

BUANEWS

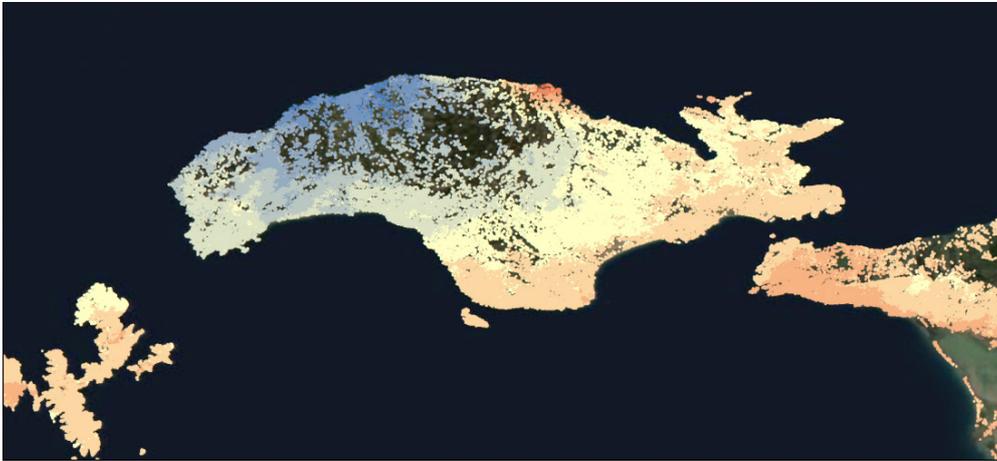
Balkan Universities Association E-Bulletin

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Balkan Universities Association

SCIENTISTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY OF THE ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI IMPLEMENT THE NEW NETWORK SERVICE FOR MONITORING GROUND MOVEMENTS USING SATELLITE DATA OF COPERNICUS SENTINEL

In order to better manage geo-hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, etc., scientists from the Department of Geology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki used radar data from the Copernicus Sentinel-1 satellite mission and created a new advanced service called S motioP mAPPING), for monitoring territorial movements.

The service, which has already been utilized during the recent strong earthquake of magnitude 7.0 on the Richter scale of Samos, is offered through the GEP (Geohazards Exploitation Platform) which is an initiative of the European Space Agency (ESA). Its implementation was carried out by European scientists, headed by Assistant Professor of the Department of Geology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Michalis Foumelis. The services of the GEP platform are used worldwide by more than 80 organizations in 32 countries.

More information:

-for ESA at the link
https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/ESA_for_Earth

-for the possibilities and ways to access the services of the GEP platform <https://discuss.terradue.com/t/gep-offering-expands-to-include-operational-service-packs-and-esa-sponsorship-for-science-users/917>

-for the GEP platform <https://geohazards-tep.eu>

-for the results of the study of the earthquake of Samos <https://eo4society.esa.int/2021/02/04/new-psi-service-snapping-operational-on-the-gep>

**THE HOLOMONTAS ASTRONOMICAL STATION OF THE ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI IS PART OF THE “FIBER IN THE SKY” PROGRAM OF THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY**

With the aim of developing the new generation of secure, satellite communications in the European Union, with the method of quantum optical signal encryption, the Holomontas Astronomical Station of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Halkidiki was selected by the European Space Agency (ESA) for its pilot program. title “Fiber in the sky”, following a proposal by the Department of Astronomy, Astrophysics and Engineering of the Department of Physics of AUTh.

In full development, the station will use two specialized, robotic telescopes, which will be used in other research objects, such as the observation of potentially dangerous paragrinding asteroids and the detection of gravitational wave

sources in the optical wavelengths, as part of its scientific team. Professor of the Physics Department of AUTh Nikos Stergioulas in the international Virgo program.

The “Fiber in the sky” program will provide services such as: interconnection and integration of satellite systems, support of terrestrial networks and provision of telecommunications services, provision of services to search and rescue operations and emergencies (e.g. natural disasters), coverage of remote areas with high speed telecommunications and remote handling of equipment at remote locations. The “Fiber in the sky” program is part of the broader Euro QCI (Quantum Communication Infrastructure) program.

The current academic year has been the most challenging in recent times for most HEIs, since nearly all academic functions must be carried out remotely. With students absent from university premises, and all educational activity taking place in virtual rooms via digital means, there is a lack of natural interaction which under normal conditions characterizes academic daily life, and which is particularly important for the formation and cultivation of the spirit of young scientists.

Despite the challenges and changes brought about by the ongoing pandemic, the Ionian University continues - as it should - to operate, adapt, educate, research, and grow. With a new rectorate methodically striving towards academic prosperity, and quality development at the heart of the institution's goal setting, the I.U. employs vision, consistency, transparency and accountability, implementing a series of reorganization interventions and modernization actions, while investing in extroversion to augment its social

contribution and strengthen its connection with society, as befits a public higher education institution.

