WBNET

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The Story and Legacy of the Network of Centres for Regional Short Study Programmes in the Western Balkans

2023 – 2026

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ERASMUS+ CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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About Project WBNET

Network of centers for regional short study programs in countries of the Western Balkans

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“Every meaningful achievement begins with people willing to share their knowledge, their time and their belief in a common idea.”

The story of WBNET is, above all, a story of people.

This monograph reflects three years of ideas exchanged, knowledge shared, challenges overcome and opportunities created through the commitment of individuals and institutions who believed in the value of cooperation and lifelong learning.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the **European Union through the Erasmus+ Programme**, which made it possible to transform an ambitious idea into a regional initiative connecting higher education institutions, educators, learners, professionals and communities across the Western Balkans and Europe.

Our sincere appreciation goes to all **WBNET partner institutions and their academic, administrative and project teams**. Their expertise, dedication and willingness to learn from one another shaped every stage of the project – from the first discussions and needs analyses to the development of Short Study Programmes, establishment of new Centres, implementation of training activities and creation of a sustainable regional network. Behind every project result presented in these pages stand people who contributed their knowledge, energy and enthusiasm.

We extend special thanks to our **industry and strategic partners**, whose practical experience helped bridge the worlds of education and work. Their contribution ensured that the programmes developed through WBNET remained connected to real professional needs and that learners were given opportunities to translate knowledge into practice.

We are equally grateful to the **teachers, trainers, researchers and experts** who shared their experience across institutions and borders, as well as to the **students and participants of the Short Study Programmes**, whose curiosity, engagement and feedback gave the project its true purpose. Ultimately, educational innovation has meaning only when it creates new opportunities for people to learn, develop and grow.

Our appreciation also goes to the institutions, organisations, media representatives and local communities that supported project activities and helped bring the WBNET story to wider audiences. Every meeting hosted, every classroom opened, every experience shared and every story communicated contributed to building the community represented in this monograph.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge something that cannot easily be expressed through project indicators or deliverables: **the relationships created along the way**. The professional connections, friendships, mutual trust and shared experiences developed

throughout WBNET have become an important part of its legacy.

To everyone who contributed – whether through a major project responsibility or through one small but meaningful action –

Thank you for being part of the WBNET journey. What we built together belongs to all of us.

WBnet

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Executive Summary

The **Network of Centres for Regional Short Study Programmes in the Countries of the Western Balkans – WBNET** was created from a simple but increasingly important question: **how can higher education respond more quickly and effectively to the changing needs of learners, employers and society?**

Across the Western Balkans, rapid technological development, digital transformation and evolving labour market requirements are creating a growing demand for new knowledge and competencies. Traditional higher education programmes remain essential, but they cannot always provide the flexibility and speed required for continuous professional development. WBNET addressed this challenge by introducing a new approach to lifelong learning based on flexible, practice-oriented **Short Study Programmes**, developed in close cooperation between higher education institutions, European partners and industry.

Implemented within the **Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education** framework, WBNET brought together institutions from the Western Balkans and the European Union around a shared vision: to strengthen institutional capacities for lifelong learning and create sustainable educational opportunities that respond directly to emerging professional and societal needs. From the outset, the project was conceived not simply as the development of several new courses, but as the creation of an educational model capable of continuing and evolving beyond the project itself.

The WBNET journey began with understanding needs. Labour market analysis, consultations with employers and exchange of experience among partner institutions provided the foundation for developing a common methodology for Short Study Programmes. Study visits, international training activities and in-home trainings strengthened the capacities of academic and administrative staff, while continuous cooperation among partners enabled European experience to be adapted to the specific educational and economic contexts of the participating Western Balkan institutions.

These efforts resulted in one of the project's most significant achievements: the development of *eight new Short Study Programmes—four in Kosovo* and four in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Designed around clearly defined learning outcomes and practical competencies, the programmes created new opportunities for upskilling, reskilling and continuous professional development. Their introduction represents an important step towards establishing more flexible lifelong learning pathways and strengthening the connection between higher education and the labour market.

To provide a permanent institutional framework for these programmes, WBNET supported the establishment of **four Centres for Short Study Programmes** at the participating Higher Education Institutions in the Western Balkans. Supported by modernised infrastructure, specialised laboratories, trained staff and new educational resources, the Centres transformed project results into institutional capacity. They were designed not only to deliver the programmes developed within WBNET, but also to identify future educational needs, develop new learning opportunities and maintain continuous cooperation with employers and local communities.

Industry cooperation was therefore embedded throughout the project rather than treated as an accompanying activity. Employers contributed to needs identification, programme development, round-table discussions, practical training and professional internships. This dialogue helped ensure that educational provision remained closely connected with real workplace requirements and established a sustainable model in which **higher education and industry become partners in developing relevant competencies for the future**.

At the same time, WBNET created a strong environment for regional and international cooperation. Project meetings, study visits, trainings, conferences and professional exchanges connected educators, researchers, institutional leaders and industry representatives across borders. Knowledge was not transferred in only one direction; it was exchanged, adapted and developed collectively. In this way, the consortium gradually evolved from a project partnership into a professional community based on trust, shared experience and a common commitment to educational innovation.

The impact of WBNET can consequently be observed at several interconnected levels. **Educationally**, it introduced new opportunities for flexible, practice-oriented lifelong learning. **Institutionally**, it strengthened capacities, infrastructure and mechanisms for developing and delivering innovative programmes. **Professionally**, it created stronger links between higher education and the labour market. **Regionally**, it established relationships and networks capable of supporting future cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Visibility and dissemination accompanied this process from the beginning. Through the project website, social media, institutional communication channels, promotional materials, public events and media coverage, WBNET shared its activities and achievements with audiences beyond the consortium. Communication became not simply a means of documenting project implementation, but an instrument for promoting lifelong learning, encouraging stakeholder engagement and extending the reach of project results.

Yet the significance of WBNET lies not only in what has already been achieved.

The Centres, programmes, laboratories and educational resources created through the project provide the foundations for continued development. Regular dialogue with employers, curriculum renewal, quality assurance, staff development and future cooperation among partner institutions are intended to ensure that the educational model continues to evolve alongside technological and labour market change. The professional relationships created throughout the project provide an equally important foundation for new initiatives, mobility, knowledge exchange and future European cooperation.

Ultimately, WBNET demonstrates that sustainable educational transformation is not created by infrastructure, curricula or institutions alone. It emerges when **people, knowledge and opportunities are connected**.

This monograph tells the story of that transformation – from the needs that inspired the project and the partnerships that shaped

it, through the programmes, Centres and activities that brought its vision to life, to the educational, institutional and regional legacy that will continue beyond its formal completion.

WBNET demonstrates that the lasting value of a European project lies not only in what is created during its lifetime, but in the **capacity, relationships and opportunities that remain when the project itself comes to an end**.

8

Short Study Programmes

4

Centres for Short Study Programmes

1

Regional Network

∞

Opportunities for Lifelong Learning

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PART I

Context and Rationale

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– NELSON MANDELA

CHAPTER

01

WBNET at a Glance

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

– PETER DRUCKER

Introduction

Higher education has entered an era of continuous transformation. Rapid technological development, digitalisation and changing labour market demands have significantly altered the expectations placed upon Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). While universities and academies continue to fulfil their traditional mission of providing comprehensive academic education, they are increasingly expected to respond quickly to emerging societal and economic needs by offering flexible learning opportunities that enable learners to acquire new knowledge and professional competences throughout their careers.

The need for such flexibility is particularly evident in technical and technological disciplines, where innovation cycles have become considerably shorter than the traditional processes of curriculum development and programme accreditation. New technologies, software tools and industrial practices evolve at an unprecedented pace,

creating a growing demand for specialised competences that cannot always be addressed through conventional degree programmes alone. As a result, lifelong learning and short, practice-oriented educational programmes have become an essential component of modern higher education systems across Europe.

Within the Western Balkans (WB), these challenges are further influenced by the region's economic development, digital transformation and the continuing need to strengthen cooperation between higher education and the labour market. Employers increasingly seek graduates equipped with practical skills and immediately applicable knowledge, while Higher Education Institutions strive to modernise their educational offer and enhance their responsiveness to changing professional requirements. Bridging this gap requires innovative educational models capable of combining academic excellence with flexibility, practical orientation and close cooperation with industry.

It was in response to these challenges that the **WBNET – Network of Centres for Regional Short Study Programmes in the Countries of the Western Balkans** project was conceived. Supported through the **Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)** programme, WBNET represents a collaborative effort of higher education institutions and non-academic partners from the European Union and the Western Balkans to strengthen the capacity of higher education systems through the establishment of **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, the development of innovative educational programmes, and the promotion of closer cooperation between academia and industry. The project places particular emphasis on lifelong learning, employability, digital transformation and regional cooperation, recognising these elements as key drivers of sustainable educational development. The project is implemented over a period of **36 months** by a consortium of **nine partner organisations** from **Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo***, bringing together complementary academic expertise, institutional experience and industry knowledge in pursuit of common objectives.

Rather than presenting only the activities undertaken during the project, this Monograph documents the broader journey of the consortium – from identifying regional challenges and designing innovative educational solutions to establishing institutional structures that will continue supporting lifelong learning beyond the project's lifetime. It reflects not only the tangible outputs of WBNET, but also the collaborative spirit, shared expertise and commitment that enabled these achievements.

1.1 Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education

The Erasmus+ Programme has become one of the European Union's most influential initiatives supporting cooperation, innovation and internationalisation in education, training, youth and sport. Within its broad portfolio of actions, **Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)** projects play a distinctive role by fostering institutional development, promoting educational reform and strengthening cooperation between Higher Education Institutions across Europe and partner countries. Their overarching objective is to improve the quality, relevance and accessibility of higher education while contributing to sustainable social and economic development.

CBHE projects are designed to support the modernisation of higher education systems through international cooperation. Rather than focusing solely on academic mobility, they encourage Higher Education Institutions to work together in addressing structural challenges, exchanging

knowledge and developing innovative educational practices that respond to contemporary societal needs. Particular attention is given to strengthening institutional capacities, improving governance, enhancing teaching and learning, promoting digital transformation, and fostering stronger links between higher education and the labour market.

Within this framework, the Western Balkans has been recognised as a strategically important region for higher education development. Countries in the region continue to modernise their educational systems while simultaneously responding to rapid technological change, demographic challenges and evolving labour market requirements. Capacity Building projects therefore provide an important platform for transferring good practices from European Higher Education Institutions, while encouraging regional cooperation and the development of sustainable institutional networks.

The WBNET project was funded under the **ERASMUS-EDU-2023-CBHE-STRAND-2** call, which supports projects aimed at enhancing the relevance, quality and responsiveness of higher education through institutional cooperation and capacity development. The project aligns closely with the priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme by promoting educational innovation, strengthening cooperation between Higher Education Institutions and industry, and supporting lifelong learning through the introduction of flexible educational pathways. In particular, WBNET responds to the growing demand for educational models capable of addressing rapidly changing labour market needs while maintaining high academic standards.

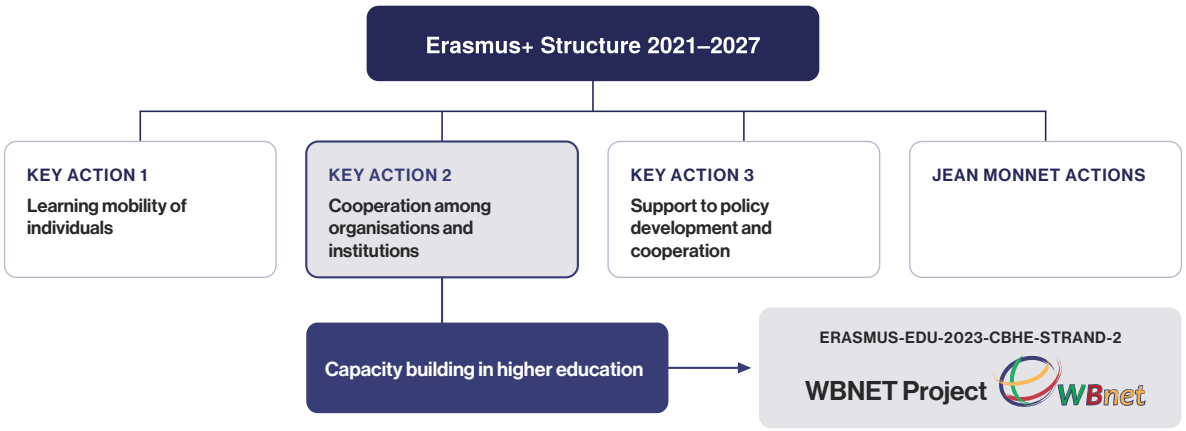


Figure 1.1 The WBNET Project within the Erasmus+ Framework

Beyond its educational dimension, WBNET also contributes to broader European policy objectives related to digital transformation, regional cooperation and sustainable development. By establishing institutional structures dedicated to the continuous development of Short Study Programmes, the project supports a more agile and responsive higher education ecosystem capable of adapting to future technological and economic changes. In doing so, it reinforces the role of Higher Education Institutions as active contributors to regional innovation, economic competitiveness and lifelong learning.

WBNET INSIGHT

Why Capacity Building Matters

Capacity Building projects are designed to create lasting institutional change rather than temporary project outputs. Their success is measured not only by the activities completed during the funding period, but also by the ability of participating institutions to sustain new practices, strengthen partnerships and continue delivering benefits after the project has formally ended. The establishment of Centres for Short Study Programmes within WBNET reflects this philosophy by creating permanent institutional structures capable of supporting lifelong learning and responding to future labour market needs.

While the Erasmus+ Capacity Building framework provided the strategic foundation for WBNET, the project itself emerged from a careful analysis of regional educational challenges and labour market needs. Understanding why the consortium chose to focus on Short Study Programmes requires a closer look at the context in which the project was conceived and the vision that guided its development.

1.2 The Genesis of WBNET

Higher education has always evolved in response to societal change. Throughout history, universities have adapted their educational models to prepare graduates for new scientific discoveries, technological breakthroughs and changing economic realities. In the twenty-first century, however, the pace of change has accelerated dramatically. Digital technologies, automation, artificial intelligence and rapidly evolving industrial processes continuously reshape professional profiles, requiring knowledge and competences that often did not exist only a few years earlier.

For Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), this presents a significant challenge. Traditional study programmes remain the cornerstone of higher education, providing comprehensive academic education and developing broad professional competences. Nevertheless, designing, accrediting and implementing new degree programmes is a complex and time-consuming process, frequently spanning several years. By the time a new curriculum is introduced, labour market demands may already have evolved, creating a persistent gap between educational provision and employers' expectations.

This challenge is particularly evident in technical and technological disciplines such as engineering, multimedia and computing, where innovation cycles are exceptionally short. Employers increasingly require specialists with practical competences in emerging technologies, while professionals already employed in these sectors seek opportunities to update their knowledge through flexible lifelong learning pathways. Responding to these needs requires educational models that combine academic quality with the flexibility to introduce new content within significantly shorter timeframes.

The Western Balkans (WB) share these challenges while also facing several regional characteristics that further emphasise the importance of educational innovation. Economic development, digital transformation and the growing integration of regional economies into European markets have created an increasing demand for highly qualified professionals equipped with specialised skills. At the same time, many employers continue to report difficulties in recruiting graduates whose competences fully correspond to rapidly changing workplace requirements. This skills mismatch

affects both economic competitiveness and the employability of graduates, highlighting the need for stronger cooperation between Higher Education Institutions and the labour market.



Rapid technological development requires educational models that combine academic excellence with practical, industry-relevant competences.

Recognising these circumstances, the WBNET consortium identified an opportunity to develop a new educational approach capable of responding more rapidly to labour market needs while preserving the academic quality associated with higher education. Rather than viewing lifelong learning as an activity separate from traditional higher education, the project embraced the concept of **Short Study Programmes** as an integral component of modern educational systems. These programmes were envisioned as flexible, practice-oriented learning opportunities designed to provide specialised competences in areas where industry demand evolves faster than conventional curricula.

At the heart of this vision lies the establishment of **Centres for Short Study Programmes**. More than administrative units, these Centres were conceived as dynamic institutional hubs connecting Higher Education Institutions with employers, professional organisations and local communities. Their role extends beyond organising educational activities; they continuously monitor labour market developments, identify emerging competence needs, coordinate the development of new programmes and promote lifelong learning within their respective institutions. By creating permanent institutional structures rather than temporary project activities, WBNET sought to ensure that the project's achievements would continue generating value long after the formal completion of the project.

Another defining feature of WBNET was its commitment to genuine international cooperation. Instead of transferring existing educational models from one institution to another, the consortium adopted a collaborative approach in which expertise, experiences and good practices were shared among partners from the European Union and the Western Balkans. This mutual

exchange enabled the development of educational solutions tailored to regional needs while benefiting from European experience in curriculum design, quality assurance and cooperation with industry. The result was not simply a collection of individual programmes but the creation of a regional network capable of supporting continuous educational innovation.

From its very beginning, WBNET therefore represented more than a curriculum development initiative. It was conceived as a strategic investment in institutional capacity, regional cooperation and educational sustainability. By combining academic knowledge, industrial expertise and international partnership, the project established the foundations for a more flexible higher education ecosystem capable of responding to future challenges with greater speed, relevance and resilience.

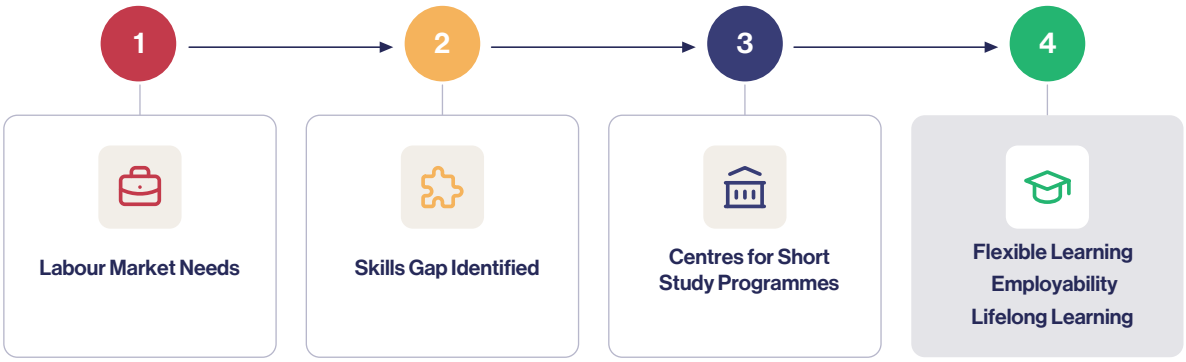


Figure 1.2 From Challenge to Solution

Ultimately, the genesis of WBNET can be understood as a response to a simple yet fundamental question: **How can Higher Education Institutions remain academically rigorous while becoming sufficiently agile to respond to rapidly changing labour market needs?** The answer proposed by the consortium was not to replace traditional higher education, but to complement it through innovative Short Study Programmes supported by dedicated Centres, international cooperation and close engagement with industry. This vision became the driving force behind every subsequent activity undertaken within the project.

WBNET INSIGHT

Why "Short" Does Not Mean "Less"

Short Study Programmes are not simplified versions of traditional degree programmes. Instead, they are carefully designed educational pathways focused on specific professional competences required by contemporary labour markets. Their strength lies in flexibility, responsiveness and practical orientation, enabling learners to acquire targeted knowledge within a relatively short period while maintaining the quality standards expected from Higher Education Institutions.

1.3 Vision and Objectives

Every successful project begins with a vision – a clear understanding of the change it seeks to achieve. For WBNET, that vision extended far beyond the development of new educational programmes. The consortium envisioned a higher education ecosystem in which universities and academies would be able to respond more rapidly to emerging labour market needs, collaborate more closely with industry, and offer flexible learning opportunities throughout an individual's professional life. Rather than treating lifelong learning as an additional educational activity, WBNET recognised it as an essential component of contemporary higher education and a prerequisite for sustainable regional development.

This vision was shaped by a simple observation: knowledge has become one of society's most dynamic resources. Technological innovation continuously transforms professional practice, creating new occupations while redefining existing ones. Consequently, education can no longer be perceived as a process completed upon graduation. Instead, it must become a continuous journey in which Higher Education Institutions accompany learners throughout their professional careers by providing opportunities for acquiring new competences whenever they are needed.

The consortium therefore sought to establish a model capable of combining the academic strengths of Higher Education Institutions with the flexibility required by modern labour markets. This model was founded on three mutually reinforcing pillars: innovative educational programmes, sustainable institutional structures and strong cooperation between academia and industry. Together, these elements formed the strategic framework upon which all project activities were developed.

The first pillar focused on the development of **Short Study Programmes** designed to address specific competence needs identified through close consultation with employers and professional organisations. Unlike conventional degree programmes, these educational pathways were intended to provide targeted, practice-oriented knowledge within a shorter period while maintaining the quality standards expected from Higher Education Institutions. Their purpose was not to replace existing academic programmes but to complement them, creating additional opportunities for lifelong learning and professional development.

The second pillar centred on the establishment of **Centres for Short Study Programmes** within participating Higher Education Institutions. The consortium recognised that innovative educational programmes require equally innovative institutional frameworks capable of supporting their long-term development. These Centres were therefore conceived as permanent organisational units responsible for identifying labour market needs, coordinating programme development, maintaining cooperation with industry and ensuring the sustainability of educational activities beyond the project's lifetime. In this way, WBNET invested not only in educational content but also in institutional capacity, creating structures that would continue generating value for learners, employers and society.

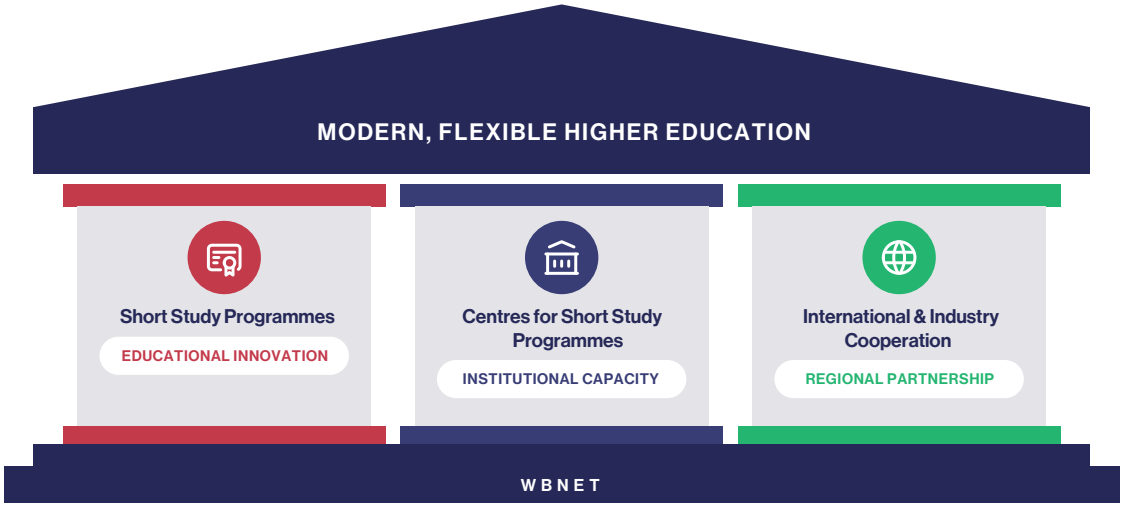


Figure 1.3 The Three Strategic Pillars of WBNET

The third pillar emphasised international cooperation and knowledge exchange. Bringing together partners from the European Union and the Western Balkans enabled the consortium to combine complementary expertise in curriculum development, quality assurance, digital learning and cooperation with industry. Rather than transferring ready-made educational models, WBNET promoted collaborative development, allowing partners to jointly design solutions adapted to regional circumstances while benefiting from European experience and established good practices. This collaborative approach strengthened institutional relationships and laid the foundations for a sustainable regional network capable of supporting future educational innovation.

Guided by this vision, the consortium defined a set of strategic objectives that translated its ambitions into concrete actions. The project aimed to establish a network of **Centres for Short Study Programmes** within participating Higher Education Institutions, creating institutional mechanisms for the continuous development and delivery of flexible educational opportunities. At the same time, it sought to design and implement innovative **Short Study Programmes** in the fields of multimedia, engineering and computing, responding directly to the competence needs identified in cooperation with employers and industry representatives. These educational activities were complemented by efforts to strengthen cooperation between Higher Education Institutions in the Western Balkans and the European Union, promote the exchange of knowledge and good practices, and encourage closer collaboration between academia and the economic sector. Together, these objectives contributed to the broader ambition of enhancing employability, supporting lifelong learning and fostering the modernisation of higher education systems across the region.

Beyond its tangible outputs, WBNET aspired to demonstrate that educational innovation is most effective when it is developed collaboratively and embedded within institutional practice. By integrating curriculum development, organisational capacity building and international cooperation into a single framework, the project sought to establish a model that could inspire similar initiatives throughout the Western Balkans and beyond. Its success would therefore be measured not only by the programmes developed or the Centres established, but also by the strength of the partnerships created, the institutional changes initiated and the opportunities generated for future learners.



Educational innovation emerges where academic knowledge meets professional practice.

Ultimately, the vision of WBNET reflects a broader understanding of the role of higher education in contemporary society. Higher Education Institutions are no longer expected solely to transmit knowledge; they are increasingly called upon to anticipate change, stimulate innovation and contribute actively to regional development. Through its integrated approach to educational modernisation, WBNET demonstrates how international cooperation, institutional commitment and close engagement with the labour market can work together to create more responsive, inclusive and sustainable systems of higher education.

WBNET INSIGHT

Vision Beyond the Project

Although WBNET formally spans thirty-six months, its vision extends well beyond the project's duration. The establishment of institutional structures, the development of sustainable partnerships and the promotion of lifelong learning create foundations that will continue supporting educational innovation long after the project's formal completion. In this sense, WBNET should be viewed not as a temporary initiative, but as the beginning of a long-term transformation in the way Higher Education Institutions engage with learners, employers and society.

1.4 WBNET in Numbers

Key Facts at a Glance

Before exploring the partnership that shaped WBNET, consider the project's scale, geographical reach and institutional diversity.
These figures summarise three years of implementation.

