knowledge and awareness of the academic staff regarding the use of AI in the teaching process in higher education. On June 26, another training session was conducted on the topic “Innovative Methods in Teaching.” This session aimed to familiarize young lecturers with new teaching methodologies and the importance of applying them in higher education. Representatives of the working group participated in the final meeting of the MAGNET Project, which took place on October 31 and November 1, 2025, at the University of Patras, Greece. Two lecturers from UAMD, Dr. Nevila Mehmeti and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ornedë Gega, took part in this final meeting. The working group is currently working intensively to complete the final phase of the project, successfully meeting all assigned tasks on time. The MAGNET Project has been a valuable experience that has produced tangible results in strengthening digital and innovative capacities in higher education across our region. The project has succeeded in fostering inter-institutional cooperation, sharing experiences and expertise, and creating a solid foundation for the modernization of teaching and learning methods in our universities.



Medical University of Plovdiv

Qualification Center will help teachers improve teaching methods at Medical University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria

MAGNET – Managerial And Governance Enhancement

A Training and Qualification Center was officially opened at the Medical University of Plovdiv as a part of the MAGNET – Managerial And Governance Enhancement through Teaching project (<https://magnet.mu-plovdiv.bg/>). It will host courses for teachers to modernize teaching methods. They will develop skills in how to use digital tools, virtual reality and artificial intelligence to make their lectures more attractive to students. Teachers are required to register on the electronic platform for training and building Massive open online courses, explained Prof. Dr. Ani Belcheva, MD – Project Coordinator for the Medical University of Plovdiv.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ani Epitropova from the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski” explained details about the platform and encouraged not only the teachers, but also the students to register in it. The expectations are that with the improvement of the quality of teaching, the results of the students will also improve.

Within the framework of MAGNET, teachers from all 12 partners from 8 countries will be able to cooperate and participate in the creation of a Balkan Network of Centers for university Pedagogy. Educational resources for teaching and learning will be shared on the edX platform (Centers for Teaching and Learning).





South-East European University

MAGNET Project: Strengthening Higher Education Collaboration in North Macedonia - Insights from SEEU's Engagement with the Ministry of Education Higher Education Sector

As part of the Erasmus+ MAGNET Project which focuses on advancing pedagogy and strengthening academic practice in higher education project representatives Vjosa Vela and Lumturije Bajrami held a productive meeting with Mr. Ahmet Qazimi, Head of the Higher Education Department at the Ministry of Education and Science of North Macedonia.

The discussion provided valuable insights into the current higher education landscape in the country, touching upon the Ministry's structure, active initiatives, and both the opportunities and challenges influencing the sector today. The exchange highlighted shared priorities related to academic development, innovation in teaching, and strategic approaches for empowering university staff and educators.

Importantly, the meeting reinforced the relevance and necessity of projects such as MAGNET. The project's core objectives establishing Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) within universities, developing MOOCs to support continuous professional development, and creating a regional networking platform for educators across the Balkans are directly aligned with the Ministry's commitment to enhancing quality and standards in higher education.

Building and maintaining dialogue with national stakeholders, including ministries, is essential for ensuring the sustainability and long-term implementation of project results. This meeting marks another constructive step toward creating stronger institutional partnerships and fostering a collaborative environment in which pedagogical innovation can thrive.

The MAGNET team looks forward to continued engagement with the Ministry and other national actors as activities progress throughout the project lifecycle.



University of Arts in Belgrade

The University of Arts in Belgrade has devoted considerable attention to the promotion of the BALKANETUP network. In addition to open calls for joining disseminated through social media platforms and the institution's official website, individual invitations were extended to colleagues engaged in the field of pedagogy throughout Serbia. Furthermore, national academic institutions offering programs in pedagogy were invited to join the BALKANETUP network, with the objective of facilitating the exchange of good practices with colleagues and institutions from the Western Balkans, as well as identifying areas of professional practice that could be further enhanced in terms of teaching and learning processes.

As part of the activities implemented within the Center for Teaching and Learning of the University of Arts in Belgrade, three video lectures were produced and made available to university teaching staff, researchers, and students.

The lecture entitled "Didactic Competences of Teachers in Higher Education" was delivered by Luka Nikolić, Associate at the Center for Teacher Education, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. The lecture addressed the concept of competences as an integrated framework encompassing knowledge, abilities, skills, values, and attitudes, as well as readiness for professional engagement. A new didactic approach, referred to as interactive teaching, was presented, emphasizing the importance of considering not only the content of instruction but also the teaching process itself and the interpersonal relationships established in the classroom during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of teaching. The lecture further highlighted the significance of focusing not solely on cognitive goals and learning outcomes, but also on emotional and social aspects, by fostering cooperative learning and group work. In this way, the teaching process becomes more dynamic, non-linear, and flexible.