These efforts have already borne fruit, such as the successful completion of the certification of the Ionian University quality assurance system with high marks, as well as a long list of academic achievements and actions of international scope, all of which allow the I.U. to look confidently towards the future and its new challenges.

Links:

University website:

<http://www.ionio.gr/>

University brochure in English:

<https://ionio.gr/download.php?f=12000-12999/IU-nf-12035-10776-en.pdf>



ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGH STANDARD MEMORY CLINICS IN GREECE



The Hellenic Initiative Against Alzheimer's Disease (HIAAD.org), expressed by the collaboration of Johns Hopkins University's Richman Family Precision Medicine Center of Excellence in Alzheimer's Disease and the Ionian University's Bioinformatics and Human Electrophysiology Lab (BiHELab), announced the formation of high standard Memory Clinics in Greece, as well as the creation of Dementia and Mild Cognitive Disorder maps.

The Clinics aim at the comprehensive care of patients and their families in accordance with international practices. At the same time, the Greek map of Dementia and Mild Cognitive Disorder will contribute to the recording of the number of patients, and in combination with the Memory

Clinics will contribute to the treatment of the disease that is constantly spreading. At present, there are 36 Memory Centers in Greece operating since August in university-affiliated hospitals in 10 cities, and which will be considerably upgraded under the program.

As Professor Panagiotis Vlamos, President of the Ionian University's Research Center and Director of the BiHELab explains, the indications that dementia and Alzheimer's disease are taking on pandemic proportions in Greece prompted these initiatives, the ultimate goal being to help formulate policies regarding the area and the type of services that should be offered to people with dementia and their families, in order to meet the ever-increasing needs.

THE IONIAN UNIVERSITY JOINS THE SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK

An I.U. Senate decision approved the affiliation of the university with the Scholars at Risk (SAR) organization as a founding member of its Greek branch. SAR is an international network of higher education institutions and individuals working to protect threatened scientists and academics and promote academic freedom.

SAR protects scholars who face serious threats to their lives, their freedom and their well-being, by providing temporary research and teaching positions in network institutions and by providing advisory services and recommendations for their further progress. The SAR network has developed a number of initiatives to identify, document, and take action in response to attacks on scientists and academics, students, and higher education communities. At a time when worldwide freedom of research and expression is being restricted, Scholars at Risk brings together teachers, students and members of the higher education community to discuss global and regional academic freedom and develop solutions that enhance the university space. The network also organizes seminars, conferences, programs and events involving both professors and university students. The Academic Freedom Monitoring Project started in 2012 and since 2015 publishes the annual Free to Think Report.



CREATION OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS MUSEUM NETWORK

The recently (2019) established Ionian University Museum, aiming to strengthen cooperation in the field of museums and culture, coordinated the efforts for the establishment of an Ionian Islands Museum Network (DIMIN) which led to the signing of a cooperation memorandum by 13 non-profit museum organizations in the Ionian Islands. Created during the pandemic, DIMIN is the outcome of a dialogue between representatives of museums and cultural institutions from Zakynthos, Ithaca, Corfu, Kefalonia and Lefkada. “Small” and regional actors networking is an important step in their development and sustainability, as it allows them to focus on initiatives to enhance their common vision and offer benefits

that will be disseminated to local and wider community.

The purposes of the DIMIN network concern museum viability, the creation of a common cultural policy, and the promotion of the distinct Ionian cultural identity, while objectives include extroversion, increase in visitor traffic, joint planning of actions, events and programs for creative / educational / research activities, creative interaction with the local community and collection visitors, as well as the development of innovative actions aiming at the participation and inclusion of the local communities and visitors through, amongst others, the use of new technologies.

I.U. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM CERTIFICATION REPORT

In December 2020, after an evaluation by a group of independent experts – academics, the certification report of the Greek Internal Quality Assurance System awarded the Ionian University a placing in the highest category of full compliance with the principles of the Quality Standard of the National Higher Education Authority (HAHE), as well

as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). For the I.U. this marks the starting point for a new course that meets the challenges of the times and the quality standards of the future.



IZU CONTINUES TO BE INTERNATIONALLY AWARDED

Cambridge IFA has awarded Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University the 3G Green University Campus of the Year 2020 in the category of “3G Good Governance, Sustainability and Green Campus 2020.”

Speaking at the online award ceremony, and pointing out that last year, IZU was placed among the best five hundred sustainable universities around the world by GreenMetric. The honourable Rector, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Bulut stated that Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University has got a sustainable area of 60 large and beautiful square kilometres green campus yet could maintain very low level of minimum carbon footprint.

He also said that, with more than 11 thousand students from 95 countries, 4 thousand among them are graduate

students, IZU is growing day by day. He also emphasized that IZU academicians are pioneers in the fields of Islamic Economics and Finance, Halal Industry, Political Science, and International Relations.

Prof. Bulut concluded his speech saying that we are continually doing our utmost to secure students’ higher education, one that extends from our noble past to the bright future.