> By combining academic excellence, institutional commitment and close engagement with industry, WBNET builds a more responsive, inclusive and sustainable higher education ecosystem.

36
Months of Collaboration

9
Partner Organisations

5
Countries Represented

7
Higher Education Institutions

2
Non-academic Partners

4
Centres for Short Study Programmes

4
Staff Training

16
In-home Trainings

330+
Participation in Trainings

8
Short Study Programmes Developed

16
Pilot Programme Cycles

320+
Participants in Pilot Activities

€596,148
Erasmus+ Funding Awarded

18
Intellectual Outputs & Deliverables

1
Regional Network Established

A Strong Regional Partnership

5 COUNTRIES



* Kosovo designation is without prejudice to positions on status and follows UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the declaration of independence.

Our Aim

Strengthen higher education in the Western Balkans through flexible, industry-relevant short study programmes and lifelong learning.

The WBNET Journey

2023-24 Project Launch & Kick-off

2024 Needs Analysis & Mapping

2024–25 Study Visits & Exchange

2024-25 Curriculum Development

2024–25 Centres for SSPs Established

2026 Pilot Implementation

2024-26 Evaluation & Assessment

2026 Final Conference & Completion

WBNET is more than a project — it connects higher education and industry, empowers individuals, strengthens institutions and supports sustainable development across the region.

Chapter Summary

WBNET was conceived as a response to the evolving needs of higher education in the Western Balkans and the growing demand for flexible, practice-oriented learning opportunities. Supported by the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education Programme, the project introduced an innovative model centred on **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, strengthened cooperation between Higher Education Institutions and industry, and promoted lifelong learning as a key component of educational modernisation. Through a shared vision, clearly defined objectives and a strong commitment to regional cooperation, WBNET laid the foundations for a more responsive and sustainable higher education ecosystem capable of addressing current and future labour market challenges.

While the vision of WBNET defined the project's strategic direction, its successful implementation depended on something equally important: a partnership capable of transforming ideas into concrete actions. Educational innovation of this scale requires complementary expertise, institutional commitment and effective collaboration across national borders. The following chapter therefore introduces the consortium behind WBNET, presenting the Higher Education Institutions and partner organisations whose shared knowledge, experience and dedication made the project possible.

WBNET REFLECTION

"Educational transformation begins with a shared vision, but it becomes reality through collaboration, innovation and the courage to embrace change."

CHAPTER

02

Building the Partnership

“Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.”

– HENRY FORD

Introduction

Educational innovation is rarely the result of individual effort. Contemporary challenges faced by Higher Education Institutions require knowledge that transcends institutional, disciplinary and national boundaries. Developing innovative educational models, strengthening cooperation with industry and establishing sustainable structures for lifelong learning demand a diversity of perspectives and complementary expertise that no single organisation can provide independently.

The WBNET consortium was established on this principle of complementarity. Bringing together Higher Education Institutions from the European Union and the Western Balkans, together with organisations representing professional practice and labour market interests, the partnership was carefully designed to combine academic excellence, institutional experience and practical expertise. Rather than functioning as a collection of independent beneficiaries, the

consortium operated as a collaborative network in which each partner contributed unique knowledge while working towards shared objectives.

This collaborative philosophy shaped every stage of the project – from the initial needs analysis and curriculum development to the establishment of Centres for Short Study Programmes, pilot implementation and dissemination of results. The strength of WBNET therefore lies not only in the outcomes achieved, but also in the partnership itself, which created an environment where innovation could emerge through dialogue, mutual learning and shared responsibility.



The strength of WBNET lies not only in its institutions, but in the people who transformed a shared vision into lasting cooperation.

2.1 Partnership Beyond Institutions

Partnership is often perceived as a formal relationship established through contracts, agreements and clearly defined responsibilities. While these elements provide the necessary organisational framework for implementing international projects, successful cooperation is ultimately built upon something far less tangible: trust, openness, shared responsibility and a genuine willingness to learn from one another. Throughout the implementation of WBNET, these qualities transformed a consortium of individual institutions into a cohesive community working towards a common goal.

From the very beginning, the consortium recognised that educational innovation cannot be achieved through isolated efforts. Each participating institution brought valuable knowledge, experience and institutional strengths, yet none possessed all the expertise required to address the complex challenges associated with developing flexible educational models for rapidly evolving labour markets. Rather than attempting to replicate existing solutions, partners chose to combine their diverse perspectives, creating an environment in which ideas could be openly exchanged, critically discussed and jointly refined.

This collaborative culture extended far beyond scheduled project meetings. Study visits, workshops, training events

and regular online communication created numerous opportunities for academic staff, project managers and administrative personnel to exchange experiences, discuss challenges and identify practical solutions. Such interactions gradually strengthened professional relationships while fostering a shared understanding of the project's objectives and values. Over time, institutional cooperation evolved into professional partnership, and professional partnership developed into lasting personal connections among members of the consortium.

Equally important was the recognition that every partner, regardless of size or previous international experience, contributed unique value to the project. European Union partners shared extensive experience in curriculum development, quality assurance and educational innovation, while Higher Education Institutions from the Western Balkans provided deep insight into regional educational systems, institutional needs and labour market priorities. Non-academic partners ensured that discussions remained firmly connected to professional practice, helping to align educational content with contemporary industry expectations. This diversity of expertise became one of the consortium's greatest strengths, allowing solutions to emerge through collaboration rather than being transferred from one institution to another.

The partnership established within WBNET therefore represents far more than a consortium created for the duration of a funded project. It reflects a network of institutions committed to continuous cooperation, mutual support and the shared pursuit of educational excellence. By working together, the partners demonstrated that sustainable innovation is not the product of individual achievements but the outcome of collective effort, complementary expertise and a common vision for the future of higher education.

WBNET INSIGHT

Partnership as a Capacity-Building Outcome

Capacity Building projects are often evaluated through measurable outputs such as curricula, training activities or institutional structures. Equally important, however, are the professional relationships established among participating organisations. These networks of trust and cooperation create opportunities for future joint initiatives, facilitate the exchange of expertise and strengthen institutional resilience. In many respects, the partnership itself becomes one of the most enduring outcomes of the project.

2.2 Meet the Consortium

The institutions behind the WBNET success story

The strength of the WBNET partnership lies in the diversity of its members. The consortium brings together Higher Education Institutions with complementary academic expertise, together with organisations representing industry and professional practice. While each partner contributes its own institutional experience and knowledge, all share a common commitment to strengthening the responsiveness of higher education to the evolving needs of society and the labour market.

Rather than assigning isolated responsibilities, WBNET encouraged collaborative implementation in which partners worked closely across institutional and national boundaries. European Union partners provided valuable experience in educational

WBNET CONSORTIUM

The WBNET Network

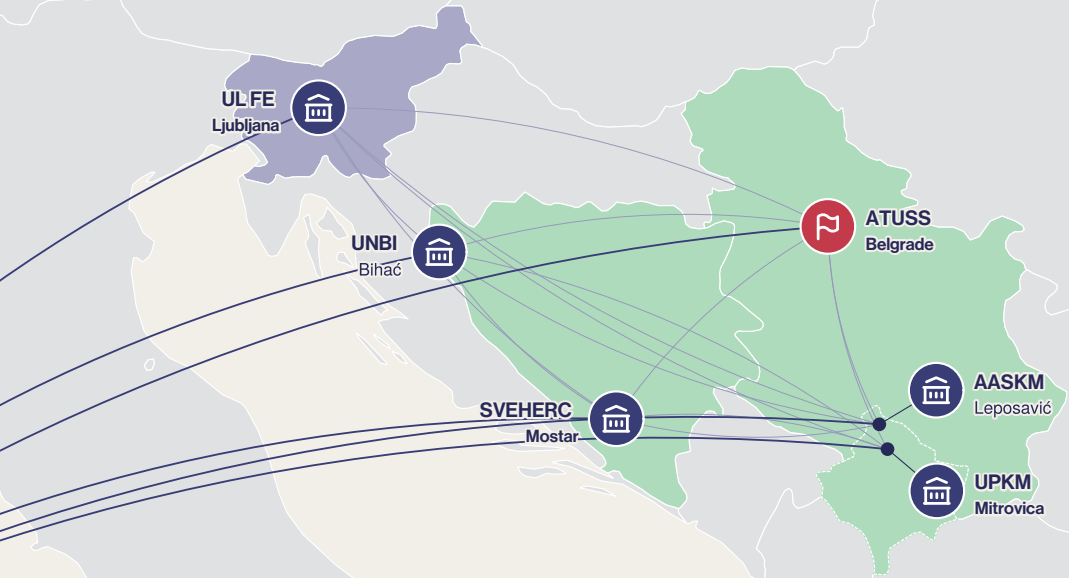
7 HEI partner institutions · 2 associated partners



Different institutions. One vision. Shared impact.

innovation, curriculum development and quality assurance, while Higher Education Institutions from the Western Balkans led the adaptation and implementation of project activities within their national contexts. Non-academic partners ensured that the project's educational solutions remained firmly connected to labour market expectations and practical professional needs.

Together, these complementary roles created a partnership in which every institution contributed to a shared vision while simultaneously benefiting from the expertise of the consortium as a whole. The following profiles present the participating organisations and highlight their specific contributions to the WBNET project.



ATUSS — Coordinator
Akademija tehničko-umetničkih strukovnih studija Beograd
Belgrade, Serbia

UL FE — Partner
University of Ljubljana – Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Ljubljana, Slovenia

UPM — Partner
Universidad Politécnica de Madrid
Madrid, Spain

UPKM — Partner
University of Mitrovica
Mitrovica, Kosovo*

AASKM — Partner
Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija
Leposavić, Kosovo*

SVEHERC — Partner
Sveučilište Hercegovina
Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

UNBI — Partner
University of Bihać
Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina

W3 Lab — Associated partner
W3 Lab Digital Solutions L.L.C.
Kosovo*

ARPSU — Associated partner
Association of Rectors of Private Universities
Bosnia and Herzegovina

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Akademija tehničko-umetničkih studija Beograd (ATUSS)

PROJECT COORDINATOR | SERBIA

"Connecting institutions, coordinating expertise and transforming a common vision into a shared achievement."

The Academy of Technical Applied Studies Belgrade (ATUSS) is one of Serbia's leading institutions of professional higher education, bringing together five specialised departments in engineering, information technologies, civil engineering, railway engineering, and design. Its multidisciplinary profile, strong emphasis on applied education and close cooperation with industry make the Academy an important contributor to the development of modern, practice-oriented study programmes. Building on extensive experience in Tempus and Erasmus+ projects, ATUSS has continuously strengthened its international cooperation and institutional capacities, promoting educational innovation, curriculum modernisation and lifelong learning. These characteristics, together with its experience in coordinating international projects, made ATUSS a natural choice to lead the WBNET consortium and support the successful implementation of its strategic objectives.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Project coordination and consortium management
- Financial and administrative oversight
- Coordination of project meetings and reporting
- Transfer of good practice from previous project
- Support for curriculum development
- Promotion of international cooperation
- Capacity building and dissemination

WBNET SIGNATURE

Project Coordination • Consortium Leadership • Curriculum Innovation • International Cooperation

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

ATUSS integrates five specialised departments into a single multidisciplinary institution, creating a unique environment for applied higher education and interdisciplinary collaboration.

АТУСС



University of Ljubljana – Faculty of Electrical Engineering (UL FE)

CONSORTIUM PARTNER | SLOVENIA

"Advancing educational innovation through research excellence and international cooperation."

The **Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the University of Ljubljana (UL FE)** is one of Slovenia's leading higher education and research institutions in the fields of electrical engineering, information and communication technologies, energy systems and emerging digital technologies. Combining high-quality education with internationally recognised research, the Faculty prepares future engineers capable of addressing complex technological challenges in an increasingly digital and interconnected world. Its multidisciplinary approach embraces areas ranging from power engineering and communications to artificial intelligence, robotics and biomedical engineering, reflecting the evolving nature of modern electrical engineering. Through active participation in numerous international research and educational initiatives, UL FE has established itself as a trusted partner in European cooperation and educational innovation.

Within the WBNET project, UL FE contributed its extensive academic expertise and international experience to the development of sustainable institutional models for lifelong learning. As the leader of **Work Package 2 – Developing Centres for Short Study Programmes**, the Faculty played a key role in designing the organisational framework for the Centres established within partner institutions. Its experience in higher education modernisation and innovation supported the consortium in creating institutional structures capable of responding to evolving labour market needs while ensuring the long-term sustainability of project results.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 2 – Developing Centres for Short Study Programmes**
- Transfer of European good practices in higher education innovation
- Support for institutional capacity building
- Expertise in engineering education and emerging technologies
- Contribution to international cooperation and knowledge exchange

WBNET SIGNATURE

Institutional Innovation • Engineering Excellence • Lifelong Learning • European Cooperation

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Electrical engineering at UL FE extends far beyond traditional engineering disciplines, integrating digital technologies, artificial intelligence, robotics, communications and sustainable energy systems into a modern interdisciplinary educational environment.

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
Faculty of Electrical Engineering



Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM)

CONSORTIUM PARTNER | SPAIN

"Embedding quality into innovation through academic excellence and international leadership."

The **Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM)** is Spain's largest public technological university and one of Europe's leading institutions in engineering, architecture and applied sciences. Built upon the tradition of several historic engineering schools, UPM combines academic excellence with internationally recognised research, innovation and strong engagement in European cooperation. Its long-standing contribution to technological education, interdisciplinary research and international projects has positioned the University among the leading engineering institutions in Europe.

Within the WBNET consortium, UPM contributed its extensive experience in educational quality management, institutional development and European project implementation. As the leader of **Work Package 5 – Quality Assurance**, the University guided the development and implementation of the project's quality framework, ensuring that activities, deliverables and project outcomes consistently met the highest academic and organisational standards. Through continuous monitoring, internal evaluation and the promotion of a culture of quality, UPM supported the consortium in establishing transparent procedures for assessing progress, identifying opportunities for improvement and ensuring the long-term sustainability of project results. This role helped ensure that quality became an integral part of every stage of WBNET implementation rather than a final evaluation exercise.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 5 – Quality Assurance**
- Development of the project's quality assurance framework
- Monitoring and evaluation of project implementation
- Guidance on quality standards and continuous improvement
- Support for institutional capacity building and sustainability

WBNET SIGNATURE

Quality Excellence • Continuous Improvement • Academic Leadership • European Cooperation

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

UPM has built its international reputation by combining centuries of engineering tradition with cutting-edge research and innovation, making quality assurance and academic excellence central elements of its institutional culture.

POLITÉCNICA



University of Mitrovica (UPKM)

CONSORTIUM PARTNER | KOSOVO*

"Transforming academic expertise into innovative learning opportunities for the digital age."

The **University of Mitrovica (UPKM)** is a comprehensive public Higher Education Institution with a long-standing tradition of educating professionals across a broad range of scientific disciplines. Through its ten faculties and numerous study programmes, the University plays an important role in higher education, scientific research and regional development. Committed to academic excellence, modern teaching methods and international cooperation, UPKM continuously strengthens its educational capacities while promoting innovation, digital transformation and the internationalisation of higher education. Its active participation in Erasmus+ and other international initiatives reflects the University's commitment to modernising educational practices and strengthening cooperation with European partners.

Within the WBNET consortium, UPKM assumed a central academic role as the leader of **Work Package 3 – Creating Programmes of Short Studies in Multimedia, Engineering and Computing**. Building on its expertise in technical sciences and applied education, the University coordinated the development of innovative Short Study Programmes aligned with labour market needs. Through close cooperation with consortium partners and industry representatives, UPKM contributed to designing flexible, practice-oriented curricula that combine academic quality with contemporary technological knowledge, creating new opportunities for lifelong learning and professional development.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 3 – Creating Programmes of Short Studies in Multimedia, Engineering and Computing**
- Coordination of curriculum development for Short Study Programmes
- Promotion of practice-oriented education and digital competences
- Cooperation with industry in programme design
- Support for pilot implementation and academic collaboration

WBNET SIGNATURE

Curriculum Development • Digital Education • Technical Expertise • Practice-Oriented Learning

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Through its Faculty of Technical Sciences, UPKM combines engineering, information technologies and applied research, providing a strong academic foundation for developing innovative educational programmes in rapidly evolving technological fields.

University of Pristina
Kosovska Mitrovica



Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)

CONSORTIUM PARTNER | KOSOVO*

"Giving visibility to innovation by connecting project achievements with people, institutions and communities."

The **Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)** is a public Higher Education Institution dedicated to delivering professionally oriented higher education closely aligned with the needs of the labour market and regional development. Through its study programmes in technical, technological and other applied disciplines, the Academy combines academic knowledge with practical training, fostering professional competences that prepare graduates for contemporary working environments. Its educational philosophy emphasises innovation, lifelong learning and strong cooperation with industry, while active participation in international projects has further strengthened its institutional capacities and commitment to educational modernisation. These characteristics made AASKM a valuable partner in WBNET and a strong advocate for practice-oriented education and regional cooperation.

Within WBNET, AASKM assumed leadership of **Work Package 7 – Dissemination and Exploitation of Results**, ensuring that the project's activities, achievements and long-term impact reached a wide range of stakeholders. The Academy coordinated communication and dissemination activities across the consortium, supporting partners in promoting project results through institutional websites, social media, traditional media, conferences and public events. Beyond communication, AASKM played an active role in organising project meetings, implementing pilot Short Study Programmes, strengthening cooperation with local employers and promoting the visibility and sustainability of WBNET at regional and international levels.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 7 – Dissemination and Exploitation of Results**
- Development and coordination of the dissemination strategy
- Promotion of project activities through digital and traditional media
- Organisation of dissemination events and stakeholder engagement
- Support for pilot implementation and cooperation with industry
- Strengthening the visibility and sustainability of project outcomes

WBNET SIGNATURE

Dissemination Leadership • Communication • Visibility • Stakeholder Engagement

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Through its strong commitment to community engagement and practice-oriented education, AASKM successfully connected project results with students, employers, local communities and the wider public, ensuring that WBNET achievements reached audiences well beyond the consortium itself.


АКАДЕМИЈА СТРУКОВНИХ СТУДИЈА
КОСОВСКО МЕТОХИЈСКА
ЛЕПОСАВИЋ

Sveučilište Hercegovina (SVEHERC)

WP6 LEADER – SUSTAINABILITY | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

"Ensuring that educational innovation continues to create value beyond the lifetime of the project."

The **Sveučilište Hercegovina (University of Herzegovina)** is a Higher Education Institution committed to academic excellence, innovation and international cooperation. Since its establishment, the University has continuously developed modern study programmes that respond to contemporary societal challenges while promoting interdisciplinary learning, research and professional development. Through active participation in European initiatives and international academic networks, the University has strengthened its institutional capacities and reinforced its commitment to quality education, sustainable development and lifelong learning. These principles closely align with the objectives of WBNET and its vision of creating flexible, labour market-oriented educational opportunities.

Within the WBNET consortium, **Sveučilište Hercegovina** led **Work Package 6 – Sustainability**, focusing on ensuring that the project's achievements would remain active and beneficial long after the formal completion of project activities. The University coordinated the development of sustainability strategies supporting the long-term operation of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, the continued delivery of educational programmes and the strengthening of institutional cooperation among consortium members. Through this work, SVEHERC helped transform project outputs into lasting institutional capacities, reinforcing WBNET's ambition to create a sustainable model for educational innovation across the Western Balkans.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 6 – Sustainability**
- Development of the WBNET sustainability strategy
- Support for the long-term operation of the Centres for Short Study Programmes
- Promotion of institutional cooperation beyond the project lifetime
- Strengthening the long-term impact of project results

WBNET SIGNATURE

Sustainability • Long-term Impact • Institutional Development • Lifelong Learning

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Through its strong commitment to international cooperation and sustainable educational development, Sveučilište Hercegovina actively promotes higher education as a driver of regional development, innovation and lifelong learning.



University of Bihać (UNBI)

WP4 LEADER – PROGRAMME REALISATION | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

"Transforming educational concepts into learning experiences through practice, innovation and regional engagement."

The **University of Bihać (UNBI)** is a public Higher Education Institution dedicated to advancing education, research and regional development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through its diverse faculties and strong commitment to international cooperation, the University promotes academic excellence, innovation and interdisciplinary learning while continuously strengthening its educational capacities in line with European higher education standards. Active participation in Erasmus+ and other international initiatives has contributed significantly to the University's internationalisation and its role in fostering educational modernisation and regional cooperation.

Within the WBNET consortium, UNBI assumed leadership of **Work Package 4 – Programme Realisation**, guiding the implementation of the newly developed **Short Study Programmes**. Building upon the curricula created through the previous work packages, the University coordinated activities related to pilot delivery, practical implementation and the organisation of learning processes within participating institutions. By connecting curriculum development with real educational practice, UNBI played a key role in transforming innovative programme concepts into learning experiences that directly respond to labour market needs. The University also actively promoted WBNET through pilot programme activities and hosted important consortium events, further strengthening cooperation among partners and increasing the visibility of project results.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Leadership of **Work Package 4 – Programme Realisation**
- Coordination of pilot implementation of Short Study Programmes
- Support for practice-oriented learning and programme delivery
- Organisation of educational activities and consortium events
- Promotion of cooperation between academia and the labour market

WBNET SIGNATURE

Programme Realisation • Practical Learning • Educational Innovation • Regional Cooperation

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

The University of Bihać combines strong regional engagement with an active international outlook, creating an educational environment where innovation, practical learning and European cooperation reinforce one another.


UNIVERZITET U BIHAĆU

2.3 Strategic Partners

Connecting Higher Education with the Labour Market

Introduction

The associated partners played an important role in supporting the implementation and long-term impact of WBNET. Their active involvement ensured that the project remained closely connected with labour market needs, digital transformation and higher education policy developments within the Western Balkans.

Representing both the private sector and the wider academic community, the associated partners contributed practical expertise, promoted cooperation with employers, participated in dissemination activities and supported the sustainability of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**. Their engagement demonstrates that educational innovation is most effective when Higher Education Institutions collaborate closely with organisations that understand the evolving needs of society and the economy.

W3 Lab Digital Solutions L.L.C.

ASSOCIATED PARTNER | KOSOVO*

"Connecting education with the digital economy through innovation, entrepreneurship and practical experience."

W3 Lab Digital Solutions L.L.C. is a rapidly growing digital company specialising in web development, mobile applications and digital marketing solutions. Through its expertise in software development and digital business, the company actively supports innovation and the development of digital competences required by contemporary labour markets. Its close cooperation with Higher Education Institutions reflects a shared commitment to preparing young professionals for immediate employment in the ICT sector. Within WBNET, W3 Lab provided valuable industry insight, supported the practical orientation of the **Short Study Programmes** and promoted stronger links between higher education and employers. The company also contributed to discussions on emerging digital skills and offered opportunities for practical training, demonstrating how industry involvement enhances the relevance and employability of graduates.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Industry expertise for curriculum development
- Support for practical training
- Promotion of digital competences
- Strengthening cooperation between academia and employers
- Support for project sustainability

WBNET SIGNATURE

Industry Partnership • Digital Innovation • Practical Training • Employability

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

W3 Lab's involvement ensured that the development of Short Study Programmes was continuously informed by real business needs and the rapidly evolving digital economy.

ASOCIJACIJA REKTORA PRIVATNIH UNIVERZITETA
АСОЦИЈАЦИЈА РЕКТОРА ПРИВАТНИХ УНИВЕРЗИТЕТА
ASOCIJACIJA REKTORA PRIVATNIH SVEUČILIŠTA

Association of Rectors of Private Universities (ARPSU)

ASSOCIATED PARTNER | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

"Expanding the impact of educational innovation through academic cooperation and policy dialogue."

The **Association of Rectors of Private Universities (ARPSU)** brings together private higher education institutions with the shared objective of promoting quality, international cooperation and the continuous development of higher education. Through conferences, round tables and professional initiatives, the Association actively contributes to discussions on educational policy, quality assurance and the alignment of higher education with labour market needs. Within WBNET, ARPSU played an important role in dissemination, stakeholder engagement and the promotion of project results among the wider academic community. By facilitating dialogue between Higher Education Institutions, experts and decision-makers, the Association contributed to strengthening the sustainability and broader impact of the project's achievements across the Western Balkans.

CONTRIBUTION TO WBNET

- Promotion of project results
- Support for dissemination and stakeholder engagement
- Contribution to quality assurance and educational policy dialogue
- Organisation of conferences and round tables
- Strengthening sustainability and regional cooperation

WBNET SIGNATURE

Academic Networking • Policy Dialogue • Dissemination • Sustainability

DISTINCTIVE FEATURE

Through its network of private universities and academic leaders, ARPSU provided an important platform for extending the visibility and long-term influence of WBNET beyond the project consortium.

Closing Remarks

The involvement of WBNET's strategic partners illustrates one of the project's fundamental principles: meaningful educational innovation is achieved through collaboration that extends beyond higher education institutions themselves. By bringing together academia, industry and professional organisations, the project created an environment in which educational programmes were shaped not only by academic expertise but also by practical experience and the evolving needs of society.

The active contribution of these partners strengthened the relevance, visibility and long-term sustainability of WBNET, demonstrating that lasting educational change is built upon continuous dialogue between education, the labour market and the wider community. Together with the consortium institutions, they formed an integrated partnership committed to creating flexible, practice-oriented learning opportunities for future generations.

Chapter Summary

The WBNET consortium demonstrates how international cooperation can transform institutional diversity into collective strength. Bringing together Higher Education Institutions and partners with complementary expertise, the project created a collaborative environment in which academic knowledge, practical experience and shared responsibility converged to address common educational challenges. Each institution contributed its unique strengths while working towards a common vision of modernising higher education through innovative **Short Study Programmes**, sustainable institutional development and stronger cooperation with the labour market.

More importantly, the partnership established through WBNET extended beyond the formal responsibilities defined by the Grant Agreement. Continuous dialogue, mutual learning and a shared commitment to educational excellence fostered professional relationships that became one of the project's most valuable intangible outcomes. In this respect, the consortium itself represents an enduring network of cooperation that will continue supporting educational innovation beyond the lifetime of the project.

WBNET REFLECTION

"The strength of a consortium is measured not by the number of its partners, but by the ability of those partners to create something together that none of them could achieve alone."