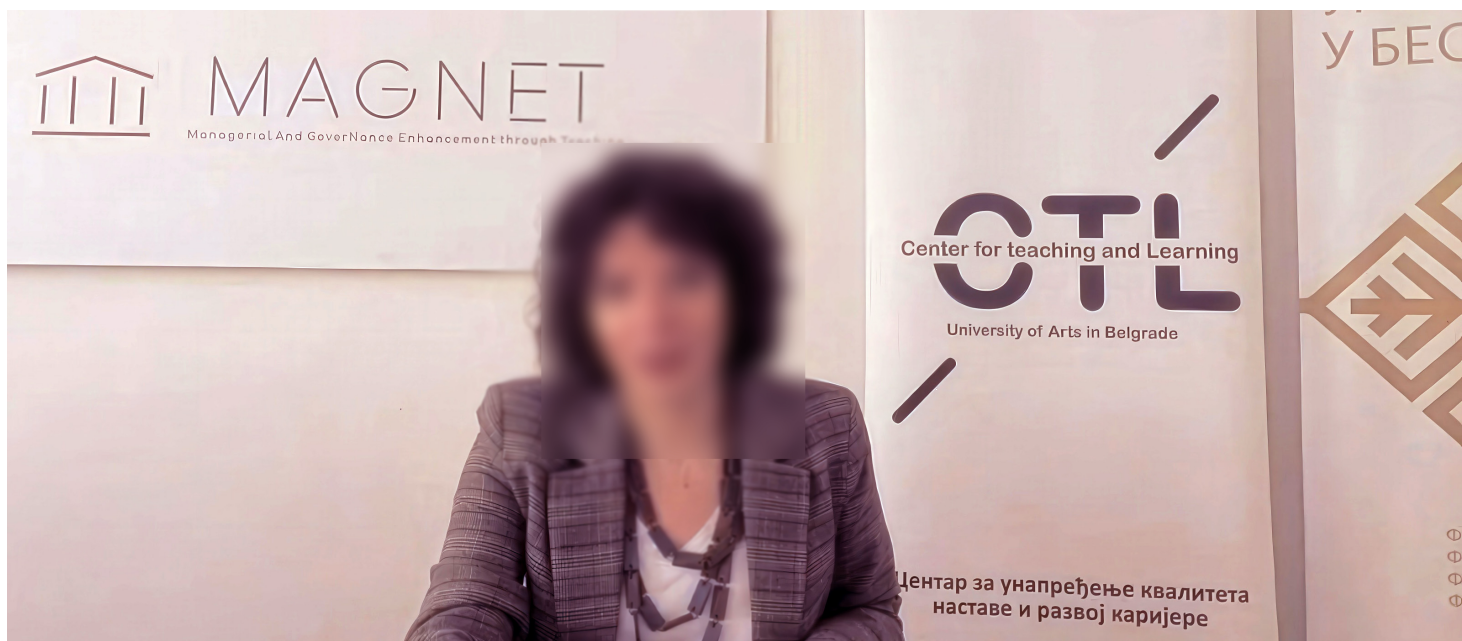
Dejana Mutavdžin, PhD, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade, de-



livered two lectures. The first one, entitled “Presenting a Model of Difficulties to Encourage Greater Inclusivity in Arts Education”, explored key questions such as: Why is inclusive education important? What is the relationship between inclusive education and the education of gifted students? How do teachers’ attitudes toward individuals with difficulties influence their behavior toward students who require additional support? And how might teachers’ behavior potentially shape interpersonal relationships among students? The second one with the topic “Art Education within Self-Regulated Learning Framework” is centered on Zimmerman’s cyclical phase model of self-regulated learning (SRL). Its purpose is to emphasize the relevance of SRL within artistic context, to stimulate colleagues’ reflection on their teaching practices, and to encourage the implementation of inspiring strategies that foster students’ development as self-regulated learners.

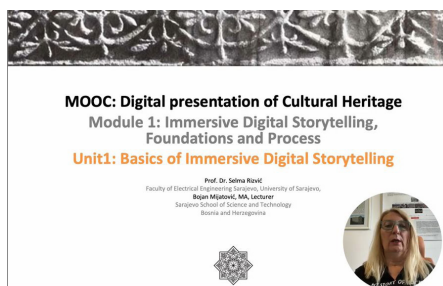
All video lectures are available on the official YouTube channel of the University of Arts in Belgrade: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2yIPLkAKzR8Vgcf-nzlxLQ>

The University of Arts has been actively engaged in promoting the activities and results of the MAGNET project through all dissemination channels. Special effort has been invested in creating and printing a promotional brochure in both Serbian and English.