London-based Cambridge (IFA) provides strategic consultancy to governments, financial institutions, and multilateral organizations in the fields of economy, management, investment and has since 2016 been granting awards in various categories.

DRUG STUDY AT IZU AGAINST COVID-19

In a study made with their thesis advisor, Vice Coordinator of Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University Laboratories and Halal Foods R&D Excellence Centre Researcher, Bilal Çakır, worked on a drug candidate made from protein in goat’s milk which is found to be effective against the novel coronavirus (Covid-19).

For about 10 years, Çakır has carried out several studies on the effectiveness of valuable bioactive compounds acquired from dairy and herbal products, especially on cancer and cardiovascular diseases. He also focused on drugs that can be used in the treatment of Covid-19 Pandemic.

In their study, Çakır and their thesis advisor from Marmara University Prof. Dr. Tuğba Tunalı- Faculty of Dentistry, Prof.

Dr. Göksel Şener and Assoc. Dr. Betül Okuyan from Faculty of Pharmacy, discovered that bioactive peptides found in goat’s milk proteins were effective against Covid-19.

Çakır’s research on developing a Covid-19 drug candidate from the active substance in goat’s milk was published in European Journal of Pharmacology. While advancing his endeavour and obtaining a patent, Çakır will also apply for a project at Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK).

<https://www.izu.edu.tr/haberler/2021/01/21/izu-de-covid-19-a-kars%C4%B1-ilac-calismasi>



IZU HOSTS THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC ECONOMICS AND FINANCE CONFERENCE



Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University hosted the 12th International Conference on Islamic Economics and Finance, the world's most prestigious conference on Islamic economics and finance between 14-20 June 2020. President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Minister of Treasury and Finance, Berat Albayrak, and the Minister of Economy of Pakistan, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh and many other distinguished scholars and speakers were present.

The President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan pointed out that with the outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic, the whole world entered a new era, thus experiencing radical changes. The President emphasized that even though this pandemic is primarily related to health, it affects almost every area of life in terms of its consequences and has caused aftershocks in many



areas, whether in labour market, commerce, personal relationships, or public security.

President Erdogan said that "Islamic economics is the key to solving the crisis". He stated: "Over-financing has created an obese economic model that does not consider the social and human costs and acts only with the concern of rent. It is necessary to extend the use of productions like sukuk for the financing of long term large infrastructure investments." President Erdogan also underlined that the goal to make Istanbul, located at the crossroads of continents and cultures, the centre of Islamic finance and economy.

<https://www.izu.edu.tr/haberler/2020/07/08/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-islam-iktisadi-krizden-cikisin-anahataridir>



IZU STUDENTS PRODUCED A ROBOT HAND

IEEE IZU students, already working on learning and experiencing engineering theories and practices in electricity, electronics, computers, and automation, came to the fore with a new social responsibility project. Thanks to Robotel, one of the projects supported by IEEE IZU, it produced economical and usable robot-hand produced with 3D printers with personal dimensions and qualities for individuals in need for prosthetics. The robot-hand produced became a hope for Melisa, whose one hand was congenitally lost.

With the Robotel project, which was created based on an international movement, children who lost their hands congenitally or because of accidents and whose prosthesis insertion process is more troublesome, can acquire new hands. Prostheses, which need to change frequently with the development of children, are far above the prices that middle and low families can afford. This situation prevents many children from having prostheses.

Considering all these, IEEE IZU volunteer students started the Robotel project. Following the information received, 13-year-old Melisa Gökgöz, whose one hand was congenitally missing, her family was contacted and hosted at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University for robot-hand measures.

The students, who started modelling and scaling studies, successfully completed both printing the model via 3D printer and the application phase of robot-hand on Melisa. As a result of the team's one-month work, Robotel was delivered to Melisa on December 27, 2018.

<https://www.izu.edu.tr/haberler/2018/12/28/i-z%C3%BC-%C3%B6%C4%9Frencileri-robot-el-%C3%BCretti>



İTÜ IS 1ST IN TURKEY IN 10 SUBJECTS OF QS SUBJECT BASED WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS



Subject based world university rankings determined by the world-renowned British education consultancy firm QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) has been announced. Obtaining very successful degrees among Turkish universities, İTÜ raised the bar since last year when it entered the list at the 218th place and ranked 202nd in the world (with 69.5 points) in “Engineering and Technology” subject this year.

<https://haberler.itu.edu.tr/en/newsdetail/2021/03/04/i-t%C3%BC-is-1st-in-turkey-in-10-areas-of-qs-area-based-world-university-rankings>



OUR STUDENT WHO WORE THE UNIFORM WITH THE CRESCENT AND THE STAR BECAME BALKAN CHAMPION

Turkey completed Balkan Indoor Athletics Championships recently held at Istanbul at the first place with a total of 15 medals. Our national athletes broke 6 Turkey records, as well. İTÜ student Ali Aksu, who wore the uniform with the crescent and the star for the first time, was acclaimed for his performance in the races. Last year, the young athlete had become Turkey's Third in 87th Turkish Senior and U-23 Athletics Championships.