PART II

Project Design and Implementation

“Every successful project begins with an idea. Its true value, however, is measured by the way that idea is transformed into opportunities, institutions and lasting change.”

CHAPTER

03

From Idea to Implementation

Introduction

Ideas have little value unless they are translated into meaningful action. Following the establishment of the consortium and the definition of a shared vision, WBNET entered the implementation phase with a clear objective: to create a sustainable framework for **Short Study Programmes** that would respond to the evolving educational and labour market needs of the **Western Balkans (WB)**.

The project's implementation was neither a linear nor an isolated process. It relied on continuous dialogue between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), employers, policy-makers and international experts, combining European experience with regional priorities. Through study visits, professional training, collaborative curriculum development and systematic quality assurance, the consortium gradually transformed strategic objectives into practical solutions capable of strengthening institutional capacities and expanding learning opportunities throughout the region.

Rather than treating project activities as separate tasks, WBNET approached implementation as an interconnected process in which each stage informed and reinforced the next. Understanding labour market demands led to the development

of a common methodology; the methodology provided the foundation for curriculum design; quality assurance ensured continuous improvement; and close cooperation with industry guaranteed that educational innovation remained firmly connected to professional practice.

This chapter follows that journey – from identifying the needs that inspired the project to the collaborative processes through which innovative educational programmes became a tangible reality.



3.1 Understanding the Needs

Listening Before Designing

One of the defining characteristics of WBNET was that the development of **Short Study Programmes** did not begin with curriculum design. Instead, the consortium recognised that sustainable educational innovation must first be grounded in a clear understanding of the challenges faced by Higher Education Institutions, employers and learners throughout the **Western Balkans (WB)**.

Although the participating institutions operated within different national higher education systems, they shared a common reality. Rapid technological development, digital transformation and changing labour market demands required more flexible educational pathways capable of responding to emerging professional profiles and lifelong learning needs. At the same time, employers increasingly sought graduates equipped not only with theoretical knowledge but also with practical competences that could be applied immediately in professional environments.

Recognising these challenges, the consortium adopted a participatory approach from the earliest stages of the project. Rather than developing educational programmes in isolation, partners engaged in a structured process of consultation with key stakeholders, ensuring that the future **Short Study Programmes** would reflect genuine regional priorities and institutional capacities. This approach positioned stakeholders not merely as beneficiaries of the project, but as active contributors to its design.

Needs analysis therefore became much more than a preliminary project activity. It established the foundation upon which all subsequent work would be built, ensuring that curriculum development, institutional reforms and capacity-building activities remained closely aligned with the realities of contemporary education and employment.

The process combined several complementary sources of information. Institutional analyses were supported by consultations with employers, representatives of industry, students, graduates and public authorities, while project partners exchanged

experiences gained through previous educational initiatives and national reforms. Study visits to European partner institutions further broadened this perspective, allowing the consortium to compare regional challenges with established European practices and to identify approaches that could be adapted to the Western Balkan context. Early in the project, partners also organised in-home trainings and awareness-raising activities, creating a shared understanding of the objectives and preparing institutional teams for the work ahead.

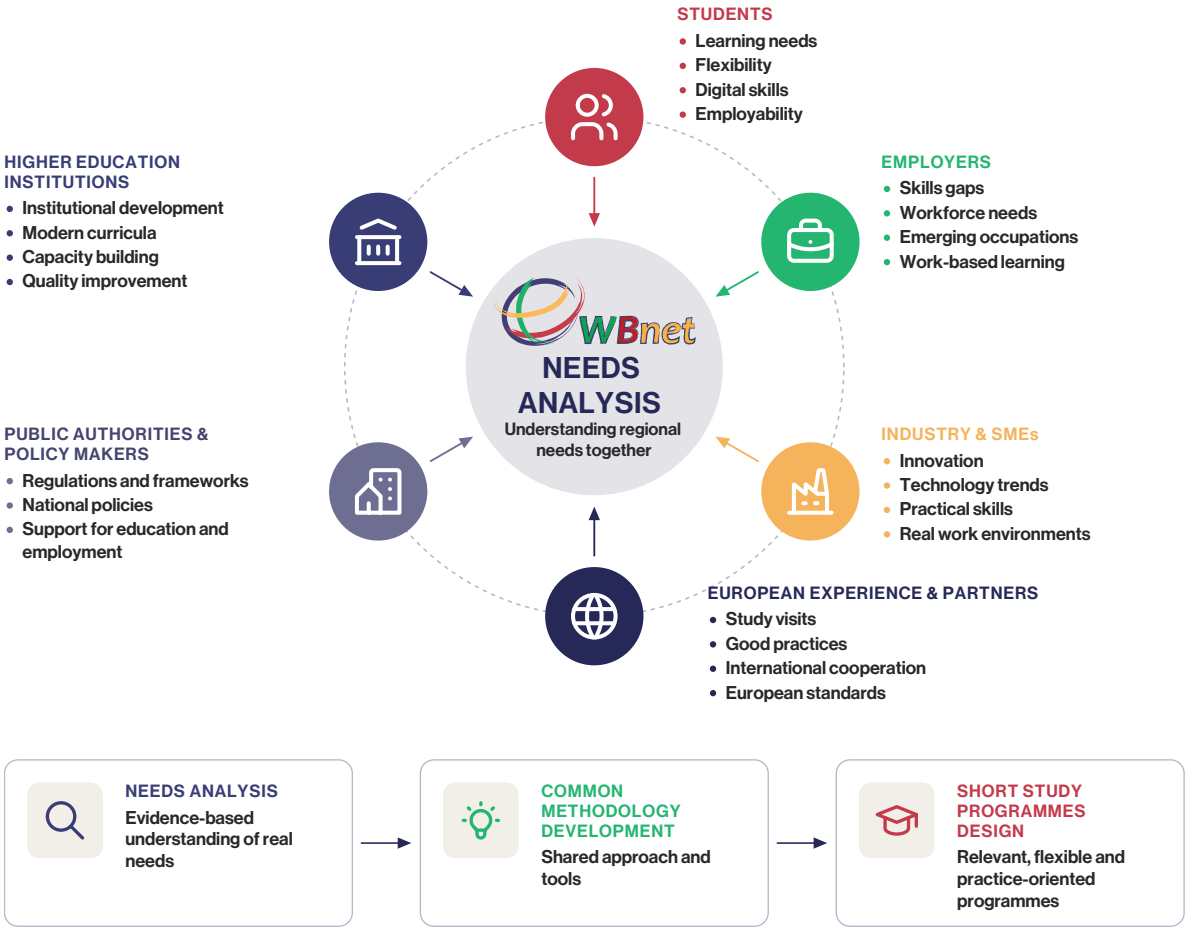


Figure 3.1 Listening to the Region

Importantly, the needs analysis was not conceived as a one-off exercise completed at the beginning of the project. Instead, it evolved into a continuous dialogue maintained throughout implementation. Feedback collected during meetings, workshops, training sessions and consultations informed successive stages of curriculum development, quality assurance and pilot implementation, allowing the consortium to refine its approach as new insights emerged. In this way, listening became an integral part of the WBNET methodology and one of the project's distinguishing characteristics.

Ultimately, understanding the needs of the region meant understanding its people – students seeking new opportunities, teachers adapting to changing educational environments, institutions pursuing greater flexibility, and employers searching for graduates with relevant, practice-oriented competences. By placing these

perspectives at the centre of the project, WBNET ensured that innovation would not be driven by assumptions, but by collaboration, evidence and shared responsibility.

WBNET INSIGHT

Educational innovation begins by asking the right questions. WBNET demonstrated that successful programme development depends not only on academic expertise, but equally on listening to the needs of learners, institutions and employers.

3.2 Building a Common Methodology

Learning Together to Build Together

Educational innovation rarely emerges from isolated efforts. It is the result of continuous dialogue, shared experiences and a willingness to learn from one another. Recognising this, the WBNET consortium approached methodology development not as the preparation of a single document, but as a collaborative process through which partners gradually established a common understanding of how **Short Study Programmes** should be designed, implemented and sustained across the **Western Balkans (WB)**.

From the earliest stages of the project, consortium members recognised that successful implementation required more than individual institutional expertise. Although each partner brought valuable experience from its own educational environment, the diversity of national systems, institutional practices and labour market contexts called for a common methodological framework capable of supporting coherent implementation throughout the project.

To achieve this, WBNET invested significant effort in creating opportunities for mutual learning. **Study visits to European partner institutions** enabled representatives of the Western Balkan Higher Education Institutions to observe established models of lifelong learning, flexible educational pathways and cooperation between universities and industry. Rather than simply presenting examples of good practice, these visits encouraged open discussion about how successful European experiences could be adapted to regional realities and institutional capacities. The exchange of ideas proved equally valuable as the formal presentations themselves, strengthening professional relationships and building mutual trust among project partners.

Knowledge transfer continued through **in-home training sessions**, workshops and regular consortium meetings, where partners jointly discussed organisational models, educational standards and practical aspects of establishing the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**. These activities gradually created a shared professional language, allowing institutions with different backgrounds and experiences to work towards common objectives while respecting their national and institutional specificities.

An equally important element of the methodology was the collaborative development of common templates, reporting procedures and implementation guidelines. Rather than imposing uniform solutions, the consortium sought to establish flexible methodological principles that ensured consistency while allowing each institution to adapt implementation to its local context. This balance between common standards and institutional flexibility became one of

the defining characteristics of the WBNET approach.

Beyond technical coordination, the methodological framework fostered a culture of cooperation. Partners were encouraged to share experiences openly, discuss challenges collectively and continuously refine their approaches throughout project implementation. In this way, methodology evolved from a set of procedures into a dynamic process of institutional learning, reinforcing the project's commitment to quality, innovation and long-term sustainability.

Ultimately, the methodology developed within WBNET represented far more than guidance for project implementation. It became a common foundation upon which the consortium built new educational models, strengthened institutional capacities and established a shared vision for the future development of flexible, labour market-oriented higher education in the Western Balkans.

WBNET INSIGHT

A shared methodology does not eliminate institutional diversity—it enables diverse institutions to work together towards common goals while respecting their individual strengths.

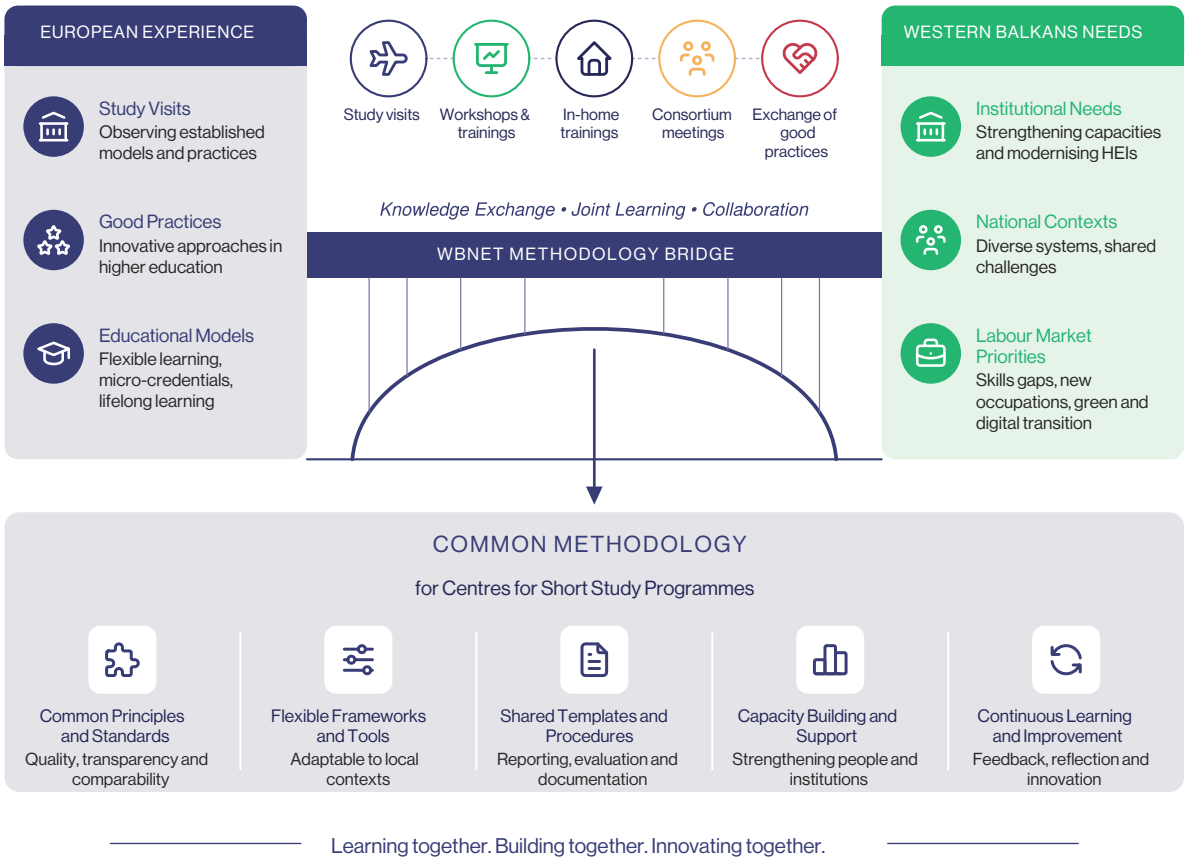


Figure 3.2 From Knowledge Exchange to a Common Methodology

3.3 Designing Short Study Programmes

From Competence Needs to Innovative Learning Opportunities

The ultimate objective of WBNET was not simply to introduce new educational programmes, but to create a flexible learning model capable of responding to the rapidly changing demands of the modern labour market. Building upon the results of the needs analysis and the common methodological framework developed by the consortium, the project entered one of its most significant phases – the design of **Short Study Programmes** that combine academic quality with practical relevance.

Rather than following traditional curriculum development approaches, WBNET adopted a competence-based philosophy that placed learning outcomes and employability at the centre of programme design. This approach shifted the focus from what learners should study to what they should be able to know, understand and perform upon successful completion of the programme. In doing so, the consortium embraced the principles of student-centred learning, flexibility and lifelong education that increasingly characterise the European Higher Education Area.

Curriculum development became a genuinely collaborative process. Academic staff from partner institutions worked closely with employers, industry representatives and external experts to identify the knowledge, skills and professional competences most relevant to contemporary occupations. This continuous dialogue ensured that every programme reflected not only academic standards but also the expectations of employers and the realities of rapidly evolving technological and economic environments.

Particular attention was devoted to balancing theoretical foundations with practical application. Each **Short Study Programme** was designed to integrate classroom learning with laboratory exercises, practical assignments, project-based activities and professional training whenever appropriate. This educational model encourages participants to develop technical competences alongside problem-solving, teamwork and communication skills that are increasingly valued in modern workplaces.

An equally important characteristic of the WBNET curricula is their flexibility. Designed as short, targeted educational pathways, the programmes provide opportunities for rapid upskilling and reskilling while remaining compatible with the principles of lifelong learning. Their modular structure enables Higher Education Institutions to respond more effectively to emerging labour market demands, technological developments and the evolving educational needs of different learner groups. In this respect, the newly developed programmes complement rather than replace traditional study programmes, expanding the educational opportunities available within participating institutions.

Throughout the development process, consortium partners continuously exchanged ideas, reviewed programme proposals and refined learning outcomes to ensure consistency across institutions while respecting national legislative frameworks and institutional autonomy. This collaborative approach not only strengthened the quality of individual curricula but also established a common educational philosophy shared by all participating Higher Education Institutions.

The resulting portfolio of **Short Study Programmes** represents one of the project's most significant achievements. Beyond the individual curricula themselves, WBNET introduced an innovative educational model that demonstrates how international cooperation, academic expertise and close engagement with industry can jointly contribute to creating flexible, practice-oriented learning opportunities capable of addressing the educational challenges of the Western Balkans.




represent a set of personal data which shal
define their identity, educational an
required educational, social and hea
The student's personal data shall be collec
means of forms the layout of which shall
shall be filled in in printed form, upon c
NETWORK OF
SHORT
IN THE COUNTRIES


Laboratory for Multimedia
department of Information and Communications Technologies
5 Laboratories
multimedia study programme
wide array of domains
many EU and research projects
(too) many industrial projects

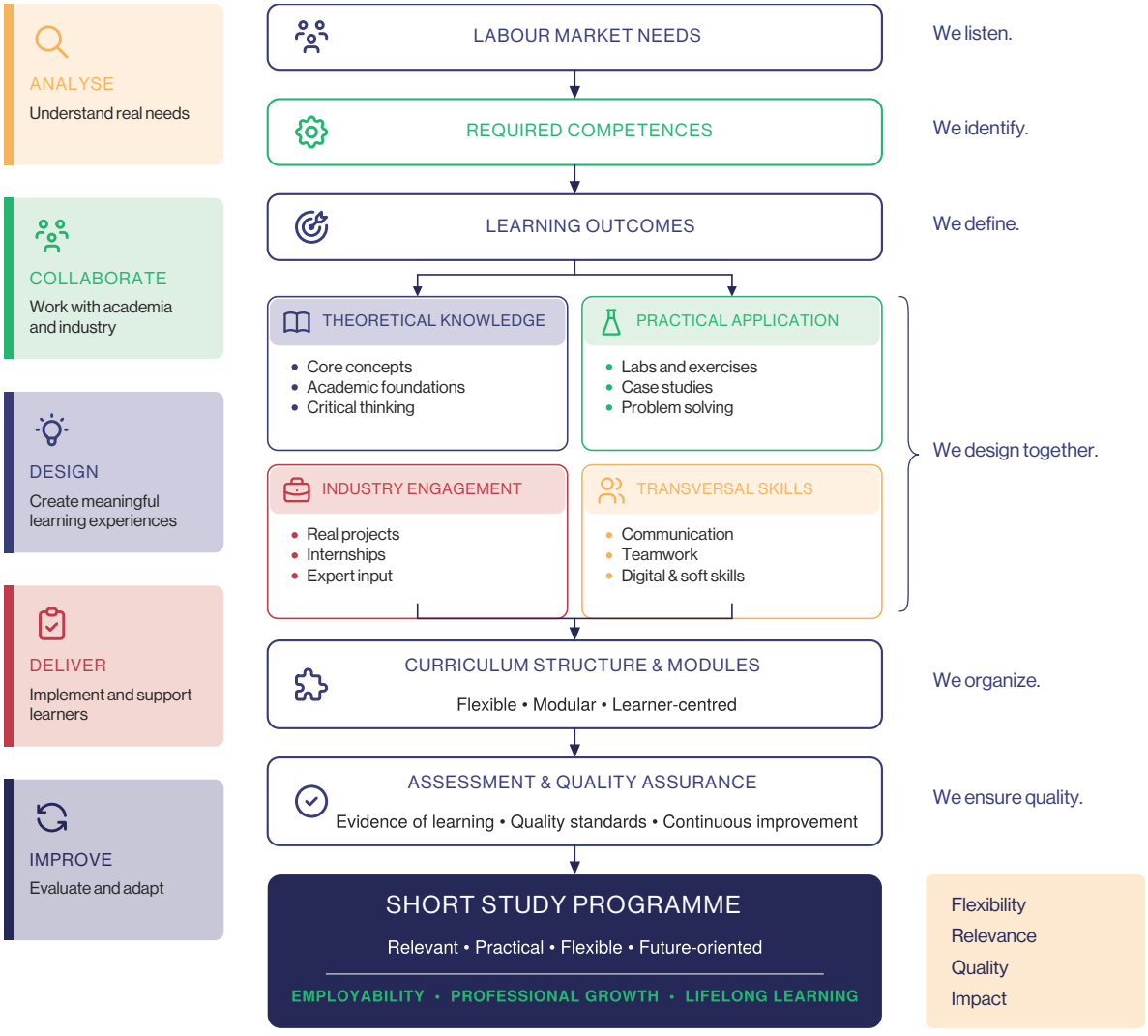





Cybersecurity
Razvoj in smernice

WBNET INSIGHT

Successful curricula are not measured by the number of subjects they contain, but by the competences they enable learners to develop and apply in real professional environments.



CO-CREATION
Students, teachers, employers, institutions

EU ALIGNMENT
EHEA principles, quality standards

REGIONAL ADAPTATION
Respecting national contexts and institutional capacities

SUSTAINABLE IMPACT
Strengthening HEIs and communities

Figure 3.3 Building a Competence-Based Curriculum

3.4 Quality as a Continuous Process

Building Excellence Through Continuous Improvement

One of the distinguishing characteristics of WBNET was its understanding of quality as a continuous process rather than a final evaluation. From the outset, the consortium recognised that educational innovation requires regular reflection, systematic monitoring and a willingness to improve throughout implementation. Consequently, quality assurance became an integral element of every project activity, accompanying each stage of development from the initial needs analysis to the delivery of the **Short Study Programmes**.

Rather than functioning as a separate administrative procedure, quality assurance was embedded within the project's organisational structure and day-to-day collaboration. A comprehensive quality framework was established to monitor progress, support decision-making and encourage continuous improvement across all work packages. This approach enabled the consortium not only to verify the achievement of planned objectives but also to identify opportunities for refinement and adaptation as implementation progressed.



Figure 3.4 The WBNET Quality Cycle

The leadership of **Work Package 5**, coordinated by the **Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM)**, played a central role in developing this quality culture. Through the establishment of clear quality standards, evaluation procedures and monitoring mechanisms, the consortium created a transparent framework that supported consistency across institutions while respecting their individual contexts. Regular reviews, internal assessments and quality reports provided valuable feedback, allowing partners to learn from one another and to address challenges collectively before they could affect project outcomes.

Quality assurance extended well beyond the evaluation of deliverables. Feedback from consortium meetings, study visits, training sessions and pilot activities was systematically collected and analysed, ensuring that the experiences of academic staff, students, employers and other stakeholders directly informed subsequent stages of project implementation. This continuous exchange of perspectives transformed quality assurance into a dynamic learning process that encouraged innovation while maintaining high academic standards.

An important feature of the WBNET quality framework was its emphasis on partnership. Responsibility for quality was not

concentrated within a single institution or committee but was shared across the consortium. Every partner contributed to maintaining project standards through active participation, peer review and constructive dialogue. This collective responsibility strengthened mutual trust and reinforced the project's commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

By integrating quality assurance into every phase of implementation, WBNET ensured that educational innovation was supported by evidence, reflection and collaboration. The resulting quality culture became one of the project's lasting institutional achievements, providing participating **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)** with practical experience in managing complex international projects while strengthening their capacity for future educational development.

WBNET INSIGHT

Quality is not achieved by checking the final result—it is achieved by improving every step that leads to it.

3.5 Learning with Industry

Bridging Education and Professional Practice

One of the defining ambitions of WBNET was to strengthen the relationship between **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)** and the labour market by creating educational opportunities that respond directly to contemporary professional needs. Throughout the project, cooperation with industry was not treated as a complementary activity but as an essential component of educational innovation, ensuring that the newly developed **Short Study Programmes** remained relevant, practical and future-oriented.

From the earliest stages of implementation, employers and industry representatives actively contributed to the identification of competence requirements and emerging professional profiles. Their participation in consultations, round tables and curriculum discussions provided valuable insight into current technological developments, workforce expectations and the skills increasingly demanded across different sectors of the economy. This continuous dialogue enabled academic partners to align educational content with real-world challenges while maintaining high academic standards.

The collaboration continued beyond curriculum development. Representatives of industry participated in workshops, dissemination events and pilot activities, offering practical perspectives that enriched the educational process and strengthened the connection between theoretical knowledge and professional application. In several partner institutions, students and participants were provided with opportunities to engage directly with companies through practical training, professional placements and project-based learning experiences. These activities not only enhanced the quality of learning but also improved participants' understanding of workplace expectations and career opportunities.



Figure 3.5 The WBNET Partnership Ecosystem

An important contribution to this process was made by WBNET's **Strategic Partners**, whose expertise and professional networks further reinforced the project's connection with the labour market. Their active involvement demonstrated that successful educational innovation requires continuous cooperation between academia, employers and the wider professional community. By facilitating dialogue, promoting practical learning and supporting dissemination activities, they helped ensure that project outcomes extended beyond institutional

boundaries and generated value for society as a whole.

The establishment of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes** further strengthened this partnership by creating institutional platforms through which cooperation with industry could continue after the formal completion of the project. Rather than representing the conclusion of collaboration, the Centres provide a sustainable framework for identifying future educational needs, developing new learning opportunities and maintaining regular dialogue with employers and other stakeholders.

Through this close interaction with industry, WBNET demonstrated that modern higher education is most effective when learning extends beyond the classroom. By combining academic excellence with practical experience, the project contributed to the development of flexible educational pathways that improve employability, support lifelong learning and strengthen the responsiveness of Higher Education Institutions to regional economic and technological change.

WBNET INSIGHT

Education becomes truly meaningful when knowledge is tested, refined and applied in real professional environments.

Looking Back, Moving Forward

The implementation of WBNET demonstrates that meaningful educational reform is not achieved through isolated activities, but through a carefully connected process of listening, collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement. Every stage of the project – from understanding regional needs to developing curricula, assuring quality and strengthening cooperation with industry – contributed to building a sustainable model for flexible, practice-oriented education across the Western Balkans.

More importantly, WBNET confirmed that successful educational innovation depends on people working together. Institutions, teachers, students, employers and strategic partners all became active contributors to a shared vision of higher education that is responsive, inclusive and future-oriented. The foundations established during project implementation now provide participating institutions with the knowledge, structures and partnerships needed to continue developing new educational opportunities well beyond the project's formal lifetime.

WBNET REFLECTION

"Innovation in education is not measured by the number of programmes created, but by the opportunities they continue to create for people, institutions and society."









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CHAPTER

04

Short Study Programmes

“The most valuable project outputs are those that continue educating long after the project itself has ended.”

Introduction

The creation of the Short Study Programmes represents one of the most significant academic achievements of the WBNET project. While the establishment of Centres for Short Study Programmes created the institutional framework for innovation, the programmes themselves transformed that vision into practical educational opportunities designed to respond directly to the needs of learners, employers and society.

Developed through close collaboration among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from the Western Balkans and supported by the academic expertise of European Union partners, the programmes reflect a shared commitment to modern, flexible and labour-market-oriented education. Rather than replicating traditional university curricula, the consortium embraced a competency-based approach focused on developing practical knowledge, digital skills and professional competencies required in rapidly evolving sectors of the economy.