University of Sarajevo



Within the framework of the ERASMUS+ HomoDigitalis project, the University of Sarajevo has developed two MOOCs that are placed on the MAGNET MOOCs platform (<https://magnet-moocs.mbg.duth.gr/dashboard>). The first course is Digital Presentation of Cultural Heritage (DPCH), developed by prof. Dr Selma Rizvić assisted by Bojan Mijatović, and the second is Knowledge Organization developed by prof. Dr Dušanka Bošković. The DPCH course is not tied to a specific curriculum and is useful for teachers of various humanities fields, and the knowledge and skills that can be acquired by attending this course can also be used by teachers of other fields. The course focus on hands on experience of developing VR applications. The Knowledge Organization course covers topics related to the semantic web and resources description in information architectures. This course follows thematic units from the doctoral subject of the same name taught at the University of Sarajevo – Philosophy Faculty, Department of Comparative Literature and Information Sciences.

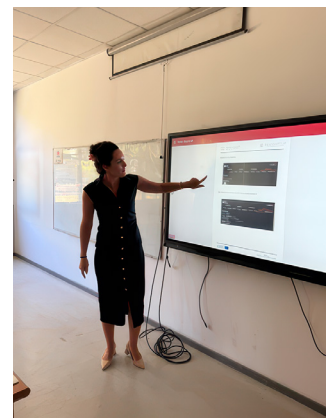
University of Prishtina



The latest training within the MAGNET project is “Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Education”, which was held on October 24. This training was conducted by CTL trainers. The objective of the training was to develop participants’ skills to meaningfully and ethically integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into teaching, scientific research, and academic administration.

As a result of the training, a manual “Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Education” was developed as a result of CTL training and for use by university teachers. This manual will be distributed and used by CTL.

Promotion of the BALKANETUP platform with students and professors from UP, is one of the most important activities. Therefore, the team responsible from UP has organized several information meetings and promotional materials on the way the platform functions.



Democritus University of Thrace

CTL's Progress - From March 2025 until October 2025

Submitting a proposal for EU funding - June-July 2025



To include our CTL in the new funding framework through National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2021-2027 a full portfolio was needed. It was a demanding piece of work but finally, our proposal was approved. Therefore, for the next two years, DUTH's CTL will absorb EU funding to further organize training and promotional events to facilitate academia's skills regarding teaching and student-centered learning excellence, with an emphasis on learning outputs.



Democritus University of Thrace launches “Starting at DUTH | start.acad@duth” – a new induction and orientation programme for new academic staff

Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) successfully held the inaugural cycle of its “Starting at DUTH | start.acad@duth” on 23-24 September 2025. The initiative is designed to welcome and facilitate the integration of newly appointed academic staff, forming a key element of the University's strategy to embed them into the academic community. Organised jointly by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU-DUTH) and the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL-DUTH), the programme was delivered in a hybrid format: in person on 23 September in the Senate Hall of the Administration Building in Komotini, and online on 24 September. More than fifty participants from across all Schools of the University – faculty, special teaching staff, laboratory teaching staff, and technical staff – attended and engaged actively in the sessions.

The programme featured presenta-

tions and interactive activities on the organisation and governance of the University, academic life and student welfare (including gender equality, psychological support and accessibility), internationalization and ERASMUS mobility, and the management of research projects. Sessions were led by members of the Rector's Council, professors and senior administrative staff, providing participants with the opportunity for direct dialogue with decision-makers and experts. Particular focus was placed on University Pedagogy and Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Rector Professor Fotios Maris presented the University's strategic priorities, underlining the significant role of new academic staff in shaping a modern, outward-looking and high-quality institution. He expressed confidence that their active contribution will strengthen teaching and research, and en-

hance DUTH's engagement with society.

With the conclusion of this first cycle, DUTH warmly welcomed its new members, providing substantial support for their smooth transition into the academic environment and empowering their professional journey. The second cycle of the programme is scheduled to take place in mid-February 2026.





Strengthening Academic Ties through Erasmus+ KA171

As part of the Erasmus+ KA171 mobility programme, DUTH had the pleasure of welcoming Prof. Anila Mitre and Prof. Merita Rumano from the University of Tirana, Albania (13-19 July 2025).

During their educational visit, our colleagues engaged in fruitful academic exchange with faculty members from the Laboratory of Molecular Developmental Biology & Developmental Neurobiology, and the Laboratory of Molecular Regulation & Diagnostics Development at the Department of Molecular Biology & Genetics (DUTH). They also

had the opportunity to visit the Erasmus Office, the Library of the School of Health Sciences, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Studio and the Virtual Reality Room gaining valuable insights into our innovative approaches to education. Beyond academic activities, they explored the cities of Alexandroupolis and Komotini, enjoying both the academic and cultural life of our University.