<https://www.itu.edu.tr/en/news-detail/2021/02/23/i-t%C3%BC-student-who-wore-the-uniform-with-the-crescent-and-the-star-became-balkan-champion>



Kırklareli University which was founded in 2007 is one of the young and dynamic universities of our country with its 12 faculties, 1 State Conservatory, 2 schools, 3 institutes, 7 vocational schools and 14 application and research centres. Kırklareli University continues its dedicated work to prepare its approximately 23.000 students for future in dynamic and contemporary educational environments with its 769 academics and 475 administrative staff. Kırklareli city has a great potential with its location on European motorway that connects European countries to our country and its intensive industrial zones that creates employment.

Kırklareli University sees internationalization as an indispensable requirement of today's global world and uses

various opportunities and tools for this purpose. Kırklareli University is a founding member of the Balkan Universities Association and the World University Association for Community Development. Speaking of international students, our University hosts a total of 2,211 students from 46 different countries. In the last four years, the number of our international students has increased by 340%.

For more information please visit:

<https://ir.klu.edu.tr/>

<https://www.studyinturkey.gov.tr/UniversityTurkey/Detail?uld=118122>



KIRKLARELI UNIVERSITY ESTABLISHED ACADEMIC COOPERATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BALKAN UNIVERSITY

The Rector of International Balkan University from Republic of North Macedonia Prof. Dr. Mehmet Dursun ERDEM and the rector of Trakya University, Prof. Dr. Erhan TABAKOĞLU visited our Rector Prof. Dr. Bülent ŞENGÖRÜR on the 7th of September, 2020. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Kırklareli University and International Balkan University, to establish a basis

for academic cooperation, academic mobility, student exchange, scientific knowledge sharing, and other joint academic activities. Prof. Dr. Bülent Şengörür expressed his pleasure regarding the visit and underlined the importance of long-lasting academic collaboration in the field of higher education.



SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY “NEOFIT RILSKI” – BLAGOEVGRAD

South-West University “Neofit Rilski” was founded in 1976 in Blagoevgrad. With a history of over 40 years, the University has gained a reputation as a leader in the sphere of science and education in Bulgaria and on the Balkans. Nowadays, it is recognized as one of the leading universities in South-Eastern Europe.

The university has been given a maximal accreditation grade by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, which is a guarantee for a high quality education in 80 Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes after secondary education, 121 Master’s programmes after the completion of Bachelor’s education and 88 Doctoral programmes. The education is provided in 30 professional areas in the fields of the humanities, natural and social sciences, economics, law, arts, healthcare, public health, sports, security and defense, etc. According to this criterion, the university holds a top position in the country ranking.

Currently, over 11,500 students, more than 500 of which are foreign students from over 20 countries, are trained in different areas of education and science at SWU “Neofit Rilski”.

There are over 30 laboratories and research centres

available at the university. The university implements proactive international policies involving the cooperation of training and research institutions from all around Europe, the USA and Russia. The university has signed Erasmus+ mobility programme contracts with about 150 universities in Europe.

In the recent years SWU has been involved in about 30 international and national projects financed under the European Territorial Cooperation Programme “Greece-Bulgaria 2007-2013”, the Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020”, European Economic Area (EEA) and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (NFM) Scholarship Fund, the Seventh Framework Programme, Horizon 2020, Erasmus+, etc.

The South-West University has its own library with a rich collection of over 200,000 volumes of scientific literature and access to various international databases.

One of the best sports centres in Bulgaria is part of the South-West University facilities. It includes a multifunctional premises for indoor sports, a centre for functional testing, a laboratory for physiotherapy, a spa and rehabilitation centre, stadiums and outdoor sports grounds.



WORLD-RENOWNED SCIENTISTS FROM FOUR CONTINENTS HAVE PRESENTED THEIR LATEST RESEARCH RELATED TO MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS AND CULT PRACTICES

MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS AND CULT PRACTICES

PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



South-West University “Neofit Rilski” has published a collection of thirty-nine scientific articles by world-renowned scientists from four continents. Some of the authors are: Prof. DSc. Vasil Markov – South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Bulgaria; Prof. Carl A. P. Ruck, PhD – Boston University, USA; Prof. Evie Holmberg, PhD – Boston University, USA; Prof. Jose Nicalas Balbi, PhD – National University of Tres de Febrero, Argentina; Prof. Engin Becsach, PhD – University of Thrace, Turkey; Prof. DSc Valeria Fol - University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Bulgaria; Prof. Manolis Varvounis, PhD – Democritus University of Thrace, Greece; Prof. DSc Vanya Losanova – Stancheva – Institute for Balkan Studies, Centre of Thracology, Bulgaria; Assoc. Prof. Alina Paranina, PhD – Herzen State University of Russia, Russia.

The articles reveal and discuss the widespread distribution of the megalithic monuments and the cult of the rock as a world phenomenon.