The development process combined several complementary perspectives. It began with a comprehensive analysis of regional

labour market needs and consultations with employers, continued through the joint design of curricula and learning outcomes, and concluded with quality assurance procedures that ensured both academic standards and practical relevance. Throughout this process, consortium partners worked together to exchange expertise, compare educational practices and develop programmes that could respond to local priorities while remaining aligned with broader European principles of lifelong learning and micro-credential education.

As a result of this collaborative effort, eight Short Study Programmes were created across four partner institutions in the Western Balkans. Although each programme reflects the specific expertise and strategic priorities of its home institution, they all share several common characteristics:

- competency-based curriculum design;
- modular programme structure;
- strong practical orientation;
- integration of mandatory professional internship;
- clearly defined learning outcomes;
- close cooperation with industry and employers;
- flexibility for lifelong learning and professional development.

Each programme carries **30 ECTS credits** and combines theoretical foundations with intensive practical training, enabling participants to acquire immediately applicable knowledge and skills. Particular emphasis is placed on project-based learning, digital technologies, problem-solving and direct engagement with professional practice, ensuring that graduates are prepared to contribute effectively from the first day of employment.

Rather than viewing the programmes as isolated educational products, the WBNET consortium conceived them as complementary components of a regional educational ecosystem. Together, they broaden access to higher education, support workforce upskilling and reskilling, encourage cooperation between academia and industry, and strengthen the capacity of Higher Education Institutions to respond more rapidly to technological and economic change.

The following pages present the eight Short Study Programmes developed within the project. Instead of focusing on detailed course specifications, this chapter highlights the distinctive profile, educational philosophy and professional orientation of each programme, illustrating how a common vision has been translated into diverse educational opportunities tailored to regional needs.

As a result, the following short study programs were established:

- UPKM: Applied information and communication technologies (Table 4.1);
- UPKM: Multimedia (Table 4.2);
- AASKM: Digital business and internet security (Table 4.3);
- AASKM: Application of modern multimedia tools (Table 4.4);
- UNBI: Information technologies (Table 1.5);
- UNBI: Multimedia (Table 4.6);
- SVEHERC: Information technologies (Table 4.7);
- SVEHERC: Digital technologies in tourism (Table 4.8).

Table 4.1 UPKM: Applied information and communication technologies

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Computer applications	7	2	3
Web design in WordPress	7	2	3
Basics of programming in Python	7	2	3
Digital presentations	6	2	3
Student intership	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.2 UPKM: Multimedia

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Video recording	7	2	3
Audio and video editing	7	2	3
Studio production and broadcasting	7	2	3
Multimedia systems in live-streaming and online production	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.3 AASKM: Digital business and internet security

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Computer applications	7	2	3
Computer networks	7	2	3
Electronic business	7	2	3
Internet and computer security	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.4 AASKM: Application of modern multimedia tools

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Computer graphics and image editing	7	2	3
Multimedia systems	7	2	3
Unmanned aerial vehicle – recording and flying techniques	7	2	3
Digital marketing	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.5 UNBI: Information technologies

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Computer applications	7	2	3
Computer networks	7	2	3
Basics of programming in Python	7	2	3
Internet and computer security	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.6 UNBI: Multimedia

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Video recording	7	2	3
Audio and video editing	7	2	3
Computer graphics and image editing	7	2	3
Digital presentations	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.7 SVEHERC: Information technologies

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Computer networks	7	2	3
Coud computing	7	2	3
Electronic business	7	2	3
Digital marketing	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

Table 4.8 SVEHERC: Digital technologies in tourism

Course title	ECTS	Lectures	Exercises
Video marketing and digital branding	7	2	3
Digital nomadism in tourism	7	2	3
Digital transformations in the tourism industry	7	2	3
E-marketing	6	2	3
Student internship	3	0	3
Total:	30		

The eight **Short Study Programmes** developed within WBNET represent far more than a collection of new educational curricula. Together, they demonstrate how international cooperation, academic expertise and close engagement with the labour market can be successfully transformed

into innovative learning opportunities that respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Although each programme reflects the strengths, priorities and institutional profile of its respective Higher Education Institution, all eight share a common educational philosophy: flexibility, practical orientation, competency-based learning and a strong commitment to lifelong education. This balance between regional diversity and a shared vision became one of the defining characteristics of WBNET and one of its greatest achievements.

Beyond their immediate educational value, the programmes provide participating institutions with a sustainable foundation for future curriculum development, continuous cooperation with employers and the introduction of new forms of professional education. As such, they represent not only the principal academic output of the project, but also an investment in the future development of human capital across the Western Balkans.

WBNET REFLECTION

"Curricula define what we teach. Opportunities define what learners become. The true success of WBNET lies in transforming knowledge into opportunities for individuals, institutions and society."

The successful development of the Short Study Programmes marked an important milestone in the WBNET journey. However, innovative curricula alone cannot ensure lasting impact. Sustainable educational innovation also requires an institutional environment capable of supporting programme delivery, fostering cooperation with stakeholders and responding to future learning needs.

To provide this foundation, the project established **Centres for Short Study Programmes** within participating Higher Education Institutions. More than physical spaces, these Centres represent permanent institutional hubs for lifelong learning, curriculum innovation and cooperation with industry, ensuring that the achievements of WBNET continue to evolve long after the project's formal completion.

CHAPTER

05

Centres for Short Study Programmes

“Educational programmes create knowledge. Educational institutions create continuity.”

Introduction

The establishment of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes** represents one of the most enduring institutional achievements of the WBNET project. While the development of innovative educational programmes addressed immediate labour market needs, the creation of the Centres ensured that these achievements would become an integral part of participating Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), providing a sustainable framework for future educational development.

From the outset, the consortium recognised that meaningful educational reform requires more than the introduction of new curricula. It also depends on creating organisational structures capable of identifying emerging skills needs, coordinating educational innovation, strengthening cooperation with employers and supporting lifelong learning. The Centres were therefore conceived not simply as administrative units, but as institutional platforms dedicated to connecting

higher education with society, industry and regional development.

Established within four partner institutions across the Western Balkans, the Centres share a common mission while respecting the specific priorities and organisational contexts of each institution. Their establishment followed comprehensive needs analyses, consultations with stakeholders and formal institutional approval processes, ensuring that every Centre was embedded within its respective higher education system and aligned with national legislative frameworks.

Beyond coordinating the implementation of **Short Study Programmes**, the Centres are designed to perform a much broader role. They support curriculum development, maintain dialogue with employers, coordinate professional training activities, promote lifelong learning, facilitate the introduction of micro-credentials and contribute to the continuous modernisation of educational provision. In this way, they serve as permanent interfaces between academia and the rapidly evolving needs of the labour market.

Although each Centre reflects the unique strengths of its institution, together they form a regional network committed to a shared educational philosophy: flexible learning, practical competence development, quality assurance and continuous cooperation with stakeholders. Their establishment demonstrates how institutional capacity building can extend beyond the duration of a project, creating organisational structures capable of sustaining innovation long after external funding has concluded.

The following sections introduce the four Centres established through WBNET, illustrating how a common vision has been translated into institutional practice across different educational environments. Together, they represent the organisational foundation upon which the project's educational legacy will continue to grow.

5.1 A New Institutional Model

From Project Initiative to Institutional Innovation

The establishment of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes** represents one of the most innovative dimensions of the WBNET project. While the development of new educational programmes addressed immediate learning needs, the consortium recognised that sustainable educational reform requires permanent institutional structures capable of supporting continuous innovation. For this reason, WBNET invested not only in creating educational content but also in establishing organisational frameworks that would ensure the long-term implementation and further development of Short Study Programmes.

Unlike traditional academic departments, the Centres were conceived as flexible institutional platforms designed to respond quickly to changing labour market demands and emerging technological developments. Their role extends beyond programme administration, encompassing the continuous identification of educational needs, coordination of curriculum development, cooperation with employers, promotion of lifelong learning and support for the implementation of competency-based education. In doing so, the Centres strengthen the capacity of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to adapt their educational offer in line with regional economic priorities and societal needs.

The creation of the Centres was based on a common methodological framework adopted by the consortium while allowing sufficient flexibility for each institution to reflect its own strategic priorities and national context. The process included labour market analyses, consultations with employers, surveys among students and professionals, preparation of strategic

documents, institutional approval procedures and the adoption of operational regulations. As a result, each Centre became an officially recognised organisational unit embedded within its respective institution and supported by an appropriate governance framework.

Beyond their organisational role, the Centres embody a broader shift in the understanding of higher education. They demonstrate that universities and academies are no longer solely providers of degree programmes but increasingly act as lifelong learning hubs, capable of offering flexible educational pathways for graduates, professionals, unemployed individuals and employers seeking targeted competence development. Through this approach, WBNET contributes to strengthening the "third mission" of higher education by reinforcing the connection between education, innovation and regional socio-economic development.

An equally important feature of the Centres is their collaborative nature. Although established within individual institutions, they operate as members of a regional network that encourages the exchange of experiences, good practices and educational innovations. This networked approach enables participating institutions to learn from one another, jointly respond to emerging challenges and continue developing new educational initiatives beyond the lifetime of the project.

Ultimately, the Centres represent much more than newly established organisational units. They are institutional mechanisms for continuous educational renewal – places where cooperation between academia, industry and society becomes a permanent process rather than a project activity. Their establishment ensures that the impact of WBNET will not be measured solely by the programmes created during the project, but by the capacity of participating institutions to continue creating new opportunities for learning, professional development and regional cooperation in the years ahead.

WBNET PERSPECTIVE

The most sustainable educational innovation is not a new programme—it is an institution capable of creating many more.



Figure 5.1 The Centre as an Educational Hub

5.2 Four Centres — One Shared Vision

Institutional Innovation Across the Western Balkans

The establishment of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes** transformed the WBNET vision into institutional reality. Although each participating Higher Education Institution (HEI) created its Centre within its own organisational framework and according to national regulations, all four Centres were founded upon a common educational philosophy: to provide flexible, practice-oriented learning opportunities that strengthen cooperation between academia, industry and society.

Rather than functioning as isolated organisational units, the Centres form an interconnected regional network committed to continuous educational innovation and lifelong learning. Each Centre reflects the specific strengths and strategic priorities of its host institution, while contributing to the shared objectives of WBNET through curriculum development, stakeholder engagement, quality assurance and the promotion of short, competency-based educational programmes.

The following pages introduce the four Centres established during the project. Together, they illustrate how a common vision has been successfully translated into different institutional environments, creating sustainable organisational structures capable of supporting educational development long after the formal completion of the project.

University of Mitrovica (UPKM)

CENTRE FOR SHORT STUDY PROGRAMMES

MISSION

“Connecting knowledge with practice, and education with the future.”

Established within the **Faculty of Technical Sciences of the University of Mitrovica (UPKM)**, the Centre for Short Study Programmes serves as a dynamic platform for connecting higher education with the evolving needs of the labour market. Building upon the University’s long-standing expertise in engineering, information technologies and multimedia education, the Centre was created to promote flexible, competency-based learning opportunities that support both professional development and lifelong learning.

Its mission is to strengthen cooperation between academia and industry by developing innovative educational programmes that respond to technological change, enhance digital competencies and improve employability. Through close collaboration with employers, continuous monitoring of labour market trends and the integration of practical training into the learning process, the Centre contributes to preparing learners for emerging professions while supporting the broader digital transformation of society.

Beyond programme delivery, the Centre aims to become a regional focal point for educational innovation, professional networking and interdisciplinary cooperation, fostering an environment in which students, professionals and industry partners can jointly create new knowledge, develop practical competences and contribute to sustainable regional development. This vision is reflected in the Centre's strategic objectives, which emphasise lifelong learning, competence development, digitalisation, multidisciplinary education and strong partnerships with industry.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Innovation • Digital Competences • Industry Partnership • Lifelong Learning



Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)

CENTRE FOR SHORT STUDY PROGRAMMES

MISSION

"Where knowledge meets practice, learning becomes opportunity."

Established within the **Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)**, the **Centre for Short Study Programmes** embodies the Academy's long-standing commitment to professionally oriented education, innovation and close cooperation with the wider community. Building upon the Academy's tradition of applied learning and its active participation in international projects, the Centre was established to provide flexible educational opportunities that respond to the rapidly changing demands

of the digital economy and contemporary labour market.

Its mission is to bridge academic knowledge with professional practice by developing **Short Study Programmes** that equip learners with relevant competencies, practical experience and digital skills required for immediate application in the workplace.

Through close cooperation with employers, public institutions and professional organisations, the Centre continuously promotes educational programmes that support upskilling, reskilling and lifelong learning while contributing to regional economic and social development.



Beyond the implementation of educational programmes, the Centre serves as a catalyst for institutional innovation. It encourages the continuous modernisation of teaching methods, strengthens cooperation between higher education and industry, and creates new opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and international collaboration. Through these activities, the Centre contributes to the Academy's strategic vision of becoming a recognised regional leader in professionally oriented higher education and an active promoter of lifelong learning in the Western Balkans.

By combining educational flexibility with academic quality and strong engagement with stakeholders, the Centre represents a sustainable platform for developing future educational initiatives and expanding opportunities for learners of different backgrounds and professional aspirations. It stands as one of the most enduring institutional achievements of the WBNET project, ensuring that innovation remains an integral part of the Academy's future development.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Professional Education • Digital Innovation • Lifelong Learning • Regional Cooperation

University of Bihać (UNBI)

CENTRE FOR SHORT STUDY PROGRAMMES

MISSION

“Innovation achieves its purpose when it becomes part of everyday learning.”

Established within the **University of Bihać (UNBI),** the **Centre for Short Study Programmes** represents the University’s commitment to modernising higher education through flexible, practice-oriented and learner-centred educational opportunities.

Building upon the University’s tradition of academic excellence and its close engagement with regional development, the Centre was established to strengthen the connection between higher education, industry and lifelong learning.



Its mission is to develop and implement innovative **Short Study Programmes** that respond to the evolving needs of the labour market while promoting professional competence, digital literacy and continuous skills development. Through active cooperation with employers, public institutions and local communities, the Centre seeks to create educational pathways that prepare learners for contemporary professional environments and support the competitiveness of the regional economy.

As the leader of the WBNET work package dedicated to the pilot implementation of Short Study Programmes, the University of Bihać played a key role in translating jointly developed curricula into educational practice. This experience positioned the Centre not only as a provider of innovative learning programmes but also as an institutional platform for testing new educational approaches, evaluating their effectiveness and promoting continuous curriculum improvement.

Beyond programme delivery, the Centre encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, supports the introduction of emerging educational models and contributes to strengthening cooperation among Higher Education Institutions, industry and society.

Through these activities, it reinforces the University's strategic vision of promoting innovation, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning while contributing to sustainable regional development.

By combining academic expertise with practical implementation and stakeholder engagement, the Centre serves as a permanent driver of educational innovation, ensuring that the achievements of WBNET continue to benefit learners, employers and the wider community long after the project's completion.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Innovation in Practice • Pilot Implementation • Regional Engagement • Lifelong Learning

University Hercegovina (SVEHERC)

CENTRE FOR SHORT STUDY PROGRAMMES

MISSION

"The greatest legacy of education is its ability to inspire the next beginning."

Established within the **University Hercegovina (SVEHERC),** the **Centre for Short Study Programmes** reflects the University's commitment to creating an educational environment that is responsive, innovative and closely connected with the needs of contemporary society. Founded within the framework of the WBNET project, the Centre serves as a strategic platform for developing flexible educational opportunities that promote lifelong learning, professional development and stronger cooperation between higher education and the labour market.

Its mission is to support the continuous development of competency-based educational programmes that enable learners to acquire relevant knowledge and practical skills throughout their professional careers. By fostering close collaboration with employers, professional organisations and public institutions, the Centre contributes to creating educational pathways that encourage employability, entrepreneurship and regional competitiveness while responding to the challenges of digital transformation and emerging labour market trends.

As the leader of **Work Package 6 – Sustainability**, the University Hercegovina played a central role in ensuring that the achievements of WBNET would extend beyond the project's formal duration. This commitment is reflected in the Centre's strategic orientation towards continuous programme development, institutional capacity building and the establishment of long-term partnerships capable of supporting future educational initiatives. Sustainability is therefore understood not merely as maintaining existing activities, but as creating conditions for continuous growth, adaptation and innovation.

Beyond coordinating Short Study Programmes, the Centre acts as a meeting

place for academic staff, learners, employers and the wider community, encouraging the exchange of knowledge, interdisciplinary cooperation and the development of new educational ideas. Through these activities, it contributes to strengthening the University's role as a regional promoter of lifelong learning, educational excellence and international cooperation.



By integrating innovation with institutional sustainability, the Centre represents a lasting investment in the future of higher education. It ensures that the educational models, partnerships and experiences established through WBNET continue to inspire new programmes, new collaborations and new opportunities for learners throughout the Western Balkans.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Sustainability • Lifelong Learning • Institutional Development • International Cooperation

“The establishment of the Centres for Short Study Programmes ensured that WBNET would leave behind more than project results—it created institutional foundations capable of generating new knowledge, new partnerships and new educational opportunities for years to come.”

From Vision to Reality

Ideas become meaningful only when they are transformed into institutions, educational opportunities and lasting partnerships. Throughout the implementation of WBNET, the consortium demonstrated that meaningful educational reform is not achieved through isolated activities, but through continuous collaboration, shared responsibility and a common commitment to innovation.

The development of **Short Study Programmes** and the establishment of **Centres for Short Study Programmes** represent far more than project deliverables. Together, they form an integrated educational model that combines academic excellence, practical learning and institutional sustainability. While the programmes respond to today’s educational and labour market needs, the Centres ensure that this process of innovation will continue to evolve long after the project’s formal completion.

Perhaps the most valuable outcome of WBNET is not found in the number of meetings organised, documents produced or activities completed. Its true achievement lies in the network of institutions, educators, employers and learners who have created a shared vision of flexible, practice-oriented higher education for the Western Balkans. It is this collaborative spirit that gives lasting value to every programme developed, every partnership established and every opportunity created through the project.

As the following chapters will demonstrate, the results of WBNET extend well beyond the completion of its planned activities. They are reflected in strengthened institutional capacities, new educational pathways, enhanced international cooperation and, above all, in the opportunities now available to future generations of learners.

Legacy

“The greatest achievement of a project is not what it delivers during its lifetime, but what continues to grow because it once existed.”

PART III

Results and Outcomes

CHAPTER

06

The WBNET Journey

“Every journey changes not only the places we visit, but also the people who travel together.”

Introduction

The success of WBNET cannot be measured solely by the programmes developed or the Centres established. Equally important was the collaborative journey that brought together educators, researchers, students, employers and institutional leaders from across Europe and the Western Balkans. Every meeting, study visit, workshop and training session became an opportunity to exchange ideas, strengthen partnerships and build a common understanding of the future of lifelong learning.

6.1 Learning Together

The Journey Begins

Every successful partnership begins with a shared vision, but it becomes meaningful only when people come together to transform that vision into action. For the WBNET consortium, this moment arrived in **January 2024**, when representatives of all partner institutions gathered at the **Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade (ATUSS)**, Department of the School of Electrical and Computer

Engineering, for the project's Kick-off Meeting.

Over three intensive days, partners moved beyond the formal signing of agreements and laid the foundations for a collaborative journey that would shape the project over the following years. The meeting provided the first opportunity for consortium members to establish working relationships, define common objectives and agree upon the organisational framework that would guide the implementation of WBNET.





Working sessions focused on the preparation of the **Project Management Plan**, the **Quality Assurance Plan** and the overall implementation timeline. Through open discussion and constructive exchange of ideas, partners established the management structure, clarified responsibilities and agreed on common working procedures that would ensure effective cooperation throughout the project. More importantly, these discussions fostered a spirit of trust and mutual understanding that quickly became one of the defining characteristics of the consortium.

The final day of the meeting was dedicated to a specialised training session introducing the concept of **Short Study Programmes** and their growing importance within contemporary higher education systems. Drawing upon its own experience in developing and implementing short-cycle education, ATUSS shared practical knowledge on the establishment, organisation and management of these programmes, highlighting their role in promoting lifelong learning, improving employability and responding more rapidly to labour market needs. For many consortium members, this was the first opportunity to explore the practical dimensions of a model that would later become the cornerstone of WBNET.

Looking back, the Kick-off Meeting represented far more than the official beginning of the project. It marked the moment when individual institutions became a consortium united by a common purpose. The ideas exchanged, the relationships established and the shared commitment demonstrated during these first days created a solid foundation upon which all subsequent activities – and ultimately the project's achievements – would be built.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

BELGRADE, SERBIA

The Kick-off Meeting transformed a consortium on paper into a community of partners with a shared vision for the future of lifelong learning in the Western Balkans.

Learning from European Excellence

Following the successful Kick-off Meeting in Belgrade, the WBNET consortium continued its journey in **April 2024** with a study visit hosted by the **Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana (ULFE)**. Organised by the **Laboratory for Multimedia (LMMFE)**, this meeting marked an important step in translating the project's vision into concrete educational practice through direct exposure to innovative teaching methods, advanced digital technologies and European experiences in lifelong learning.

From the very beginning, the visit demonstrated the University's commitment to educational innovation. Representatives of the Faculty introduced participants to the evolution of information and communication technologies, multimedia engineering and the growing role of **Short Study Programmes** and micro-credentials within contemporary higher education. The discussions highlighted how universities can respond more rapidly to technological change by offering flexible learning pathways that complement traditional degree programmes while supporting lifelong learning and professional development.

Alongside the regular consortium meetings and project progress discussions, the study visit placed particular emphasis on practical learning. Participants explored a wide range

of specialised laboratories, gaining first-hand insight into modern multimedia technologies, metrology, quality assurance and advanced communication systems. Demonstrations of antenna measurement technologies, satellite communication infrastructure, thermal imaging calibration and immersive multimedia applications illustrated how cutting-edge research can be effectively integrated into teaching and professional training.

A significant part of the programme was devoted to specialised training sessions designed to strengthen the competences of academic staff from the Western Balkans. Through interactive workshops, participants explored **hybrid multimedia systems**, modern IP-based audiovisual infrastructures and the growing importance of cybersecurity in contemporary digital environments. The involvement of experts from both academia and industry, including representatives of **Cisco Slovenia**, provided valuable perspectives on current technological trends and the practical challenges associated with digital transformation.

The final day of the visit focused on one of the project's key thematic areas – **multimedia technologies in education**. Participants were introduced to emerging applications of **extended reality (XR)**, virtual environments and immersive learning experiences, exploring how these technologies can enrich teaching, improve student engagement and create new possibilities for practical education. Hands-on demonstrations of virtual tours and video production further reinforced the project's commitment to integrating modern digital tools into future Short Study Programmes.

Beyond the technical knowledge acquired, the Ljubljana study visit strengthened professional relationships among consortium members and demonstrated the value of learning through direct experience. It encouraged participants to reflect not only on new technologies but also on innovative pedagogical approaches that could be transferred and adapted within their own institutions. Many of the concepts explored during these three days later found their place in curriculum development, laboratory modernisation and the establishment of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, making the visit an important milestone in shaping the educational identity of WBNET.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

The study visit demonstrated that educational innovation is not defined by technology alone, but by the ability to transform technology into meaningful learning experiences.

From Innovation to Sustainability

The third major milestone in the WBNET journey brought the consortium to the **Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM)** in **September 2024**, where partners gathered to review project progress, exchange experiences and prepare the next phase of implementation. While previous study visits had introduced innovative educational models and technological developments, the Madrid meeting focused on an equally important dimension of educational reform – ensuring that innovation becomes sustainable through institutional capacity building and continuous professional development.

Throughout the three-day programme, consortium members reflected on the progress achieved during the first months of the project while jointly planning the activities that would transform the project's vision into long-term institutional practice. Progress reports presented by the project coordinator, **Prof. Dr. Ljiljana Pecić**, together with contributions from all partner institutions, illustrated how the collaborative efforts initiated at the Kick-off Meeting had already

begun to generate tangible results. At the same time, discussions surrounding the first draft objectives of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes** marked an important transition from conceptual planning towards the establishment of permanent institutional structures that would become one of the defining achievements of WBNET.



The educational programme prepared by UPM reflected the University's multidisciplinary approach to contemporary higher education. Training sessions introduced participants to emerging concepts such as **urban mining**, **energy transition**, **circular economy** and **renewable fuels**, demonstrating how technological innovation and sustainability increasingly shape both education and industry. Equally important were discussions on the future of ICT and multimedia education, addressing the growing influence of artificial intelligence, rapidly changing labour market requirements and the evolving learning preferences of Generations Z and Alpha. The presentation of the **EELISA European University Alliance** further illustrated how international cooperation can foster educational excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration and institutional transformation across Europe.

One of the most distinctive features of the Madrid study visit was its strong emphasis on **academic staff development**. Through a comprehensive programme organised by the **Institute of Educational Sciences (ICE)**, participants explored innovative pedagogical approaches that extend well beyond traditional university teaching. Topics such as project-based learning, flipped classrooms, emotional intelligence in education, collaborative learning methods, virtual learning environments and inclusive teaching strategies demonstrated that educational innovation depends not only on modern technologies but also on the continuous professional development of those who teach. This perspective resonated strongly with the objectives of WBNET, reinforcing the idea that sustainable educational reform begins with empowered educators.



1 BELGRADE
Serbia

Building the Partnership
- Kick-off Meeting
- Consortium Formation
- Project Management
- Quality Assurance
- Short Study Programmes

2 LJUBLJANA
Slovenia

Educational Innovation
- Multimedia and XR Technologies
- Cybersecurity
- Advanced Laboratories
- Digital Transformation
- Learning by Experience

3 MADRID
Spain

Preparing Sustainable Change
- Pedagogical Innovation
- Lifelong Learning
- Educational Sciences (ICE)
- Professional Development
- Sustainability Plan

Three destinations. One shared vision for the future of lifelong learning.

The final sessions of the meeting looked towards the future. Discussions on the draft **Sustainability Plan** encouraged partners to consider how the project's achievements could continue beyond its funded lifetime through institutional commitment, strategic planning and regional cooperation. In this respect, Madrid represented more than another consortium meeting; it marked the moment when WBNET began to shift its attention from project implementation towards long-term educational impact.