The scientific papers included in the collection were presented within the framework of the Third International Symposium “Megalithic Monuments and Cult Practices”, hosted by South-West University “Neofit Rilski”. The forum is organized every 4 years; it has become an attractive academic place for discussions, presentation of new discoveries and hypotheses of leading researchers in the field of cult practices.

The collection was published with the support of the National Research Programme “Cultural Heritage, National Memory and Social Development” of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as of the Faculty of Arts at South-West University “Neofit Rilski”.

**A CD AND SCORES PROMOTE BULGARIAN PIANO ART
WORK IN A NUMBER OF EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES**

The collection of piano works by Bulgarian composers recognizes several creative figures from different generations such as Marin Goleminov (1908 - 2000), Ivan Spassov (1934 - 1996), Filip Pavlov (1949) and Yordan Goshev (1960). The works of the above listed composers included in this CD with scores demonstrate both their specific period and their unique personal style. The important stages of the Bulgarian piano music development are marked by their compositions, becoming part of the common tendencies and personal preferences. The contributions of artistic ideas and their practical achievements are evident in the realization of the variety of approaches in the piano music. This is often connected with other leading genres in the authors' music heritage and with their performance practices. The common feature connecting these artists remains their multilateral involvement as composers, stage performers, educators, theoreticians, writers and renowned public figures in music institutions contributing significantly to the Bulgarian music culture. The final choice of these particular music works was done due to being most frequently performed on stage and being a popular and preferred repertoire for many pianists in Bulgaria and abroad. This is another reason for the CD releasing as part of the Bulgarian piano heritage. The recordings for the CD were made by distinguished Bulgarian pianists who give concerts all over Europe - Prof. Rostislav Yovchev, Prof. Filip Pavlov, Simeon Goshev and Prof. Roxana Bogdanova.

The CD with scores is available in the libraries of the Academy of Music and Theater Arts in Vienna, Austria; Dortmund Technical University; Osnabruck University, Germany; "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iasi, Romania; University "Macedonia", Thessaloniki, Greece; Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Great Britain; Conservatoire Royal, Brussels, Belgium and in other music colleges and universities in Europe.

**БЪЛГАРСКО КЛАВИРНО НАСЛЕДСТВО
BULGARIAN PIANO HERITAGE**

TRAKYA UNIVERSITY SIGNED THE HIGHEST-BUDGET CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROJECT OF ITS KIND WITH A BUDGET OF 3.3 MILLION EUROS

The signing ceremony of the project titled “Cross-Border Regions Collaborate for Blue Growth: Blue Growth Collabs”, where Trakya University is a Project partner, took place online with the participation of Turkish and Bulgarian officials. The project, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Presidency of the Council of the European Union and whose budget was increased from 2,855,247 euros to 3.3.3 million euros due to its functionality; it is the first project to be funded in one go in terms of budget, financial size and scope of activity. Within the scope of the project, which will contribute to the sustainable protection of the nature of the two countries; Water Pollution Monitoring Laboratory, Water Ecosystem Laboratory and Water Culture and Biotechnology Laboratory will be awarded a Research Boat for use in data collection in water, soil and air analysis.

Trakya University, which implemented the project “Cross-Border Regions Collaborate for Blue Growth Collabs” in partnership with Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov University and Akad N. Zelinski School from Burgas, Bulgaria, as part of the INTERREG-IPA Bulgaria – Turkey Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Strategic Project Limited Bidding Call program, is taking an important step towards the protection and development of the environment. The signing ceremony of the project took place online within the scope of Covid-19 measures. Rector of Trakya University Prof. Dr. Erhan Tabakoğlu, Vice Rector and Director of the International Relations Application and Research Center Prof. Dr. Murat Türkyılmaz, Director of Edirne High School Recep Şentürk, Director of Project Coordination Application and Research Center Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Atılgan, Assistant Director of Technology Transfer Center Inst. Serdar Özer and Inst. Burcu Ören Özer and project partners and European Union officials attended the ceremony.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Faruk Kaymakçı: The Project Will Bring Great Gains to Both Countries

Ambassador Faruk Kaymakçı, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and President of the European Union, expressed his happiness at taking part in such an important project during the signing ceremony. Referring to the strategic importance of water conservation and improvement and emphasizing that it is very important for the two countries to take part in such a project, Kaymakçı said, “The project will have an impact on the protection of watersheds not only technically but also with its intellectual capacity. I hope that the cooperation that continues with the project we started will continue after the end of the project and will have a lasting impact for the region. I am confident that the project, which will be carried out under the guidance of the European Union, will bring great gains to the two countries.”

Rector of Trakya University Prof. Dr. Erhan Tabakoglu stated that the project is very important in terms of leaving a healthy world and a livable environment for future generations and said, “The environment and water are the property not only of us, but of our children and of all mankind. Therefore, as we attach great importance to this project, we think that the project will add value to our university’s mission of internationalization in the Balkans. This cooperation with our neighbor will bring a culture of working together and lead many different studies. I would like to thank all the people who contributed to this project.”