Looking back, the study visit to Madrid completed an important learning cycle within the project. If Belgrade established the partnership and Ljubljana inspired educational innovation, Madrid demonstrated how innovation can be embedded within institutional structures and sustained through continuous learning, strategic planning and international cooperation. It was here that the consortium began to recognise that the true legacy of WBNET would not be measured solely by the programmes it developed, but by the educational culture it helped create.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

MADRID, SPAIN

The Madrid study visit demonstrated that sustainable educational innovation depends not only on new programmes, but on empowered educators, institutional commitment and a shared vision for the future of higher education.

6.2 From Knowledge to Action

"Ideas become meaningful when they are shared, challenged and transformed into practice."

Introduction

The development of innovative educational programmes within WBNET was never intended to take place behind institutional walls. Throughout the project, consortium partners actively engaged employers, public institutions and the wider professional community in an open dialogue about the future of lifelong learning and competency-based education. Round tables and interim conferences became important milestones in this process, providing opportunities to validate project results, exchange experiences and ensure that the newly developed **Short Study Programmes** reflect genuine labour market needs.

Rather than presenting complete solutions, these events encouraged continuous dialogue between academia and industry, allowing project partners to refine their educational approach through direct interaction with stakeholders. In this way, dissemination became more than communication – it became an integral part of curriculum development and institutional innovation.



Listening to the Labour Market

Round Table – University of Bihać

One of the first opportunities to present the emerging results of WBNET to external stakeholders took place at the **Technical Faculty of the University of Bihać**, where representatives of the consortium met with employers from the ICT, multimedia and media sectors to discuss the future implementation of **Short Study Programmes**.

The discussion clearly demonstrated that technological change continues to reshape workforce requirements at an unprecedented pace. Representatives of local companies emphasised the growing demand for professionals equipped with practical competences in software engineering,

multimedia production, information technologies and digital communication. Rather than seeking broad theoretical qualifications alone, employers highlighted the importance of flexible educational programmes capable of providing targeted upskilling and reskilling opportunities that respond quickly to changing market conditions.

For the consortium, these discussions represented an important confirmation that the educational philosophy underpinning WBNET was aligned with real labour market expectations. The concept of **Centres for Short Study Programmes** – designed to develop flexible, practice-oriented educational opportunities in close cooperation with industry – was recognised by stakeholders as a valuable mechanism for strengthening the relationship between higher education and regional economic development.

Equally important, the event reinforced the collaborative nature of the project. Representatives of Higher Education Institutions from Spain, Slovenia, Serbia, Kosovo* and Bosnia and Herzegovina jointly presented the project's progress, demonstrating how international cooperation could generate educational solutions adapted to local needs while benefiting from European experience and expertise.

The discussions in Bihać therefore represented much more than a traditional consultation meeting. They marked the moment when the voices of employers became an integral part of the educational model being developed through WBNET, confirming that successful curriculum development begins with listening as much as with teaching.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

BIHAĆ, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The first round table confirmed that meaningful educational innovation begins by understanding the needs of employers and involving them as active partners in curriculum development.

Celebrating Progress, Sharing Experience

Interim Conference – University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica (UPKM)

The **Interim Conference**, hosted by the **Faculty of Technical Sciences of the University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica (UPKM)**, represented an important milestone in the implementation of WBNET. Taking place approximately halfway through the project, it offered the consortium an opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved, evaluate the first tangible results and prepare for the next phase of implementation.

Bringing together partners from the Western Balkans and the European Union, the conference demonstrated how the project had evolved from initial planning towards concrete educational activities. Discussions focused not only on project management and implementation, but also on one of the defining characteristics of WBNET – the integration of practical learning into higher education through well-structured professional internships and close cooperation with industry.

A central component of the conference was a series of training sessions dedicated to the organisation and implementation

of student internships. Representatives of partner institutions shared their experiences in establishing cooperation with employers, designing internship models and integrating practical training into educational programmes. These exchanges highlighted the diversity of institutional approaches while confirming a shared understanding that meaningful learning extends beyond the classroom and requires continuous engagement with the professional environment.



The conference also provided an opportunity for companies cooperating with partner institutions to present their own experiences in hosting students and supporting practice-oriented education. Their contributions reinforced one of the project's fundamental principles: that sustainable educational innovation depends on active dialogue between higher education institutions and employers. By bringing together academic and professional perspectives, the conference strengthened the collaborative model that would later become one of the defining features of the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**.

Beyond its academic programme, the Interim Conference also played an important role in increasing the visibility of the project. Media coverage provided by **TV Most** and **FTN TV**, together with dissemination through various communication channels, introduced the wider public to the objectives and achievements of WBNET, demonstrating how international cooperation contributes to the modernisation of higher education in the Western Balkans.

Looking back, the Interim Conference represented far more than a review of project activities. It became a moment of reflection, exchange and renewed motivation, confirming that the consortium was steadily progressing towards its common objective of creating innovative, flexible and practice-oriented educational opportunities for future learners.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

KOSOVSKA MITROVICA, KOSOVO*

The Interim Conference demonstrated that the success of educational innovation depends not only on developing new programmes, but also on creating meaningful partnerships between higher education and professional practice.

Looking Ahead Together

Round Table – Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM), Zvečan

The final round table within the WBNET journey was hosted by the **Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)** in Zvečan, bringing together representatives of Higher Education Institutions from the Western Balkans and the European Union at a stage when the project had already begun to demonstrate its most significant achievements. More than a regular consortium meeting, the gathering represented an opportunity to reflect on the progress made while jointly preparing the final phase of project implementation and ensuring the long-term sustainability of its results.

Over two intensive days, partners reviewed the implementation of individual work packages, discussed quality assurance procedures, dissemination activities and sustainability planning, and agreed on the final steps towards the introduction of **Short Study Programmes** and micro-credentials within participating institutions. These discussions illustrated how the project had evolved from strategic planning into an operational educational model supported by institutional commitment and regional cooperation.



Particular attention was devoted to strengthening cooperation between higher education and the labour market. Through an open exchange of experiences, partners confirmed that practice-oriented education and continuous dialogue with

employers remain essential elements of modern higher education. The discussion no longer focused on whether **Short Study Programmes** were needed, but rather on how they could be continuously developed, improved and expanded beyond the lifetime of the project.

The meeting also offered participants an opportunity to visit the newly equipped laboratories and teaching facilities of the Department in Zvečan, where they became acquainted with the infrastructure supporting practical education and professional training. These visits demonstrated how investments made through WBNET had been translated into tangible educational environments that would continue serving future generations of learners and academic staff.

Beyond the formal programme, the consortium explored the rich cultural and historical heritage of Kosovo and Metohija. These shared experiences strengthened personal relationships among partners and reinforced one of the project's most valuable achievements – the creation of a collaborative academic community built on mutual trust, intercultural understanding and a shared commitment to educational excellence.

The event also received significant media attention through coverage by **Television Most**, whose prime-time report introduced the wider public to the project's objectives and achievements. Such visibility further contributed to raising awareness of the importance of lifelong learning, institutional cooperation and educational innovation within the region.

As one of the final major gatherings of the consortium, the meeting in Zvečan symbolised more than the conclusion of a successful project phase. It demonstrated the maturity of the WBNET partnership and the confidence with which participating institutions looked towards the future. By this stage, collaboration had become more than a project obligation – it had evolved into a lasting professional network united by a common vision of flexible, learner-centred and practice-oriented higher education.

WBNET HIGHLIGHT

ZVEČAN, KOSOVO*

The final round table confirmed that the greatest achievement of WBNET was not only the educational model it created, but the community of institutions committed to carrying it forward.

"By the end of the journey, the consortium had become more than a partnership — it had become a community."

6.3 Bringing Innovation Home

"Knowledge achieves its greatest value when it is shared."

Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of WBNET was the commitment of every partner institution to multiply the knowledge

acquired during international study visits. Rather than limiting newly gained experience to project participants, consortium members organised a series of in-home trainings through which academic staff, administrative personnel and future programme coordinators became actively involved in the project. In this way, knowledge travelled far beyond consortium meetings, gradually becoming part of the institutional culture of each Higher Education Institution.

UNBI

Expanding Local Capacity

The **University of Bihać (UNBI)** approached the in-home training programme as a continuous process of institutional learning. Rather than organising isolated dissemination events, the University gradually transformed the knowledge acquired through international cooperation into practical competences shared across the Faculty of Technical Engineering.

The first in-home training introduced academic and administrative staff to the overall objectives of WBNET, the concept of **Short Study Programmes** and the University's role within the consortium. By presenting European experiences and discussing the educational philosophy behind flexible learning pathways, the training established a common understanding of the project's ambitions and prepared the institution for the activities that followed.

As the project progressed, each subsequent training built naturally upon the previous one. Following the study visit to **Ljubljana**, participants became acquainted with emerging multimedia technologies, cybersecurity, extended reality (XR), virtual tours and innovative approaches to video production, while also exploring their potential application within future educational programmes.

Knowledge gained during the study visit to **Madrid** further expanded this learning process. Academic staff shared European experiences related to the development of Short Study Programmes, modern pedagogical approaches and institutional models supporting lifelong learning. These discussions encouraged participants to consider how international good practices could be adapted to the local educational environment while strengthening the University's preparedness for establishing the Centre for Short Study Programmes.

The final stage of the in-home training programme focused on implementation. Attention shifted from introducing project concepts towards discussing concrete strategies for developing and delivering Short Study Programmes, strengthening regional cooperation and embedding educational innovation within the University's long-term institutional development. By this stage, WBNET was no longer perceived simply as an international project but as an opportunity to modernise educational practice and expand opportunities for lifelong learning within the region.

Taken together, the four in-home trainings demonstrate how international mobility can generate lasting institutional impact. Knowledge acquired through European cooperation was systematically shared with a wider academic community, gradually becoming part of the University's educational practice and strengthening its capacity to implement innovative, practice-oriented learning opportunities long after the project concludes.



WBNET SIGNATURE

From European experience to institutional competence.

SVEHERC

Embedding a New Educational Vision

For the **University of Herzegovina (SVEHERC)**, the in-home training programme represented a gradual process of institutional preparation for the introduction of **Short Study Programmes**. Rather than focusing exclusively on technical aspects of project implementation, the University approached these activities as an opportunity to build a shared institutional understanding of flexible learning, lifelong education and the strategic role of the future **Centre for Short Study Programmes**.

The first in-home training introduced academic and administrative staff to the objectives of the WBNET project, the University's responsibilities within the consortium and the European concept of Short Study Programmes. Participants discussed the opportunities that such programmes could create within the higher education system of Bosnia and Herzegovina while reflecting on the experiences of partner institutions from across Europe and the Western Balkans. From the outset, the emphasis was placed not only on understanding the project itself, but on recognising its long-term institutional value.

Building upon this foundation, the second training transferred the knowledge acquired during the study visit to the **University of Ljubljana**. Academic staff shared the project's latest developments, presented innovative educational approaches observed during the international mobility activities and introduced colleagues to the practical steps required for establishing the future Centre for Short Study Programmes. In this way, European experiences were gradually translated into local institutional knowledge while encouraging broader participation in the implementation of project activities.

The third in-home training marked the transition from institutional preparation towards strategic planning. Following the consortium meeting in **Madrid**, participants reviewed the project's achievements to date, discussed the agreed work calendar and analysed the next steps in developing Short Study Programmes. Rather than introducing entirely new concepts, this session consolidated previous learning, aligned institutional priorities with the consortium's future activities and reinforced the

University's readiness to move from planning towards implementation.

Together, these three training sessions illustrate a carefully structured process of organisational learning. The University of Herzegovina gradually moved from introducing the concept of Short Study Programmes, through transferring international experience, to strategically preparing its academic community for future implementation. In doing so, SVEHERC demonstrated that successful capacity building is achieved not by the number of activities organised, but by the continuity of institutional learning and the ability to transform project experiences into sustainable educational development.



WBNET SIGNATURE

Institutional readiness grows through continuous learning, shared responsibility and a common vision for the future.

UPKM

Transforming Teaching through Innovation

For the **University of Mitrovica (UPKM)**, the in-home training programme became a mechanism for transforming international experience into institutional expertise. Through a carefully sequenced series of training sessions, the University gradually introduced academic and administrative staff to the philosophy of **Short Study Programmes**, innovative educational technologies and contemporary pedagogical approaches that would later support the implementation of the WBNET project.

The first in-home training established the foundations of this process by presenting the overall objectives of WBNET, the University's responsibilities within the consortium and the concept of Short Study Programmes as an innovative model for lifelong learning. Academic and non-academic staff were introduced to the experiences of European partner institutions, creating a shared understanding of the project's vision and preparing the institution for the activities that followed.

The second training built upon this foundation by transferring the knowledge gained during the study visit to the **University of Ljubljana**. Participants explored topics including multimedia education, video

production, extended reality (XR), micro-credentials and cybersecurity, while discussing how these technologies could enrich future educational programmes and strengthen practical learning. The training demonstrated how emerging digital technologies can become integral components of modern higher education when combined with innovative teaching methods and close cooperation with European partners.



Following the study visit to **Universidad Politécnica de Madrid**, the third in-home training shifted the focus from technology towards pedagogy. Academic staff presented contemporary educational concepts explored at UPM, including innovative teaching methodologies, service-learning projects, short course development and new approaches to ICT and multimedia education. Particular attention was devoted to learner-centred teaching strategies, interdisciplinary learning and the continuous professional development of university teachers, reinforcing the understanding that educational innovation depends as much on pedagogical excellence as on technological advancement.

Together, these three training sessions illustrate a coherent process of institutional learning. Beginning with a shared understanding of the WBNET vision, continuing through the adoption of innovative digital technologies and culminating in modern pedagogical approaches, the University of Mitrovica successfully transformed international project experiences into local educational capacity. In doing so, UPKM strengthened its readiness to implement **Short Study Programmes** while fostering a culture of continuous professional development and educational innovation.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Educational transformation begins when innovative technologies and innovative teaching evolve together.

AASKM

Building a Community of Learning

For the **Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija (AASKM)**, the in-home training programme became much more than a mechanism for transferring knowledge acquired during international study visits. Each training session served as an opportunity to engage a wider academic community, encourage institutional dialogue and promote a culture of continuous professional development that extended beyond the immediate objectives of the WBNET project.

The first in-home training introduced teachers and staff of the Department in Zvečan to the objectives of the WBNET project, the responsibilities of AASKM within the consortium and the concept of **Short Study Programmes** as an innovative model of lifelong learning. The experiences gained during the Kick-off Meeting at the coordinating institution were shared with colleagues, creating a common understanding of the project's vision and laying the foundation for active institutional participation. From the very beginning, the emphasis was placed on discussion and collective engagement rather than one-way knowledge transfer.

The second training expanded this dialogue by presenting the experiences gained during the study visit to the **University of Ljubljana**. Particular attention was devoted to the establishment and organisation of short courses, innovative educational practices and the practical experiences of European partners in developing flexible learning opportunities. The training attracted broad participation from academic staff, demonstrating growing institutional interest in the implementation of the WBNET concept and encouraging active discussion on how these experiences could be adapted within AASKM.

The third in-home training reflected the project's transition from planning towards implementation. Drawing upon the knowledge acquired during the study visit to **Universidad Politécnica de Madrid**, participants discussed the development of **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, innovative educational approaches, energy transition, circular economy, renewable fuels and the evolving expectations of new generations of learners. In addition, the programme was enriched by a presentation delivered by **Mr Goran Lazić**, Erasmus+ Project Officer, introducing broader opportunities within the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Vocational Education and Training programme. This combination of project experiences and institutional networking broadened the perspective of participants and reinforced the Academy's commitment to international cooperation and continuous educational development.

Taken together, the three in-home training sessions demonstrate how AASKM transformed international mobility into institutional learning. By continuously sharing experiences, encouraging dialogue among colleagues and connecting project activities with wider European educational initiatives, the Academy fostered an environment in which innovation became a shared institutional responsibility rather than the task of an individual project team. In doing so, AASKM exemplified one of the central ideas of WBNET – that sustainable educational change is achieved when knowledge is openly shared, discussed and collectively embraced.

WBNET SIGNATURE

Knowledge creates the greatest impact when it becomes part of an institution's shared culture.

The WBNET journey was defined not only by the places visited or the activities completed, but by the relationships established throughout the project. Every study visit, workshop and in-home training strengthened mutual understanding, encouraged professional dialogue and reinforced the shared commitment to creating more flexible, practice-oriented higher education across the Western Balkans.



As the experiences of the participating institutions demonstrate, capacity building is not a single event but a continuous process of learning, sharing and institutional development. Although each partner followed its own path, together they contributed to a common objective: transforming European experience into sustainable educational practice adapted to regional needs.

Perhaps the most valuable outcome of this journey cannot be measured through reports or statistics. It is reflected in the network of educators, researchers and professionals who continue to collaborate, exchange ideas and buil new initiatives inspired by the experience gained through WBNET. More importantly, it lives on in the institutions that are now better prepared to provide innovative learning opportunities for future generations of students and lifelong learners.

Legacy

“The most meaningful journeys are those that continue long after the destination has been reached.”

CHAPTER

07

Results and Impact

“The true value of a project is measured not by the activities it completes, but by the opportunities it creates for those who come after.”

Introduction

Every successful project reaches a point where activities become achievements and plans become reality. For WBNET, this transformation was reflected not only in the completion of project deliverables, but also in the educational, institutional and regional changes that emerged throughout the implementation process.

The project resulted in far more than reports, meetings or newly developed curricula. It introduced innovative educational models, established Centres for Short Study Programmes, equipped modern laboratories, strengthened cooperation with industry and created new opportunities for lifelong learning in the Western Balkans. Perhaps most importantly, it demonstrated that sustainable educational reform is achieved through partnership – by connecting universities, employers and local communities around a common vision for the future.

The following sections present the most significant outcomes of WBNET, illustrating how individual project activities gradually evolved into lasting institutional capacities and regional cooperation that will continue well beyond the project’s formal completion.

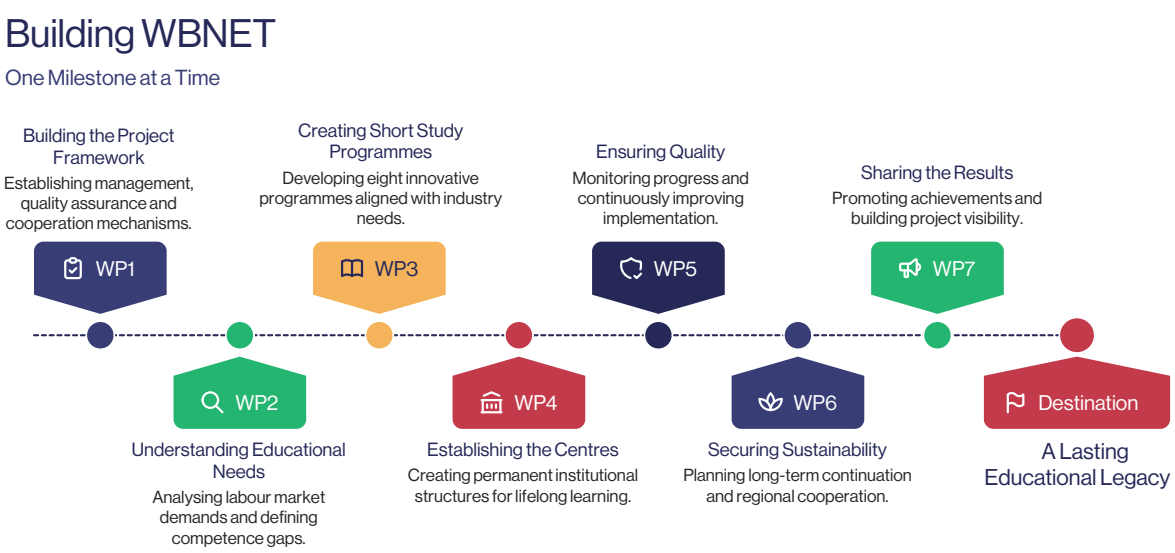


Figure 7.1 The WBNET implementation followed a progressive development model in which each completed deliverable contributed to the next phase of the project, ultimately resulting in sustainable institutional capacity, strengthened regional cooperation and new lifelong learning opportunities across the Western Balkans.

7.1 From Deliverables to Lasting Change

Every Erasmus+ project is evaluated through the successful completion of its planned deliverables. In WBNET, however, these deliverables represented much more than contractual obligations. They formed a logical sequence of interconnected milestones, each building upon the previous one and collectively contributing to the creation of a sustainable system of **Short Study Programmes** in the Western Balkans.

Rather than developing isolated project outputs, the consortium followed a carefully structured pathway. Initial activities focused on establishing a solid organisational and methodological framework through project management, quality assurance procedures and comprehensive needs analysis. These foundations enabled the collaborative development of new curricula, the establishment of Centres for Short Study Programmes and the creation of modern learning environments equipped to support innovative teaching and practical training.

The next phase transformed these newly developed capacities into educational practice. Through study visits, staff training, pilot implementation, cooperation with employers and continuous quality monitoring, project results gradually moved beyond planning and became an integral part of institutional development. At the same time, dissemination activities ensured that the project's achievements reached a broader academic and professional community, encouraging replication and wider adoption of its innovative approach.

The final phase focused on sustainability. Cooperation agreements with business partners, the establishment of the regional Knowledge Labs Network, the Sustainability Plan and this monograph itself ensure that the outcomes of WBNET will continue to evolve after the formal completion of the project. In this way, the project's deliverables became not an endpoint, but the foundation for future educational cooperation and continuous development.



Figure 7.2 WBNET Results Framework

WBNET SIGNATURE

Deliverables measure project progress. Their real value is measured by the change they continue to create

7.2 Educational Impact

"Education creates its greatest impact when it opens new opportunities for learning."

Introduction

The educational impact of WBNET extends far beyond the development of new study programmes. By introducing innovative approaches to lifelong learning, strengthening cooperation with industry and modernising teaching methodologies, the project contributed to a broader transformation of higher education within the participating institutions. Rather than creating isolated educational products, WBNET established a flexible learning ecosystem capable of responding to rapidly changing technological, economic and societal needs.

Perhaps the project's most significant educational achievement lies in the introduction of **Short Study Programmes** as a new model of higher education in **Kosovo*** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. For the first time, participating institutions developed structured, practice-oriented programmes designed to provide targeted knowledge and competencies aligned with labour market demands while complementing traditional higher education. This represents an important step towards strengthening lifelong learning opportunities and improving access to continuous professional education across the region.

The newly established **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, supported by modern laboratories and innovative teaching resources, provide the institutional environment necessary for implementing these educational models. Combined with enhanced academic capacities, strengthened cooperation with industry and the adoption of contemporary teaching methodologies, they create favourable conditions for the long-term development of flexible, learner-centred education.

Beyond the participating institutions, the educational philosophy promoted through WBNET contributes to wider regional discussions on the future of higher education. By demonstrating how universities can respond more effectively to technological change, evolving labour market requirements and the growing demand for lifelong learning, the project offers a model that can inspire similar initiatives across the Western Balkans.

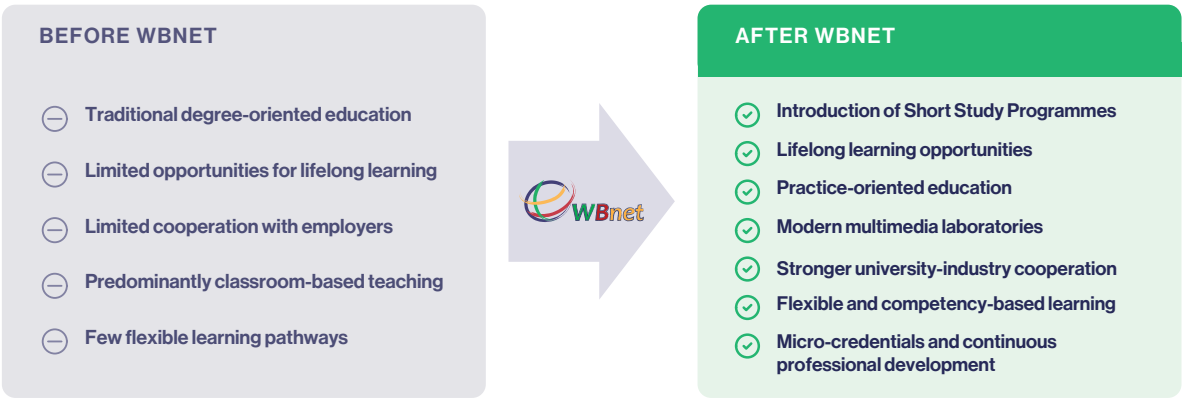


Figure 7.3 Educational Transformation through WBNET

WBNET SIGNATURE

"Education becomes truly relevant when learning continues beyond the classroom and throughout life."

7.3 Institutional Impact

"Strong institutions are built not only through infrastructure, but through the people, partnerships and ideas that shape them."

Introduction

The long-term value of WBNET extends beyond the educational programmes it created. Equally significant is the transformation that took place within the participating Higher Education Institutions themselves. Through the establishment of new organisational structures, investment in modern learning environments and the development of institutional capacities, the project strengthened the ability of partner institutions to respond to emerging educational and labour market needs.

Rather than introducing temporary project activities, WBNET created permanent institutional resources that will continue supporting lifelong learning long after the project's completion. New **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, modern laboratories, trained academic staff and strengthened international partnerships now form an integrated framework for continuous educational development and regional cooperation.

Most importantly, the project encouraged participating institutions to adopt a more flexible and collaborative approach to

higher education – one that values innovation, interdisciplinary learning and close cooperation with industry as essential elements of institutional growth.

Building Institutional Capacity

One of the most significant institutional achievements of WBNET was the establishment of **Centres for Short Study Programmes** within the participating institutions. These Centres represent more than newly created organisational units; they provide a sustainable institutional framework for the development, coordination and delivery of flexible educational programmes tailored to the needs of lifelong learners and employers.

Complementing these organisational changes, the project enabled the modernisation of teaching infrastructure through the establishment and equipping of specialised laboratories. These facilities provide contemporary learning environments where theoretical knowledge is integrated with practical application, supporting innovative teaching methods and strengthening the quality of professional education.