Director of Edirne High School Recep Senturk stated that the project, which will carry out exemplary applications in the water resources of Turkey and Bulgaria, is very important for improving environmental awareness and expressed that they are very happy to take part in this project as Edirne High School.



Within the scope of the project, Trakya University will be given three laboratories equipped with the latest technological equipment

The project, co-ordinated by Trakya University Vice Rector and Director of the International Relations Application and Research Center Prof. Dr. Murat Türkyılmaz and Director of Trakya University Project Coordination Application and Research Center Assoc.Prof.Dr Emre Atılgan, will cooperate at the regional and cross-border level in order to ensure environmental protection and sustainable development. The project, which plans to carry out infrastructure and R&D activities worth EUR 1,384,000, will also strengthen the research infrastructures of project partners in order to develop joint research methodologies. In addition to the Trakya University Faculty of Science building, a Water Pollution Monitoring Laboratory equipped with the latest technological equipment, Water Ecosystem Laboratory and Water Culture and Biotechnology Laboratory will be established on an area of 450 square meters.



**THE FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT DEGREE PROGRAM
BETWEEN TRAKYA UNIVERSITY AND COSTANTA OVIDIUS UNIVERSITY**

Trakya University Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu, who continues to negotiate with the universities in Balkans in order to keep the existing relations warm and to establish new relations, congratulated Associate Professor Dan-Marcel Iliescu, the new Rector of Constanta Ovidius University, on his new position by meeting with him. During the meeting, the strength of historical and cultural ties between the two countries and universities were emphasized, and new collaborations are considered possible.

Trakya University Romanian Language and Literature Department will start accepting students within the framework of the “International Joint Undergraduate Program”.

During the online meeting, Trakya University Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu, wishing good luck to the new administration of Constanta Ovidius University, emphasized the strong cooperation between the two universities. Stating that the ties between Trakya University and Constanta Ovidius University will be strengthened with new projects with the Balkan University Association (BUA) and bilateral cooperation agreements, Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu said, “Within the framework of the +2 Joint Degree program, we aim to accept the students from both countries. Trakya University, one of the pioneers of International Joint Degree programs in Turkey, wishes to expand its hinterland which includes North Macedonia and Kosovo by adding Romania.

Our biggest goal is to help the improvement of the member universities of the union by increasing the influence area of BUA, which we founded, and thus the development of the Balkans. We are ready to transfer our experience, knowledge and all our strengthenings for the development of Balkans. “

After expressing their desire to hold the meetings face to face as soon as possible, which were held online due to the pandemic, Trakya University Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu invited the Rector of Constanta Ovidius University Assoc Dr Dan Iliescu and his management to Edirne.

Thanking for his kind invitation and then inviting Trakya University Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu and his delegation to Constanta, Ovidius University Rector Assoc. Dr. Dan Iliescu said the ties between the two universities herald new collaborations. Noting that there are new projects and working opportunities in many fields, Assoc Dr Iliescu stated that they are ready to work with Trakya University, and added that the joint undergraduate program to be carried out specifically for Romanian Language and Literature will benefit the two universities and Balkans.

Trakya University Rector Prof Dr Erhan Tabakoğlu, as well as Vice Rector and Director of Foreign Relations Application and Research Center Prof Dr Murat Türkyılmaz attended the meeting, in which the two university administrations confirmed that they will make mutual visits once the pandemic conditions disappear.

RECTOR NIMANI PRESENTS THE DRAFT STATUTE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF UGJFA IN MES

Today was held the meeting of rectors with the Commission for Statutes of UPs and with the Minister of Education Mr. Ramë Likaj. Rector of the University of Gjakova, Prof. Ass. Dr. Artan Nimani presented the draft statute of UGJFA and the achievements of the University in order to realize the mission and vision of UGJFA. They also agreed on the processing of statutes in government and parliament for approval.

Link: <https://uni-gjk.org/en/lajme/1238/rector-nimani-presents-the-draft-statute-and-achievements-of-ugjfa-in-mes>

**UNIVERSITY OF GJAKOVA DECIDES TO AWARD THE TITLE "DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA" - POST MORTEM FOR FORMER CONGRESSMAN THOMAS PETER 'TOM' LANTOS**

The Senate of the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" in the meeting held on 17th of July, 2020, decided to award the title "Doctor Honoris Causa" - Post mortem for the former US Congressman Mr. Thomas Peter 'Tom' Lantos, with the motivation: "For merit and extraordinary contribution to the consolidation of peace and the promotion of human values, to the permanent support of the process of freedom and independence of the Republic of Kosovo".

Link: <https://uni-gjk.org/en/lajme/1186/university-of-gjakova-decides-to-award-the-title-doctor-honoris-causa-post-mortem-for-former-congressman-thomas-peter-tom-lantos>



MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE, MR. RAMË LIKAJ VISITED THE UNIVERSITY OF GJAKOVA

Rector of the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani", Prof. Ass. Dr. Artan Nimani and his associates received in a meeting the Minister of Education and Science (MES) Mr. Ramë Likaj. During the meeting were discussed the needs of the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani" and the challenges that UGJFA is facing. While the focus of the meeting was the construction of the university campus of the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani".