Institutional development was further reinforced through the continuous professional development of academic and administrative staff. Participation in study visits, international cooperation and in-home training activities strengthened institutional expertise while fostering a culture of collaboration, knowledge sharing and continuous improvement. As demonstrated throughout this monograph, capacity building was not limited to individual project participants but gradually became embedded within each participating institution.

The project also contributed to strengthening the international profile of partner institutions. Through close cooperation with universities from the European Union and the Western Balkans, institutions expanded their professional networks, exchanged good practices and established partnerships that extend beyond the duration of the project. These relationships create new opportunities for future research, educational cooperation and joint initiatives supporting regional development.

Ultimately, the institutional impact of WBNET is reflected not only in new infrastructure or organisational models, but in the increased capacity of participating Higher Education Institutions to innovate, cooperate and respond proactively to future educational challenges.

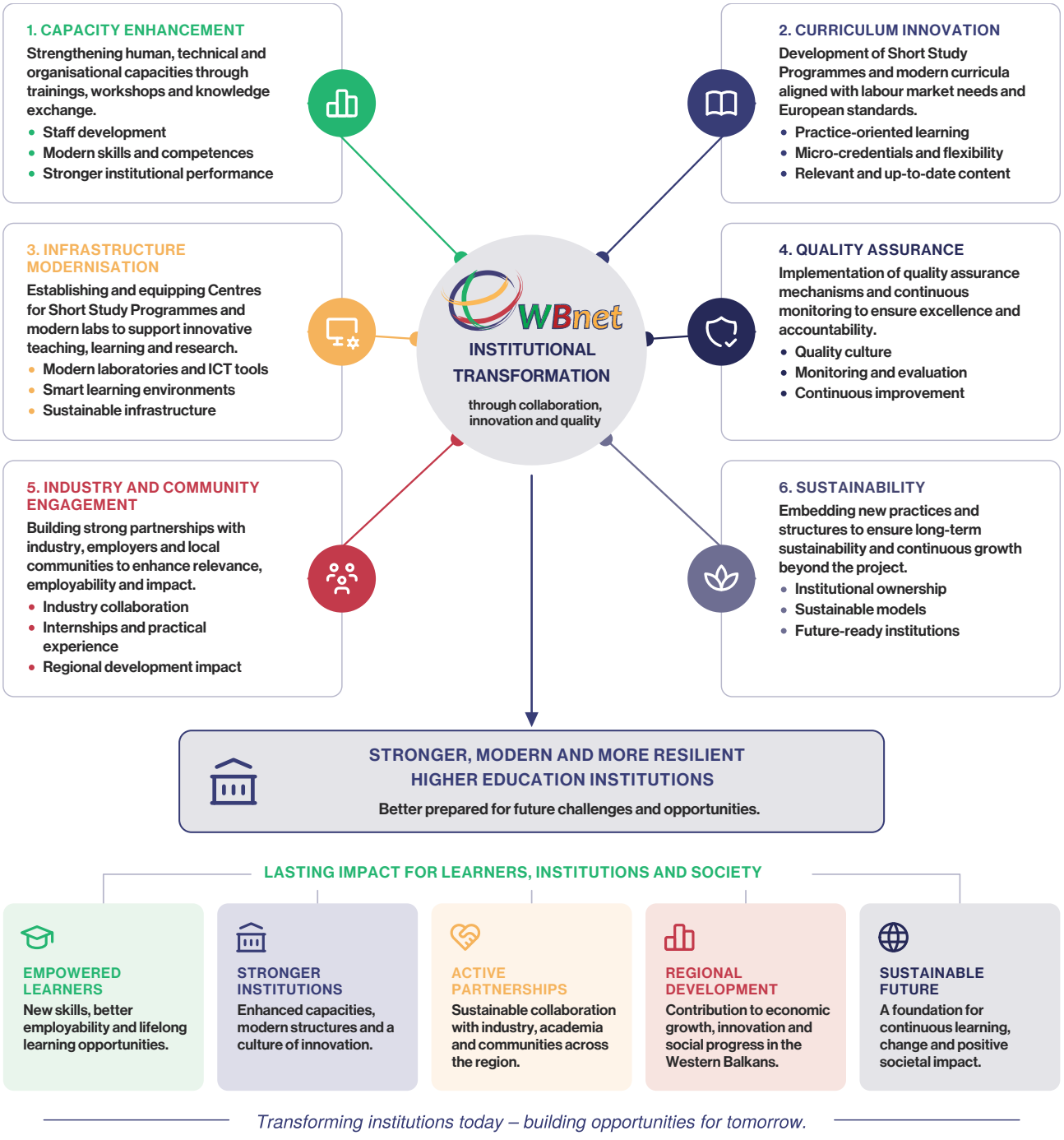


Figure 7.4 Institutional Transformation through WBNET

WBNET SIGNATURE

“Sustainable educational change begins when institutions themselves become capable of continuous innovation.”

7.4 Connecting Education and Industry

“The strongest educational programmes are those developed together with the people who will one day use their knowledge.”

Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of WBNET was its commitment to strengthening the relationship between **Higher Education Institutions** and the labour market. Rather than developing educational programmes in isolation, the consortium adopted a collaborative approach in which employers, professional organisations and industry representatives actively contributed to shaping the future of **Short Study Programmes**.

From the earliest stages of the project, labour market needs guided the development of educational content. Needs analyses, consultations with employers and round table discussions provided valuable insights into emerging competence requirements, ensuring that newly developed programmes reflected current technological trends and professional expectations. This continuous dialogue transformed industry partners from external stakeholders into active contributors to curriculum development and educational innovation.

The project also established a practical framework for long-term cooperation. Through partnership agreements, professional internships, guest lectures and participation in programme design, companies became an integral part of the educational process, creating opportunities for learners to acquire practical skills in authentic professional environments while enabling Higher Education Institutions to respond more effectively to changing market demands.

From Consultation to Collaboration

The cooperation established through WBNET extended well beyond occasional meetings with employers. Industry representatives participated in labour market analyses, contributed to discussions during round tables and interim conferences, and provided valuable feedback during the design of **Short Study Programmes**. Their practical experience helped ensure that programme learning outcomes reflected real workplace requirements while maintaining the academic standards expected from higher education.

The project further strengthened these relationships through the signing of cooperation agreements with companies and institutions across the participating regions. These partnerships created opportunities for practical training, professional internships and future joint educational activities, establishing a sustainable bridge between academic learning and professional practice.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of WBNET in this area was not simply the number of agreements signed, but the development of a new culture of cooperation. Throughout the project, universities and employers moved from occasional consultation towards continuous partnership, recognising that educational excellence and economic development are closely interconnected. This collaborative approach now provides a solid foundation for the

continued implementation and further development of **Short Study Programmes**, ensuring that they remain relevant, responsive and closely aligned with labour market needs.

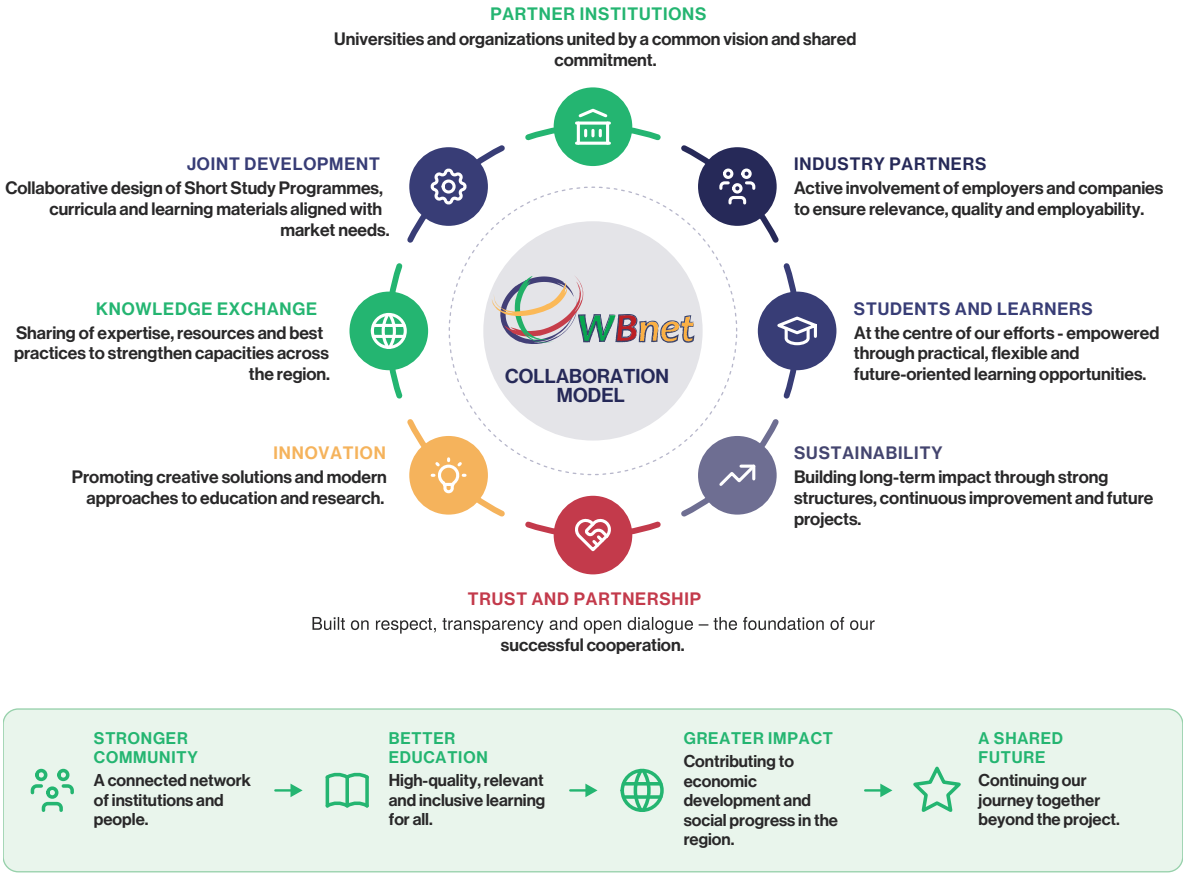


Figure 7.5 The WBNET Collaboration Model

In this respect, WBNET demonstrated that successful educational innovation depends not only on universities, but on the willingness of all stakeholders to work together in preparing future generations for rapidly changing professional environments.

WBNET SIGNATURE

“When education and industry design learning together, graduates are better prepared for tomorrow’s challenges.”

Beyond Partnership

WBNET demonstrated that universities and employers share a common responsibility for developing the knowledge, skills and competencies required by modern society. By creating permanent channels of cooperation, the project established a foundation for educational programmes that remain relevant long after their initial development.

7.5 Building a Regional Educational Community

"The strongest partnerships are those that continue to create opportunities long after the project has ended."

Introduction

One of the most enduring achievements of WBNET is the regional network that emerged through three years of close cooperation among **Higher Education Institutions**, industry partners and educational professionals from the Western Balkans and the European Union. While the project successfully developed new educational programmes and strengthened institutional capacities, its broader contribution lies in creating a collaborative community committed to advancing lifelong learning across the region.

Throughout the project, universities from different educational systems worked together to address common challenges, exchange experiences and jointly develop innovative solutions. This continuous dialogue fostered mutual trust, strengthened professional relationships and demonstrated that sustainable educational development is best achieved through partnership rather than isolated institutional efforts.

A Network That Extends Beyond the Project

Regional cooperation within WBNET evolved far beyond the implementation of planned project activities. Joint curriculum development, international study visits, in-home trainings, conferences and continuous communication enabled partner institutions to establish lasting professional relationships based on shared expertise, mutual support and a common vision for the future of higher education.

An important milestone in this process was the establishment of the **Knowledge Labs Network for Innovation and Sustainability**, through which partner institutions committed themselves to continuing cooperation beyond the formal duration of the project. The Network provides a framework for joint educational initiatives, collaborative research, staff mobility, exchange of teaching resources, cooperation with industry and the continuous development of **Short Study Programmes**, ensuring that the achievements of WBNET remain active long after the project has officially concluded.

Beyond institutional cooperation, the project strengthened regional dialogue between academia, employers and public stakeholders. By creating opportunities for knowledge exchange across borders and disciplines, WBNET demonstrated that educational innovation benefits from diversity of experience while contributing to the development of a more integrated and resilient higher education area in the Western Balkans.

Perhaps the greatest legacy of the project is therefore not represented by any single deliverable or institutional achievement, but by the network of people and institutions who continue to collaborate, inspire one another and jointly shape the future of lifelong learning. In this sense, WBNET established not only a consortium, but a regional educational community capable of generating new ideas, responding to future challenges and creating opportunities for generations of learners yet to come.

WBNET SIGNATURE

“Projects have a defined duration. Partnerships have the potential to shape the future.”

The results of WBNET cannot be measured solely through newly established Centres, developed programmes or completed project deliverables. Its greatest achievement lies in creating a sustainable framework for cooperation that enables institutions to continue learning from one another while jointly responding to future educational challenges.

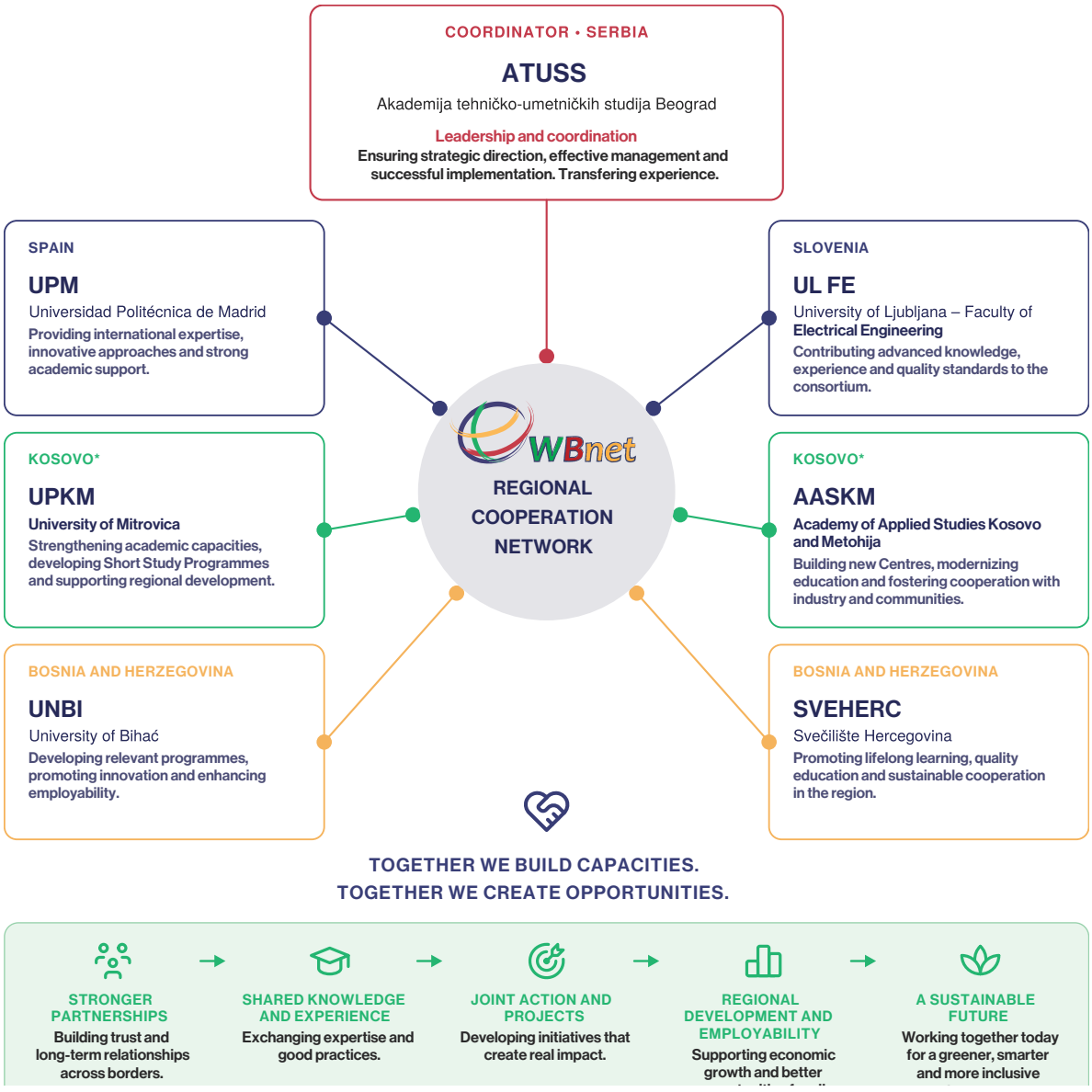


Figure 7.6 The WBNET Regional Cooperation Model

By connecting universities, employers and international partners around a common vision of lifelong learning, WBNET demonstrated that educational innovation is most successful when knowledge is openly shared, responsibilities are jointly embraced and partnerships extend beyond project boundaries.

The legacy of WBNET is therefore not only visible in what has been created, but in what will continue to grow.

CHAPTER

08

Voices of WBNET

“Projects are remembered not only for what they achieve, but for the people whose lives and work they inspire.”

Introduction

Every project tells two stories. The first is written through its activities, achievements and measurable results. The second is told through the experiences of the people who helped shape it. Throughout the WBNET journey, educators, project coordinators, researchers, students, industry representatives and institutional leaders contributed their knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to a shared vision of strengthening lifelong learning across the Western Balkans.

The voices presented in this chapter offer a personal perspective on the project’s impact. They reflect the diversity of experiences within the consortium while revealing a common thread that connects every participant – the belief that cooperation, innovation and continuous learning have the power to transform higher education.

Together, these reflections illustrate that WBNET was more than an Erasmus+ project. It became a community of people united by shared ideas, mutual trust and a common ambition to create educational opportunities that will continue benefiting future generations long after the project’s completion.

“Every voice tells a story. Together, they tell the story of WBNET.”

PART IV

Capitalization and Future Perspectives

“Knowledge creates its greatest value when it continues to inspire long after a project has ended.”

VOICES OF WBNET · GLASOVI WBNET-A

University of Mitrovica

Univerzitet u Prištini sa privremenim sedištem u Kosovskoj Mitrovici

KOSOVSKA MITROVICA, KOSOVO*

Multimedia · Applied Information and Communication Technologies
Multimedija · Primenjene informaciono-komunikacione tehnologije

“This course has made a valuable contribution to my professional development and the modernisation of my everyday work.”

„Ovaj kurs bio je dragocen doprinos mom profesionalnom razvoju i modernizaciji svakodnevnog rada.“

– JOVANA MAKSIMOVIĆ



Viktor Bojanić

Freelancer · Multimedia
Frilenser · Multimedija

“I attended the Multimedia training program at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Kosovska Mitrovica, and I am very satisfied with the knowledge and skills I gained. The lectures were engaging, well organised, and strongly focused on practical work.

As a freelancer, the program helped me expand my knowledge and develop skills that I can immediately apply in my work with clients. I particularly appreciated the practical assignments, which gave me the opportunity to further develop my skills in the field of multimedia.

The program was well organised, and the professors presented the material clearly and effectively. I would gladly recommend it to anyone interested in developing their knowledge and practical skills in multimedia.”

„Pohađao sam program obuke Multimedija na Fakultetu tehničkih nauka u Kosovskoj Mitrovici i veoma sam zadovoljan znanjem i veštinama koje sam stekao. Predavanja su bila zanimljiva, dobro organizovana i snažno usmerena na praktičan rad.

Kao frilenseru, program mi je pomogao da proširim znanje i razvijem veštine koje mogu odmah da primenim u radu sa klijentima. Posebno sam cenio praktične zadatke, koji su mi omogućili da dodatno razvijem svoje veštine u oblasti multimedije.

Program je bio dobro organizovan, a profesori su gradivo izlagali jasno i efikasno. Rado bih ga preporučio svima koji žele da razviju svoje znanje i praktične veštine u oblasti multimedije.“



Jovana Maksimović

Librarian · Applied Information and Communication Technologies
Bibliotekarka · Primenjene informaciono-komunikacione tehnologije

“The ICT course was highly informative and well structured, with clearly presented topics and practical examples applicable to everyday work.

As a librarian at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Kosovska Mitrovica, the knowledge I gained has greatly helped me improve my work with digital tools, electronic resources, and library materials. The classes were interactive and adapted to the participants, making it easier to acquire new knowledge and apply it in practice.

I particularly value the practical skills I gained, which I can directly apply to the organisation and improvement of library services. For me, this course has made a valuable contribution to my professional development and the modernisation of my everyday work.”

„Kurs iz informaciono-komunikacionih tehnologija bio je veoma informativan i dobro strukturiran, sa jasno predstavljenim temama i praktičnim primerima primenljivim u svakodnevnom radu.

Radim kao bibliotekarka na Fakultetu tehničkih nauka u Kosovskoj Mitrovici, a stečeno znanje mi je umnogome pomoglo da unapredim rad sa digitalnim alatima, elektronskim izvorima i bibliotečkom građom. Časovi su bili interaktivni i prilagođeni polaznicima, što je olakšalo usvajanje novih znanja i njihovu primenu u praksi.

Posebno cenim praktične veštine koje sam stekla i koje mogu neposredno da primenim u organizaciji i unapređenju bibliotečkih usluga. Za mene je ovaj kurs bio dragocen doprinos profesionalnom razvoju i modernizaciji svakodnevnog rada.“

VIDEO STATEMENTS · VIDEO IZJAVE

Viktor Bojanić

Jovana Maksimović

VOICES OF WBNET · GLASOVI WBNET-A

Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija

Akademija strukovnih studija Kosovsko-metohijska

KOSOVO*

Application of Modern Multimedia Tools · Digital Business and Internet Security
Primena savremenih multimedijalnih alata · Digitalno poslovanje i internet bezbednost

“Technical knowledge alone is no longer enough to fully prepare us for today’s labour market.”

„Samo tehničko znanje više nije dovoljno da nas u potpunosti pripremi za današnje tržište rada.“

– NEMANJA ĐURIĆ



Emilija Denović

Medical student · Application of Modern Multimedia Tools
Studentkinja medicine · Primena savremenih multimedijalnih alata

“As a medical student, my main field of study is quite different from digital business, but I have always been interested in developing my internet and digital skills. I was particularly interested in learning more about digital marketing and multimedia systems because I would like, at some point, to create a YouTube channel focused on healthy lifestyles and nutrition. The programme helped me better understand how digital platforms can be used to create, present and promote content, while also making me more aware of the importance of using online tools safely and responsibly. I see these new skills as a valuable complement to my medical education and something I can use creatively in the future.”

„Kao studentkinja medicine, bavim se oblašću koja je prilično daleko od digitalnog poslovanja, ali me je oduvek zanimalo da razvijam svoje internet i digitalne veštine. Posebno sam želela da naučim više o digitalnom marketingu i multimedijalnim sistemima, jer bih jednog dana volela da pokrenem YouTube kanal posvećen zdravim stilovima života i ishrani. Program mi je pomogao da bolje razumem kako se digitalne platforme mogu koristiti za kreiranje, predstavljanje i promovisanje sadržaja, a ujedno me je učinio svesnijom koliko je važno da se onlajn alati koriste bezbedno i odgovorno. Ove nove veštine vidim kao dragocenu dopunu svom medicinskom obrazovanju i kao nešto što u budućnosti mogu kreativno da iskoristim.“



Dragan Lazić

Professional Engineer in Fire Protection · Application of Modern Multimedia Tools
Strukovni inženjer zaštite od požara · Primena savremenih multimedijalnih alata

“Having recently graduated from the Fire Protection study programme at AASKM, I saw this short programme as an opportunity to



Dragan Lazić, Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija

“This showed me how modern multimedia and digital technologies can also have very practical applications in my own professional field.”

„To mi je pokazalo da savremene multimedijalne i digitalne tehnologije mogu imati veoma praktičnu primenu i u mojoj struci.“

– DRAGAN LAZIĆ

complement my professional education with new practical skills. I was particularly interested in the course on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – Filming and Flight Techniques, especially the practical work with a drone equipped with a thermal imaging camera that can be used for fire detection in open areas. This showed me how modern multimedia and digital technologies can also have very practical applications in my own professional field. The programme broadened my skills and gave me a new perspective on how emerging technologies can support fire protection activities.”

„Pošto sam nedavno završio studijski program Zaštita od požara na Akademiji strukovnih studija Kosovsko-metohijska, ovaj kratki program video sam kao priliku da svoje stručno obrazovanje dopunim novim praktičnim veštinama. Posebno me je zanimao predmet Bespilotne letelice – tehnike snimanja i letenja, a naročito praktičan rad sa dronom opremljenim termovizijskom kamerom, koja se može koristiti za otkrivanje požara na otvorenom prostoru. To mi je pokazalo da savremene multimedijalne i digitalne tehnologije mogu imati veoma praktičnu primenu i u mojoj struci. Program je proširio moje veštine i dao mi novi pogled na to kako nove tehnologije mogu da podrže poslove zaštite od požara.“



Ivana Đurić

Graduate biologist · Digital Business and Internet Security
Diplomirani biolog · Digitalno poslovanje i internet bezbednost

“After graduating in Biology, I wanted to explore an area quite different from my formal education and gain a better understanding of e-business and internet applications. The programme gave me an opportunity to become familiar with digital tools and concepts that are increasingly present in almost every profession, regardless of the field. I particularly appreciated learning how online business works and becoming more aware of the importance of security when using digital services and applications. For me, the programme was an opportunity to step outside my original field, develop new competencies and discover how digital knowledge can complement my existing education and create new possibilities for further professional development.”

„Nakon što sam diplomirala biologiju, želela sam da istražim oblast prilično različitu od svog formalnog obrazovanja i da bolje razumem elektronsko poslovanje i internet aplikacije. Program mi je pružio priliku da se upoznam sa digitalnim alatima i konceptima koji su sve prisutniji u gotovo svakoj profesiji, bez obzira na oblast. Posebno sam cenila to što sam naučila kako funkcioniše onlajn poslovanje i što sam postala svesnija važnosti bezbednosti pri korišćenju digitalnih servisa i aplikacija. Za mene je program bio prilika da izađem iz okvira svoje osnovne struke, razvijem nove kompetencije i otkrijem kako digitalna znanja mogu da dopune moje dosadašnje obrazovanje i otvore nove mogućnosti za dalji profesionalni razvoj.“



Nemanja Đurić

Production Engineering student · Digital Business and Internet Security
Student proizvodnog mašinstva · Digitalno poslovanje i internet bezbednost

“As a Production Engineering student, I believe that technical knowledge alone is no longer enough to fully prepare us for today’s labour market. I joined the programme because I wanted to develop additional digital and multimedia skills that could expand my employment opportunities after graduation. Working with modern tools and learning how digital content can be created, presented and communicated gave me competencies that complemented my engineering education in a very practical way. The programme also encouraged me to think beyond the traditional career paths associated with my field. I now feel that I have a broader range of skills to offer and more possibilities to explore when entering the labour market.”

„Kao student proizvodnog mašinstva, smatram da samo tehničko znanje više nije dovoljno da nas u potpunosti pripremi za današnje tržište rada. Upisao sam program jer sam želeo da razvijem dodatne digitalne i multimedijalne veštine koje bi mi mogle proširiti mogućnosti zapošljavanja nakon diplomiranja. Rad sa savremenim alatima i učenje o tome kako se digitalni sadržaj kreira, predstavlja i komunicira dali su mi kompetencije koje su na veoma praktičan način dopunile moje inženjersko obrazovanje. Program me je podstakao i da razmišljam izvan tradicionalnih karijernih puteva vezanih za moju struku. Sada osećam da imam širi spektar veština koje mogu da ponudim i više mogućnosti koje mogu da istražim kada izađem na tržište rada.“

“I see these new skills as a valuable complement to my medical education and something I can use creatively in the future.”

„Ove nove veštine vidim kao dragocenu dopunu svom medicinskom obrazovanju i kao nešto što u budućnosti mogu kreativno da iskoristim.“

– EMILIJA DENOVIĆ

VOICES OF WBNET · GLASOVI WBNET-A

University of Bihać

Univerzitet u Bihaću

BIHAĆ, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Information Technologies · Multimedia
Informacione tehnologije · Multimedija

“Everything I had the opportunity to learn during the lectures and practical sessions can be applied directly in my teaching.”

„Sve što sam imala priliku naučiti na predavanjima i praktičnim vježbama mogu direktno primijeniti u nastavi.“

– ELIDA HAJRULAHOVIĆ



Seid Mešić

Information Technologies · Multimedia
Informacione tehnologije · Multimedija

“The two short study programs I attended at the Faculty of Technical Engineering of the University of Bihać were Information Technologies and Multimedia. In the first program, I found internet security and the protection of personal data most interesting. In the Multimedia program, I was most interested in photo editing and video editing. Through these programs, I gained new practical computer skills, learned to use digital tools that were previously unfamiliar to me, and created multimedia content differently. These programs will be very useful for my professional work. After attending the lectures and workshops, I feel more competent in working with multimedia content, and I also have a better understanding of how computer networks function. The knowledge I gained from these programs will enable me to work more easily and creatively in teaching, which is exactly what I expected.”

„Na Tehničkom fakultetu Univerziteta u Bihaću pohađao sam dva kratka studijska programa: Informacione tehnologije i Multimedija. U prvom programu najzanimljivije su mi bile teme sigurnosti na internetu i zaštite ličnih podataka, a u programu Multimedija najviše me je zanimala obrada fotografija i montaža videa. Kroz ove programe stekao sam nove praktične računarske vještine, naučio sam koristiti digitalne alate koji mi ranije nisu bili poznati i počeo drugačije kreirati multimedijalni sadržaj. Ovi programi bit će mi veoma korisni u profesionalnom radu. Nakon predavanja i radionica osjećam se kompetentnijim za rad s multimedijalnim sadržajem, a bolje razumijem i kako funkcionišu računarske mreže. Znanje koje sam stekao kroz ove programe omogućit će mi da u nastavi radim lakše i kreativnije, a upravo to sam i očekivao.“



Elma Vojić

Information Technologies · Multimedia
Informacione tehnologije · Multimedija

“I enrolled in the short study programs in Information Technologies and Multimedia at the Faculty of Technical Engineering of the University of Bihać. During the programs, I found the Computer Graphics and Animation course particularly interesting, as it introduced me to various tools for creating multimedia content. I also found the practical workshops led by industry professionals very engaging and informative. These programs have certainly helped me gain new knowledge and skills that I can apply in my current job.”

„Upisala sam kratke studijske programe Informacione tehnologije i Multimedija na Tehničkom fakultetu Univerziteta u Bihaću. Tokom programa posebno mi je bio zanimljiv predmet Računarska grafika i animacija, jer me je upoznao s različitim alatima za kreiranje multimedijalnog sadržaja. Veoma zanimljive i poučne bile su mi i praktične radionice koje su vodili stručnjaci iz industrije. Ovi programi su mi zasigurno pomogli da steknem nova znanja i vještine koje mogu primijeniti na svom sadašnjem poslu.“



Admir Džaferović

Teacher
Nastavnik

“I really enjoyed the program because it was practical, useful, and focused on developing skills that can be applied in real-life situations. What I found particularly interesting was that the lectures were delivered by distinguished industry professionals, which gave us the opportunity to learn from real-world examples and experiences. One of the most engaging parts of the program was working with Adobe Premiere and video editing. Through hands-on assignments, I developed skills that I could immediately put into practice. I learned the basics of using Adobe Premiere, including how to properly edit videos and frame shots. Although I was already familiar with many of the topics from my previous experience, the program helped me improve my web design skills and taught me how to create brochures. These skills are extremely valuable to me because I can use them in my everyday work. I now feel more prepared and confident in my professional abilities.

As a teacher, the knowledge I gained allows me to prepare higher-quality lessons. Video editing and brochure creation have become essential tools in my daily work with students, while my improved web design skills help me teach them modern and practical techniques. The knowledge and experience gained through this program will be very valuable for my future professional development. They enable me to make my lessons more engaging and up-to-date through the use of video materials and brochures, while also allowing me to apply and further develop my web design skills in new projects. I believe these competencies will greatly benefit my continued professional growth and my work with students.”

„Program mi se jako dopao jer je bio praktičan, koristan i usmjeren na razvijanje vještina koje se mogu primijeniti u stvarnim situacijama. Posebno zanimljivo bilo mi je to što su predavanja držali istaknuti stručnjaci iz industrije, pa smo imali priliku učiti na primjerima i iskustvima iz stvarnog svijeta. Jedan od najzanimljivijih dijelova programa bio je rad u programu Adobe Premiere i montaža videa. Kroz praktične zadatke razvio sam vještine koje sam odmah mogao primijeniti. Naučio sam osnove rada u programu Adobe Premiere, uključujući pravilnu montažu videa i kadriranje. Iako su mi mnoge teme već bile poznate iz ranijeg iskustva, program mi je pomogao da unaprijedim vještine web dizajna i naučio me kako se izrađuju brošure. Te vještine su mi izuzetno vrijedne jer ih mogu koristiti u svakodnevnom radu. Sada se osjećam spremnijim i sigurnijim u svoje profesionalne sposobnosti.

Kao nastavniku, stečeno znanje omogućava mi da pripremam kvalitetnije časove. Montaža videa i izrada brošura postali su nezaobilazni alati u mom svakodnevnom radu s učenicima, a unaprijeđene vještine web dizajna pomažu mi da ih podučavam savremenim i praktičnim tehnikama. Znanje i iskustvo stečeni kroz ovaj program bit će veoma vrijedni za moj daljnji profesionalni razvoj. Omogućavaju mi

“Video editing and brochure creation have become essential tools in my daily work with students.”

„Montaža videa i izrada brošura postali su nezaobilazni alati u mom svakodnevnom radu s učenicima.“

– ADMIR DŽAFEROVIĆ

da časove učinim zanimljivijim i savremenijim uz pomoć video materijala i brošura, a ujedno mogu primjenjivati i dalje razvijati vještine web dizajna u novim projektima. Vjerujem da će ove kompetencije uveliko doprinijeti mom daljnjem profesionalnom rastu i radu s učenicima.“



Emir Japić

Teacher of vocational subjects
Nastavnik stručnih predmeta

“The program was well-structured, comprehensive, and focused on connecting theoretical knowledge with practical application. I would particularly highlight the modern approach to learning, the exchange of experiences, and the application of new technologies in the field. I gained new professional knowledge, improved my analytical and practical skills, and broadened my understanding of modern technological processes. I consider the development of my ability to apply acquired knowledge in real-world professional situations particularly valuable. The program further strengthened my professional competencies and my ability to connect theory with practice.

As a teacher of vocational subjects, the knowledge I gained enables me to improve the quality of my teaching and provide students with up-to-date professional knowledge and skills. The knowledge and skills acquired through this program represent a significant contribution to my professional and academic development. I plan to apply them in my teaching, continuous professional development, and future research projects, with the aim of improving the quality of education and strengthening the connection between education and the needs of industry.”

„Program je bio dobro strukturiran, sveobuhvatan i usmjeren na povezivanje teorijskog znanja s praktičnom primjenom. Posebno bih istakao savremen pristup učenju, razmjenu iskustava i primjenu novih tehnologija u struci. Stekao sam nova stručna znanja, unaprijedio analitičke i praktične vještine i proširio razumijevanje savremenih tehnoloških procesa. Naročito vrijednim smatram to što sam razvio sposobnost primjene stečenog znanja u stvarnim profesionalnim situacijama. Program je dodatno ojačao moje stručne kompetencije i sposobnost povezivanja teorije i prakse.

Kao nastavniku stručnih predmeta, stečeno znanje omogućava mi da unaprijedim kvalitet nastave i učenicima pružim savremena stručna znanja i vještine. Znanja i vještine stečeni kroz ovaj program predstavljaju značajan doprinos mom profesionalnom i akademskom razvoju. Planiram ih primjenjivati u nastavi, kontinuiranom profesionalnom usavršavanju i budućim istraživačkim projektima, s ciljem unapređenja kvaliteta obrazovanja i jačanja veze između obrazovanja i potreba industrije.“



Elida Hajrulahović

Mathematics and computer science teacher · Multimedia
Nastavnica matematike i informatike · Multimedija

“Good afternoon! My name is Elida Hajrulahović. I am a mathematics and computer science teacher at the Medical High School in Bihać. First of all, I would like to say that I participated in the short study program in Multimedia, and I was extremely satisfied with the experience. It was truly an honor to attend such a program organized by

our University of Bihać, more specifically, the Technical Faculty of the University of Bihać.

What I would particularly like to emphasize is that everything I had the opportunity to learn during the lectures and practical sessions can be applied directly in my teaching. This includes digital presentations, computer graphics, and, of course, audio and video editing, which I found especially fascinating. I believe that working with Adobe Premiere will definitely be one of the areas I will focus on developing my skills in the near future. Thank you very much, and I sincerely hope that we will have the opportunity to continue with this type of education and professional development in the future."

„Dobar dan! Moje ime je Elida Hajrulahović. Nastavnica sam matematike i informatike u Medicinskoj školi u Bihaću. Prije svega, želim reći da sam pohađala kratki studijski program Multimedija i da sam izuzetno zadovoljna tim iskustvom. Bila mi je zaista čast pohađati ovakav program koji je organizovao naš Univerzitet u Bihaću, tačnije Tehnički fakultet Univerziteta u Bihaću.

Ono što bih posebno željela naglasiti jeste da sve što sam imala priliku naučiti na predavanjima i praktičnim vježbama mogu direktno primijeniti u nastavi. To se odnosi na digitalne prezentacije, računarsku grafiku i, naravno, audio i video montažu, koja me je posebno oduševila. Vjerujem da će rad u programu Adobe Premiere sigurno biti jedna od oblasti u kojoj ću u bliskoj budućnosti razvijati svoje vještine. Veliko vam hvala i iskreno se nadam da ćemo i ubuduće imati priliku za ovakav vid obrazovanja i stručnog usavršavanja."

VIDEO STATEMENTS · VIDEO IZJAVE

Admir Džaferović | Elida Hajrulahović | Elma Vojić | Seid Mešić | Emir Japić

VOICES OF WBNET · GLASOVI WBNET-A

University Hercegovina

Sveučilište Hercegovina

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

IT Course · Digital Technologies in Tourism
IT tečaj · Digitalne tehnologije u turizmu

“Digital skills are now an almost indispensable part of working in tourism.”

„Digitalne vještine danas su gotovo neizostavan dio rada u turizmu.“

– IVANA PAVLOVIĆ



Ivana Pavlović

Master of Communication Studies · Digital Technologies in Tourism
Mag. komunikologije · Digitalne tehnologije u turizmu

“In May and June 2026 I attended the first round of the short study cycle Digital Technologies in Tourism, organised by Sveučilište Hercegovina within the WBNET project. During the course I took the subjects Web Design Basics in WordPress, E-marketing, Digital Nomads in Tourism and Digital Transformations in the Tourism Industry. My overall impression after completing the course is extremely positive.

The lecturers’ explanations were clear and easy to follow, and the materials were accessible and useful for revising on my own. I believe the knowledge I gained will help me both in my current job and in finding new business opportunities, since digital skills are now an almost indispensable part of working in tourism.

Teamwork played an important role: through shared tasks and exchanging experiences with the other participants, I absorbed the material more easily and gained new ideas for applying what I had learned.

The practical part of the course – from building a website in WordPress, through the basics of e-marketing and drafting project ideas that we could carry out in the future, to insights into new trends such as digital nomadism and the transformation of the tourism sector under the influence of digital technologies – fully met my expectations, and the lecturers’ feedback helped me improve my work during the course itself.

I would gladly enrol in a similar short study cycle again. For future cycles I would suggest even more practical work on real examples. As a topic for a new short cycle I would propose artificial intelligence in tourism, as I believe such knowledge would make it even easier to find employment in the tourism sector.

I consider the most useful aspect of the whole cycle to be the combination of theoretical and practical work, as well as getting to know the other participants – and, of course, the fact that the course was free of charge. Overall, I rate this experience as very useful, both professionally and personally.”

„Pohađala sam kratki ciklus studija Digitalne tehnologije u turizmu u prvom krugu, u 5. i 6. mjesecu 2026. godine, u okviru projekta WBNET u organizaciji Sveučilišta Hercegovina. Tijekom tečaja slušala

sam kolegije Osnove web dizajna u WordPressu, E-marketing, Digitalni nomadi u turizmu te Digitalne transformacije u turističkoj industriji. Ukupni dojam nakon završetka tečaja izrazito je pozitivan.

Objašnjenja predavača bila su jasna i razumljiva, a materijali dostupni i korisni za samostalno ponavljanje gradiva. Smatram da će mi stečena znanja pomoći kako u sadašnjem poslu, tako i u pronalaženju novih poslovnih prilika, s obzirom na to da su digitalne vještine danas gotovo neizostavan dio rada u turizmu.

Timski rad imao je važnu ulogu – kroz zajedničke zadatke i razmjenu iskustava s ostalim polaznicima lakše sam usvojila gradivo i dobila nove ideje za primjenu naučenog.

Praktični dio nastave – od izrade web stranice u WordPressu, preko osnova e-marketinga i praktične izrade idejnih projekata koje bismo mogli provesti u budućnosti, do uvida u nove trendove poput digitalnog nomadstva i transformacije turističkog sektora pod utjecajem digitalnih tehnologija – u potpunosti je zadovoljio moja očekivanja, a povratne informacije predavača pomogle su mi da unaprijedim svoj rad tijekom samog tečaja.

Rado bih se ponovno upisala na sličan kratki ciklus studija. Za buduće cikluse predložila bih još više praktičnog rada na stvarnim primjerima. Kao temu za novi kratki ciklus istaknula bih umjetnu inteligenciju u turizmu, jer smatram da bi takva znanja dodatno olakšala zapošljavanje u turističkom sektoru.

Najkorisnijim aspektom cijelog ciklusa smatram kombinaciju teorijskog i praktičnog rada, kao i upoznavanje drugih sudionika i, naravno, to što je tečaj bio besplatan. U cjelini, ovo iskustvo ocjenjujem vrlo korisnim, kako profesionalno tako i osobno.“



Sanja Balić

IT Course
IT tečaj

“Attending the IT course was a pleasant and useful experience for me: it brought me new knowledge, but also extra motivation to keep learning. My overall impression after completing the course is very positive. The programme was dynamic, interesting and focused on knowledge that is up to date and applicable in everyday work. The learning materials were easily accessible, and through their approach and clear explanations the lecturers managed to bring closer even those IT concepts that seemed more demanding to me at first.

I especially liked the practical parts of the classes. Through concrete tasks on the computer we had the chance to apply straight away what we were learning, which I found particularly interesting and useful. Teamwork also played an important role, because talking, exchanging ideas and helping each other made it easier to arrive at solutions. The lecturers’ feedback was valuable too, as it helped me spot mistakes, improve my work and gain more confidence in using new knowledge.

I believe the IT skills I acquired will be useful for my further professional development and will open up new business opportunities. That is why I would enrol in a similar short study cycle again without a second thought.

As a suggestion for future cycles, I would single out even more practical work, because concrete tasks and applying knowledge are still the fastest way to learn. It would also be interesting to offer an IT course for teachers, for example on creating interactive digital materials, quizzes and educational games. Such knowledge could help make lessons more engaging and modern and make it easier to capture pupils’ attention.

I am very happy to have had the chance to take part in this programme. I am grateful for the knowledge, the experience and the opportunity for personal and professional growth.”

„Pohađanje IT tečaja za mene je bilo jedno lijepo i korisno iskustvo koje mi je donijelo nova znanja, ali i dodatnu motivaciju za daljnje učenje. Moj ukupni dojam nakon završenog tečaja je vrlo pozitivan. Program je bio dinamičan, zanimljiv i usmjeren na znanja koja su suvremena i primjenjiva u svakodnevnom radu. Materijali za učenje bili su nam lako dostupni, a predavači su svojim pristupom i jasnim objašnjenjima znali približiti i one informatičke pojmove koji su mi u početku djelovali zahtjevnije.

Posebno su mi se svidjeli praktični dijelovi nastave. Kroz konkretne zadatke na računalu imali smo priliku odmah primijeniti ono što smo učili, što mi je bilo posebno zanimljivo i korisno. Timski rad također je imao važnu ulogu jer smo kroz razgovor, razmjenu ideja i međusobnu pomoć lakše dolazili do rješenja. Vrijedne su mi bile i povratne informacije predavača jer su mi pomogle uočiti pogreške, unaprijediti rad i steći više sigurnosti u korištenju novih znanja.

Vjerujem da će mi stečene IT vještine biti korisne u daljnjem profesionalnom razvoju i otvoriti mogućnosti za nove poslovne prilike. Zbog toga bih bez razmišljanja ponovno upisala sličan kratki ciklus studija.

Kao prijedlog za buduće cikluse izdvojila bih još više praktičnog rada, jer se kroz konkretne zadatke i primjenu znanja ipak najbrže uči. Također, bilo bi zanimljivo ponuditi IT tečaj namijenjen učiteljima i nastavnicima, primjerice za izradu interaktivnih digitalnih materijala, kvizova i edukativnih igara. Takva bi znanja mogla pomoći u stvaranju zanimljivije i suvremenije nastave te u lakšem privlačenju pažnje učenika.

Jako sam sretna što sam imala priliku sudjelovati u ovom programu. Zahvalna sam na stečenom znanju, iskustvu i prilici za osobni i profesionalni razvoj.“



Nedim Suljagić

IT Course
IT tečaj

“In May and June 2026 I attended the short IT course cycle.

My overall impression after completing the short study cycle is very positive. The programme was useful and interesting. The explanations were clear and easy to understand, and the teaching materials were accessible and helpful for following the content. I believe the knowledge and skills I gained will help me in my future work, and also when looking for new business opportunities.

Teamwork was very important because it made it possible to exchange knowledge and experience. I would enrol again – and in fact I already have, in the second round: the short cycle Digital Technologies in Tourism, which is currently under way.

The practical part did not fully meet my expectations. I feel there were too few practical tasks and concrete examples from a real business environment. I would suggest that future cycles increase the share of practical work and of work on concrete examples from real business settings.

I have no proposal for a new cycle, but I will follow the calls in case something interesting comes up again. My personal impression is mostly positive, although I think a greater share of practical work and concrete examples would further improve the experience.”

„Pohađao sam kratki ciklus IT tečaja u 5. i 6. mjesecu 2026. godine.

Ukupni dojam nakon završenog kratkog ciklusa studija je vrlo pozitivan. Program je bio koristan i zanimljiv. Objašnjenja su bila jasna i razumljiva, a nastavni materijali su bili dostupni i korisni za praćenje sadržaja. Smatram da će mi stečeno znanje i vještine pomoći u budućem poslu, ali i prilikom pronalaženja novih poslovnih prilika.

Timski rad je bio vrlo važan jer je omogućio razmjenu znanja i iskustava. Ponovo bih se upisao – što sam i učinio – na drugi krug, odnosno na kratki ciklus Digitalne tehnologije u turizmu, koji je trenutno u toku.

Praktični dio nije u potpunosti zadovoljio moja očekivanja. Smatram da je bilo premalo praktičnih zadataka i konkretnih primjera iz stvarnog poslovnog okruženja. Predložio bih da se u budućim ciklusima poveća udio praktičnog rada i rada na konkretnim primjerima iz stvarnog poslovnog okruženja.

Nemam prijedlog za neki novi ciklus, ali ću pratiti natječaje ako bude ponovo nešto interesantno. Moj subjektivni doživljaj je uglavnom pozitivan, iako smatram da bi veći udio praktičnog rada i konkretnih primjera dodatno poboljšao iskustvo.“

“It brought me new knowledge, but also extra motivation to keep learning.”

„Donijelo mi je nova znanja, ali i dodatnu motivaciju za daljnje učenje.“

– SANJA BALIĆ

CHAPTER

09

Dissemination and Visibility

Introduction

Every successful project is measured not only by the quality of its results, but also by its ability to share those results with the wider community. Throughout its implementation, WBNET recognised dissemination as an integral component of capacity building rather than a concluding project activity. By continuously communicating its progress, achievements and educational vision, the consortium ensured that project outcomes reached academic institutions, industry partners, students, policy makers and the broader public across the Western Balkans and Europe.

Dissemination within WBNET extended far beyond promoting project activities. It became a process of building awareness about the importance of lifelong learning, strengthening the visibility of Short Study Programmes and encouraging dialogue between higher education and the labour market. Through its website, social media channels, promotional campaigns and public events, the project created multiple opportunities for sharing knowledge,

exchanging experiences and inspiring future educational initiatives.



Figure 9.1 The WBNET Digital Ecosystem

Equally important, these communication activities contributed to the long-term sustainability of the project. By making project results openly accessible and engaging a broad network of stakeholders, WBNET strengthened the foundations for future cooperation while ensuring that the ideas developed throughout the project continue to reach new institutions, educators and learners long after its formal completion.

The following sections illustrate how communication became more than dissemination – it became an essential instrument for building visibility, strengthening partnerships and extending the impact of WBNET beyond the boundaries of the consortium.

WBNET SIGNATURE

"Results create impact only when they are shared, understood and transformed into new opportunities."

9.1 A Digital Home for the Project

"A website is more than a communication tool—it is the project's living memory."

The official WBNET website became the central communication platform of the project, providing a shared digital space where partners, stakeholders and the wider public could follow the project's development from its very beginning to its final outcomes. More than a repository of information, the

website served as a dynamic environment that documented the consortium's journey while making its activities, achievements and educational vision openly accessible to all interested audiences.

Throughout the implementation period, the website continuously reflected the evolution of WBNET. News articles, reports from project meetings, study visits, workshops, round tables and dissemination events were regularly published, creating a chronological record of the consortium's activities across the Western Balkans and the European Union. By presenting project milestones as they occurred, the platform allowed visitors to observe not only the project's progress but also the collaborative process through which its results were achieved.

Beyond documenting activities, the website became an important resource for sharing project outputs. Information about the newly developed Short Study Programmes, the Centres for Short Study Programmes, educational resources and other key project results was made publicly available, supporting transparency and encouraging wider adoption of the innovative educational models developed through WBNET. In this way, the platform contributed not only to dissemination but also to the transfer of knowledge beyond the consortium itself.

The website also played a significant role in strengthening cooperation among project partners. By providing a common communication platform and ensuring consistent visibility of activities implemented across different institutions, it reinforced the project's shared identity while highlighting the contribution of every consortium member. Through a unified visual identity and coordinated communication strategy, the website reflected WBNET as a truly collaborative European initiative rather than a collection of individual institutional activities.

https://wbnet.atuss.edu.rs/

Perhaps its greatest value lies in its lasting accessibility. Long after the project's formal completion, the website will remain a permanent digital archive of WBNET, preserving its achievements, documenting its development and making its educational resources available to future students, educators, researchers and institutions interested in advancing lifelong learning and regional cooperation.

WBNET SIGNATURE

"A project's website preserves not only its results, but the story of how those results were achieved."

9.2 Reaching the Community

"Communication becomes meaningful when it transforms information into engagement."

Throughout the implementation of WBNET, communication extended well beyond reporting project activities. Every announcement, social media post, media interview and public event represented an opportunity to connect with a wider community of educators, students, employers and institutions interested in the future of lifelong learning. Rather than simply informing audiences about project progress, the consortium sought to create dialogue, encourage participation and promote the broader educational vision behind WBNET.



Social media played a particularly important role in this process. By sharing regular updates from consortium meetings, study visits, workshops, training sessions and dissemination events, project partners brought the WBNET journey closer to the public while demonstrating the collaborative spirit that characterised the consortium. These communication channels enabled project results to reach audiences far beyond the participating institutions, increasing awareness of Short Study Programmes, lifelong learning opportunities and the importance of stronger cooperation between higher education and industry.