Rector Nimani has also raised concerns about delays in the accreditation process of new study programs.

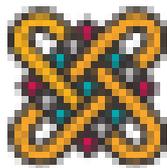
Link: <https://uni-gjk.org/en/lajme/1130/minister-of-education-and-science-mr-rame-likaj-visited-the-university-of-gjakova>

**UNIVERSITY OF GJAKOVA AWARDS THE "DIN MEHMETI" AWARD**

Rector of the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani", Prof. Ass. Dr. Artan Nimani, in the presence of the Professional Commission of UGJFA, awarded the "Din Mehmeti" prize to the professor of Albanian literature Anton Nikë Berisha, for the book "The being of the poetic message Book of Prefaces 2". Prof. Dr. Anton Nikë Berisha, for over twenty-three years worked as a professor at the University of Calabria (Italy). Rector Nimani expressed gratitude and thanks to Professor Berisha for his valuable contribution and work in the field of literature and education as well as for the books that on this occasion the professor donated to the University of Gjakova "Fehmi Agani". The "Din Mehmeti" Prize is awarded for assistance in the development and promotion of theoretical and critical thinking of literature.

Link: <https://uni-gjk.org/en/lajme/1079/universiteti-i-gjakoves-ndan-cmimin-din-mehmeti>





UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA



TWO INTERNATIONAL DISTINCTIONS FOR THE LABORATORY OF SCENOGRAPHY / COSTUME DESIGN OF THE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA.

Scenography and costume design projects produced by UoWM students of the Fine and Applied Arts were among the participating works in the International Scenography / Costume design online exhibition of the School of Scenography, London. The UoWM students' projects were supervised, organized and coordinated by Tassos Protopsaltou, Adjunct academic staff, Scenography / Costume Design Laboratory of the UoWM Fine and Applied Arts Department.

The distinctions were awarded to the collaborative work of the participating students Lea Kavvadia, Andas Bibiri and Maria Panagiotopoulou, for their work on Anton Chekhov's Cherry Orchard, and Giouli Douka, Anastasis

Mekeridis, Anta Bibiri and Maria Panagiotopoulou for their scenography and costume design work on the opera La Traviata by Giuseppe Verdi. It is worth noting that Giouli Doukas' and Anastasis Mekeridis' work is based on historical buildings and areas in Florina (i.e. the buildings of Agia Olga and the City Hall), in an attempt to create a bond between local elements and international art.

The School of Scenography is focused on international research in Scenography and Costume Design from a practical, theoretical and research perspective. The Scenography / Costume design exhibition has been scheduled to be physically presented in London next March (conditions permitting), or it will take place at a later date.

UOWM CERTIFICATION ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL ISO STANDARDS

The University of Western Macedonia has been certified under ISO 37001:2016, ISO 14001:2017, ISO 26000:2010 and ISO 9001:2015 according to the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) standards.

ISO 37001:2016 specifies requirements and provides guidance for establishing, implementing, maintaining, reviewing, and improving an anti-bribery management system. ISO 37001:2016 addresses the following in relation to the organization's activities:

- bribery in the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors.
- bribery by the organization.
- bribery by the organization's personnel acting on the organization's behalf or for its benefit.
- bribery by the organization's business associates acting on the organization's behalf or for its benefit.
- bribery of the organization.
- bribery of the organization's personnel in relation to the organization's activities.
- bribery of the organization's business associates in relation to the organization's activities.
- direct and indirect bribery (e.g., a bribe offered or accepted through or by a third party).

ISO 14001:2017 specifies the requirements for an environmental management system that an organization can use to enhance its environmental performance. It is intended for use by an organization seeking to manage its environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner that contributes to the environmental pillar of sustainability. Consistent with the organization's environmental policy, the intended outcomes of an environmental management system include:

- enhancement of environmental performance.
- fulfilment of compliance obligations.
- achievement of environmental objectives.

ISO 26000:2010 is intended to:

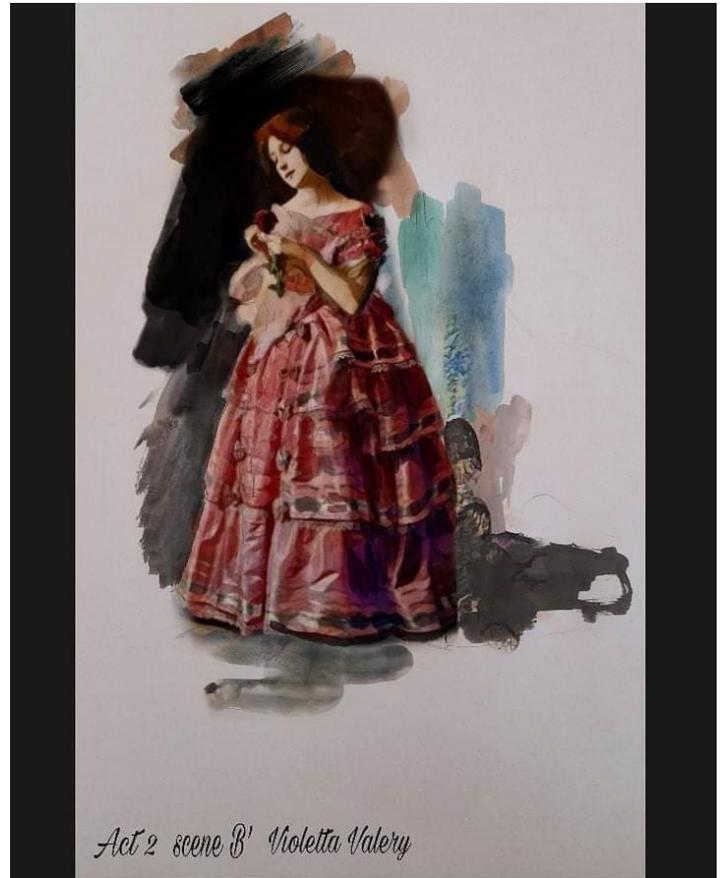
- assist organizations in contributing to sustainable development.
- encourage them to go beyond legal compliance, recognizing that compliance with law is a fundamental

duty of any organization and an essential part of their social responsibility.

- promote common understanding in the field of social responsibility.
- complement other instruments and initiatives for social responsibility, not to replace them.

ISO 9001:2015 contains eight key principles of quality management which is not auditable but do form the fundamental characteristics of quality management:

- customer focus and customer satisfaction
- leadership
- involvement of people
- process approach
- a systematic approach to management
- continual improvement
- factual approach to decision making
- mutually beneficial supplier relationship



UOWM ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS AMONGST WORLD'S TOP SCIENTISTS

A study conducted by Stanford University researchers ranked six UoWM Academic Staff members among the top scientists in the world. The list "Data for updated science-wide author databases of standardized citation indicators" ranks scientists worldwide in all scientific fields considering the impact of their published work in 2019. It includes about 100,000 scientists distinguished worldwide, as well as 2% of the top scientists in the scientific sub-field in which they specialize. The novelty of this study is that the bibliometric indicators that are evaluated include not only the total number of citations and the h-index of the scientists according to the Scopus bibliographic database, but also parameters such as the weighted measurement of the co-authorship and the position of the author in publications.

The six UoWM Academic Staff members are the following:

Name	Department	Scientific Field/Sub-Field
Frontistis Zacharias	Chemical Engineering	Environmental Sciences / Energy
Goula Maria	Chemical Engineering	Physical Chemistry/Energy
Kalogiratou Zacharoula	Informatics	Computation Theory& Mathematics/ General Physics
Koroneos Christoforos	Mechanical Engineering	Environmental Sciences / Energy
Pilavakis Petros	Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering & Transports / Energy
Tsipouras Markos	Electrical and Computer Engineering	Biomedical Engineering/Medical Informatics

The list also includes scientists whose work has been most cited by peers throughout their careers. In this list the three UoWM Academic Staff members are:

Name	Department	Scientific Field/Sub-Field
Koroneos Christoforos	Mechanical Engineering	Environmental Sciences/ Energy
Pilavakis Petros	Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering & Transports / Energy
Theodoulidis Theodoros	Mechanical Engineering	General Physics/Applied Physics

These great distinctions reflect the high level and internationally recognized research conducted at the University of Western Macedonia and will be the driving force of high goals achievement.



UKLO MANAGES ITS FUNCTIONING IN TIMES OF PANDEMICS

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the expressed need for adjustment to the new circumstances, has greatly affected UKLO. Its academic community, in the course of the past period of time, according to its Rector Korunovski, had to learn by doing, to respect the health protocols in organizing the educational process, events and activities, the whole way of living in general and to acclimatize to the new normal. In this respect, UKLO first took up steps to alleviate the teaching process (online – blended – physical attendance), with proactive participation of academic staff and having an ear for students needs, followed by introducing a set of documents to regulate this matter and the Strategy for Learning in pandemic circumstances. Regarding its responsibility towards the wider community, UKLO assisted student activism and volunteer work and organized a set of online discussions tackling the emerging issues related to socio-economic, legal, health, educational spheres impacted

by the pandemic, known as the CORONA dialogues that provided specific input by a range of academic experts.

In parallel, UKLO strengthened the activity of the Office for psychological counseling and guidance for its students and staff to, free of any charge, try and provide professional support in coping with the pandemic-induced issues in the area of mental health. University experts in psychology and medicine further broadened the activity and offered the service to the wider community.

After a year since the outbreak UKLO has learnt many lessons, but following the recent developments in the COVID situation, it confirms its commitment to go on with its service to the community and the society, as well as its readiness to make all the indispensable modifications on the go, to better suit the calls of these challenging times.



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