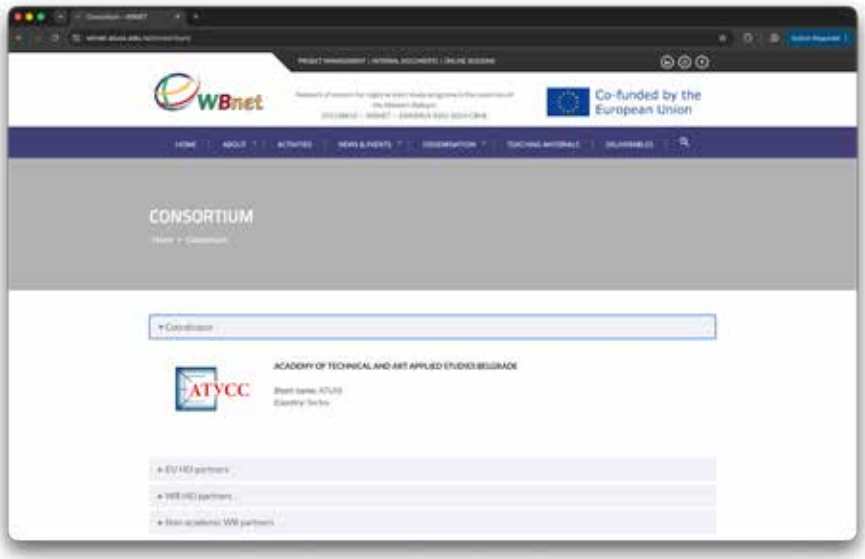
Traditional media further amplified the visibility of the project. Television reports, newspaper articles, institutional websites and online news portals presented WBNET activities to local and regional audiences, helping to communicate the project's objectives and achievements in an accessible and engaging way. Coverage of major project events – including study visits, round tables, Green Week activities and institutional meetings – contributed to strengthening public awareness of educational innovation while highlighting the growing importance of flexible learning opportunities in the Western Balkans.

An equally important aspect of dissemination was the active involvement of partner institutions themselves. Every consortium member contributed to the project's visibility through its own communication channels, creating a coordinated dissemination network that reflected both institutional diversity and a shared European identity. Although each institution addressed its own local audience, together they communicated one consistent message: that lifelong learning, innovation and international cooperation are essential elements of modern higher education.

Ultimately, communication within WBNET was never an activity performed at the conclusion of the project. It accompanied every stage of implementation, ensuring that ideas, experiences and achievements were continuously shared with the communities they were intended to benefit. In doing so, dissemination became an integral part of the project's educational mission, extending its impact well beyond the consortium itself.

WBNET SIGNATURE

"Every shared story became another opportunity to inspire collaboration, learning and innovation."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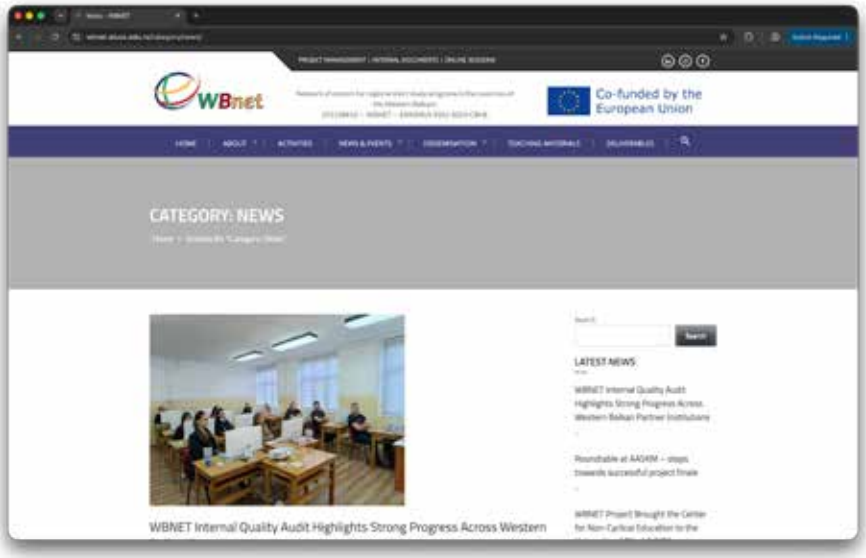
ACADEMY OF TECHNICAL AND ART APPLIED STUDIES BELGRADE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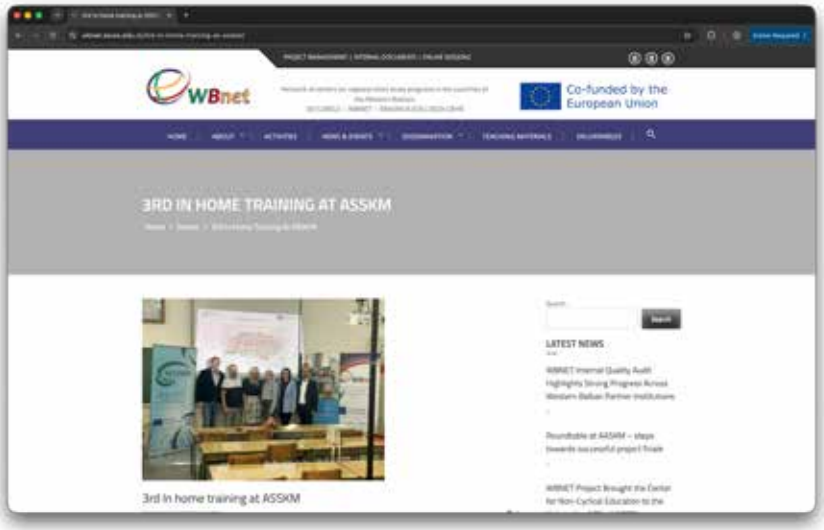
CATEGORY: NEWS
LATEST NEWS
WBNET Internal Quality Audit Highlights Strong Progress Across Western Balkan Partner Institutions
Roundtable at AASKM – steps towards successful project finale
WBNET Project Brought the Center for Non-Cyrilical Education to the
WBNET Internal Quality Audit Highlights Strong Progress Across Western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WBNET Internal Quality Audit Highlights Strong Progress Across Western Balkan Partner Institutions
Roundtable at AASKM – steps towards successful project finale
WBNET Project Brought the Center for Non-Cyrilical Education to the
3rd In home training at ASSKM

9.3 Communicating the Vision

"A strong visual identity transforms project results into a lasting public presence."

Throughout the WBNET project, promotional materials served as more than communication tools – they became visual ambassadors of the project's identity and educational mission. Every brochure, poster, roll-up banner, promotional video and digital publication contributed to presenting WBNET as a modern European initiative committed to strengthening lifelong learning, innovation and regional cooperation.

From the very beginning, the consortium adopted a consistent visual identity that connected all dissemination activities under a common recognisable image. Project logos, graphic standards and communication materials created a coherent visual language across all partner institutions, ensuring that every event, publication and public presentation reflected the shared values and objectives of WBNET while strengthening the project's visibility among diverse audiences.

Promotional materials accompanied every important stage of the project. They supported the organisation of conferences, workshops, study visits, Green Week activities, round tables, training sessions and public presentations, providing participants with clear information while reinforcing the project's professional image. Printed brochures and leaflets introduced the concept of Short Study Programmes, while banners, posters and digital presentations helped communicate project objectives and achievements to students, educators, employers and the wider public.

As the project progressed, visual communication evolved alongside its educational results. Materials increasingly focused on presenting tangible achievements – including the establishment of Centres for Short Study Programmes, newly equipped laboratories and innovative learning opportunities – thereby transforming communication from promoting project activities to showcasing concrete impact. This transition reflected the natural evolution of WBNET itself, from an ambitious project proposal into a recognised regional initiative with visible educational outcomes.



Perhaps the greatest strength of the project's promotional strategy was its ability to create a recognisable identity shared by all consortium members. Regardless of where activities were organised – whether in Belgrade, Ljubljana, Madrid, Bihać, Mostar, Kosovska Mitrovica or Zvečan – the visual language of WBNET remained consistent, reinforcing the perception of a united partnership working towards common educational goals.

Today, these promotional materials represent more than a collection of communication products. They form part of the visual history of WBNET, documenting the project's evolution while continuing to communicate its vision to future learners, educators and institutions interested in strengthening lifelong learning throughout the Western Balkans.

WBNET SIGNATURE

“A shared visual identity turned individual activities into one recognisable story of cooperation, innovation and lifelong learning.”

WBNET Dissemination at a Glance

120+
News and media publications

30+
Public events

Thousands
of people reached online

“Every activity communicated a message. Together, they built the visibility and legacy of WBNET.”


WBnet

CHAPTER

10 Looking Ahead

“The true success of a project is measured not by its conclusion, but by the opportunities it creates for the future.”

10.1 From Project to Permanent Practice

“The greatest success of a project is achieved when its results become part of everyday practice.”

The completion of WBNET does not represent the conclusion of its activities, but the beginning of a new phase in which the project’s achievements become permanently embedded within the participating Higher Education Institutions. Throughout three years of collaboration, the consortium established the organisational structures, educational programmes, partnerships and institutional capacities necessary to ensure that the project’s outcomes continue to evolve long after the formal project period has ended.

At the heart of this transition are the newly established **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, which now provide a permanent institutional framework for the development and delivery of flexible, practice-oriented education. Rather than functioning as temporary project initiatives, the Centres have been integrated into the strategic development of partner institutions, enabling them to continuously analyse labour market needs, design new educational programmes and strengthen cooperation with employers and local communities.

The **Short Study Programmes** developed through WBNET represent another important step towards institutional transformation. Their modular structure, practical orientation and flexibility allow participating institutions to respond more rapidly to technological progress and emerging workforce requirements than is possible through traditional study programmes alone. As these

programmes become part of the regular educational offer, they create new opportunities for lifelong learning, professional upskilling and closer integration between higher education and the world of work.

Equally important is the continuation of the quality culture established throughout the project. The mechanisms introduced for curriculum development, quality assurance, stakeholder consultation and continuous evaluation will remain integral components of the Centres' operation. By maintaining regular dialogue with industry, monitoring graduate outcomes and updating educational content in response to changing market demands, partner institutions will ensure that the innovative spirit of WBNET continues to guide future educational development.

Perhaps the most significant transformation, however, is less tangible. WBNET has demonstrated that higher education institutions can become more agile, collaborative and responsive without compromising academic quality. The project introduced a new way of thinking about lifelong learning – one in which universities do not simply respond to change but actively anticipate it, creating educational opportunities that evolve alongside society itself.

In this sense, WBNET has moved beyond the boundaries of a funded initiative. It has become part of the institutional identity of its partner universities, providing a sustainable model for educational innovation that will continue to grow through future generations of learners, educators and professionals.

WBNET SIGNATURE

"Projects may conclude, but institutions continue to grow through the ideas they choose to embrace."



Figure 10.1 From Project to Permanent Practice

10.2 Growing with the Labour Market

"The future of education belongs to institutions that learn as continuously as the societies they serve."

The rapid pace of technological development and the changing expectations of employers require higher education institutions to rethink not only what they teach, but also how quickly they can respond to emerging educational needs. One of the fundamental principles established through WBNET is that educational innovation should be viewed as a continuous process rather than a one-time achievement. The **Short Study Programmes** created during the project therefore represent a flexible

framework capable of evolving alongside technological progress and labour market demands.

The newly established **Centres for Short Study Programmes** will play a central role in this process. Their mission extends beyond delivering existing educational programmes to continuously identifying emerging competence needs, analysing labour market trends and developing new learning opportunities in cooperation with employers, professional associations and public institutions. In doing so, the Centres will ensure that educational provision remains relevant, responsive and closely aligned with regional economic development.

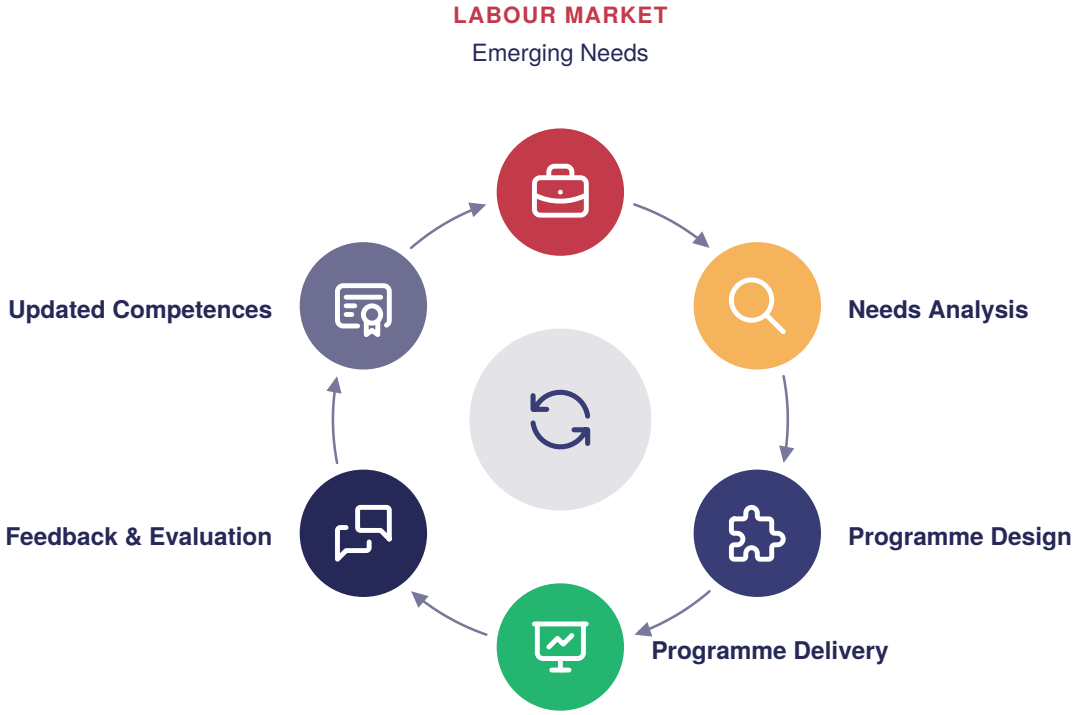


Figure 10.2 The WBNET model promotes continuous curriculum renewal through regular dialogue with employers, quality assurance processes and feedback from learners, ensuring that Short Study Programmes remain aligned with evolving labour market needs.

Future programme development will build upon the collaborative model established during WBNET. Regular consultations with industry, feedback from participants, graduate follow-up and cooperation with international partners will provide valuable insights for updating existing curricula and designing new courses in response to evolving technological fields. Areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, renewable energy, digital business, multimedia technologies and smart manufacturing represent only some of the emerging domains in which future Short Study Programmes may contribute to workforce development and lifelong learning.

Equally important is the project's commitment to lifelong learning as a permanent educational principle. As professional careers become increasingly dynamic, opportunities for continuous upskilling and reskilling will become essential for both individuals and employers. By providing flexible, practice-oriented learning pathways, the Centres established through WBNET are well positioned to support this transition, enabling learners to acquire targeted competencies throughout their professional lives.

In this way, WBNET has introduced more than a new educational model – it has established a mechanism for continuous educational renewal. Rather than adapting to change only after it occurs, participating

institutions are now better equipped to anticipate future developments and respond proactively to the evolving needs of learners, employers and society.

WBNET SIGNATURE

“The most sustainable curriculum is one that never stops evolving.”

Lifelong learning is not about returning to education – it is about ensuring that education evolves throughout life.

10.3 Strengthening the WBNET Community

“Partnerships achieve their greatest value when they become communities of continuous learning.”

One of the most valuable outcomes of WBNET is the professional community that has emerged through years of collaboration among universities, educators, researchers, industry representatives and institutional leaders from the Western Balkans and the European Union. While projects have a defined duration, the relationships established throughout this initiative provide a strong foundation for future cooperation that extends well beyond its formal completion.

The establishment of the **Knowledge Labs Network for Innovation and Sustainability** represents an important milestone in this process. More than formal agreement, the Network reflects the shared commitment of partner institutions to continue working together in the fields of lifelong learning, curriculum development, applied research and educational innovation. It provides a common platform for exchanging expertise, sharing educational resources and jointly addressing emerging challenges in higher education.

Looking ahead, the WBNET partnership is well positioned to expand its cooperation through new international initiatives, joint research projects and future European programmes. The experience gained through Erasmus+ has strengthened the consortium’s ability to develop innovative educational solutions while creating opportunities for participation in new collaborative projects that further contribute to regional development and European integration.

Equally important is the commitment to maintaining regular communication and professional exchange among partner institutions. Academic staff mobility, joint workshops, conferences, guest lectures and collaborative curriculum development will continue to strengthen institutional capacities while encouraging the exchange of good practices and innovative teaching approaches. By preserving this culture of cooperation, the WBNET community will remain an active driver of educational development long after the project’s completion.

The future of WBNET therefore lies not only in the educational programmes it created, but in the network of people and institutions that continue to share a common vision. Through trust, mutual support and a commitment to continuous innovation, this community has the potential to inspire new partnerships, new ideas and new opportunities for future generations of learners across the Western Balkans.

A LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

LIFELONG LEARNING
Accessible, flexible and practice-oriented education for everyone

INNOVATION
Future-ready curricula and modern teaching approaches

COOPERATION
Stronger partnerships across the Western Balkans and Europe

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE
Applied research and knowledge exchange that create impact

EMPLOYABILITY
Skills and competences that meet labour market needs and open new opportunities

CENTRES
Sustainable Centres for Short Study Programmes within partner institutions

SHORT STUDY PROGRAMMES
Flexible, modular and industry-aligned learning opportunities

MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE
Equipped laboratories and digital resources supporting innovation

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK
A lasting community for sharing, learning and growing together

WBnet

QUALITY
Continuous quality assurance and improvement

TRUST
Built on respect, transparency and shared values

COMMUNITY
A strong network of people and institutions united by a common vision

SUSTAINABILITY
Institutional, academic and financial sustainability for long-term impact

IMPACT
Contributing to regional development and the European Higher Education Area

Building today. Inspiring tomorrow. Empowering the future.

The legacy of WBNET is a better future for all.

WBNET SIGNATURE

"The strongest networks are built not by agreements alone, but by the people who continue to learn, innovate and grow together."

"The end of a project marks the beginning of a network."

10.4 A Legacy for Future Generations

"The greatest legacy of education is not the knowledge we preserve, but the opportunities we create for those who follow."

Throughout its implementation, WBNET has demonstrated that meaningful educational transformation is achieved through vision, cooperation and a shared commitment to continuous learning. While the project officially concludes with the completion of its planned activities, its true legacy lies in the foundations it has established for future generations of learners, educators and institutions across the Western Balkans.

The newly developed **Short Study Programmes**, the **Centres for Short Study Programmes**, modern laboratories and strengthened partnerships with industry represent tangible achievements that will continue supporting lifelong learning for years to come. More importantly, these results have introduced a new educational philosophy – one that values flexibility, practical competence, international cooperation and continuous professional development as essential components of modern higher education.

The experience gained through WBNET has also strengthened the confidence of participating institutions to embrace innovation and respond proactively to future challenges. By working together across national borders and institutional traditions, the consortium demonstrated that common educational challenges can be transformed into shared opportunities through collaboration, mutual trust and the exchange of knowledge. This spirit of partnership remains one of the project's most enduring achievements.

The future will undoubtedly bring new technologies, new professions and new educational needs. The structures created through WBNET provide a solid foundation for responding to these changes, enabling partner institutions to continue developing innovative learning opportunities while remaining closely connected with the needs of society and the labour market.

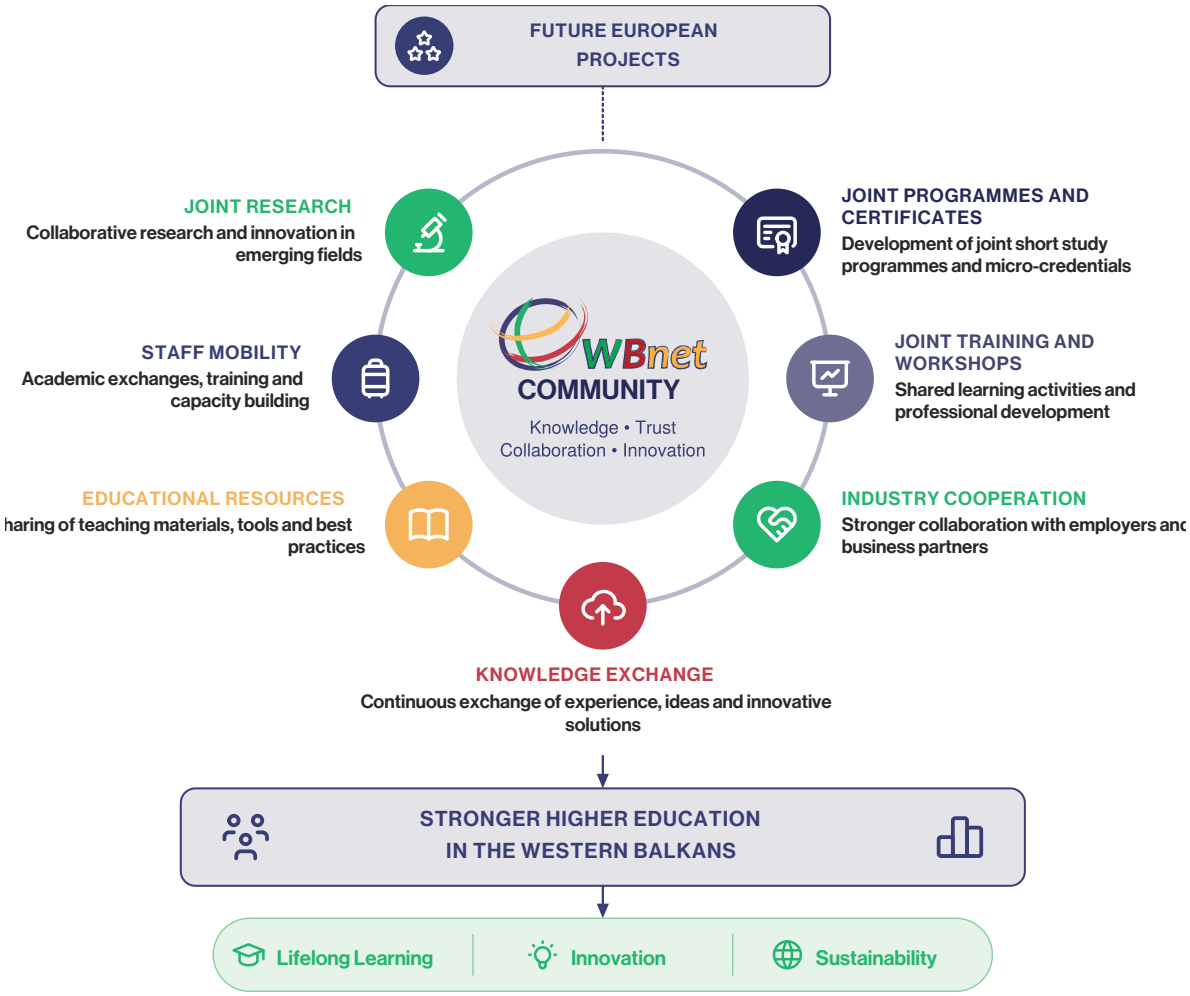
Perhaps the greatest success of WBNET cannot be measured by the number of deliverables completed or activities organised. It is reflected in the confidence that educational institutions can evolve together, learn from one another and collectively shape a more flexible, inclusive and sustainable future for higher education in the Western Balkans.

As this monograph reaches its final pages, it becomes clear that WBNET is more than the story of a successful Erasmus+ project. It is the story of a partnership that grew into a community, of ideas that became institutional practice, and of a shared vision that will continue to inspire future cooperation. Every programme developed, every Centre established, every laboratory equipped and every friendship created represents another step towards a stronger and more connected European Higher Education Area.

WBNET SIGNATURE

“The legacy of WBNET is not only what was built together—it is what future generations will continue to build upon.”

Looking ahead, the success of WBNET will not be measured solely by the achievements documented in this monograph, but by the opportunities that continue to emerge because of them. Every learner enrolling in a Short Study Programme, every teacher introducing a new educational approach, every employer collaborating with a Centre, and every future partnership inspired by this experience becomes part of the project’s continuing story.



Educational innovation is never a final destination. It is a continuous journey shaped by curiosity, collaboration and the willingness to embrace change. WBNET has provided the foundations for that journey, but its future will be written by the institutions and people who continue to believe that learning has the power to transform both individuals and society.

“The project may be complete, but its story has only just begun.”

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
AASKM	Academy of Applied Studies Kosovo and Metohija
ARPSU	Association of Rectors of Private Universities
ATUSS	Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade
CBHE	Capacity Building in Higher Education
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EELISA	European Engineering Learning Innovation and Science Alliance
EU	European Union
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IP	Internet Protocol
QA	Quality Assurance
QAB	Quality Assurance Board
SC	Steering Committee
SSP	Short Study Programme
SVEHERC	Sveučilište Hercegovina (University of Herzegovina)
UL FE	University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Electrical Engineering
UNBI	University of Bihać
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPKM	University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica
UPM	Universidad Politécnica de Madrid
WB	Western Balkans
WBNET	Network of Centres for Regional Short Study Programmes in the Countries of the Western Balkans
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package
XR	Extended Reality

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4. WBNET Consortium. (2024–2026). Project Deliverables and Public Documentation. Erasmus+ Project No. 101128813. Official deliverables repository

B. WBNET Project Deliverables

The following references use the deliverable identifiers and titles published on the official project website.

Reference	Document title
WBNET D1.2 (2024)	Project Management Plan
WBNET D2.2 (2025)	Centers Involved in Documentations of HEIs
WBNET D3.1 (2025)	Equipment Installed and Involved in Financial Books of WB HEIs
WBNET D3.2 (2025)	Developed Minimum Eight Curricula for Short Study Programmes
WBNET D3.3 (2025)	Developed Programme for Practice in Companies
WBNET D3.4 (2025)	Elaborat for Accreditation of Eight Short Study Programmes
WBNET D3.5 (2025)	Developed Teaching Materials for Minimum Eight Courses
WBNET D4.1 (2026)	16 Participation Lists of Enrolled traineers in 16 Short Study cycles
WBNET D5.1 (2024)	Quality Assurance Plan
WBNET D5.3 (2026)	Report from Internal Audit
WBNET D6.1 (2025)	Sustainability Plan
WBNET D6.2 (2026)	Two Round Tables – Two Reports
WBNET D6.3 (2025)	Report from Interim Conference and Decision for Forming Network of Project Supporters
WBNET D7.1 (2024)	Dissemination Plan
WBNET D7.2 (2025)	Project Website
WBNET D7.3 (2024)	Promotional Materials for Project Promotion

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