UPTAKERS

UPTAKERS PROJECT
2ND YEAR PROGRESS



NEWSLETTER

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PROJECT BRIEF

UPTAKERS is an Erasmus+ Capacity Building initiative designed to elevate digital competencies in higher education across the MENA and EU regions. By integrating VR, AR, and AI-driven immersive tools into teaching and learning, the project supports universities in modernizing their academic offer and strengthening their digital transformation strategies. Through upgraded courses, new VR curricula, specialized training, and cross-regional collaboration, UPTAKERS empowers students and staff with future-ready skills that match evolving market demands.

OBJECTIVES

The project aims to enhance institutional capabilities in extended reality technologies, enrich academic programs with updated and newly developed digital courses, and build strong links between universities, industry, and local communities. UPTAKERS focuses on improving teaching practices, promoting innovation, and equipping students with advanced digital skills that prepare them for emerging professional environments.

VISION

UPTAKERS envisions a modern, inclusive, and digitally empowered higher education ecosystem where immersive technologies foster creativity, innovation, and equal access to high-quality learning. The project seeks to establish sustainable XR-based educational environments that continue to expand opportunities for students, educators, and institutions long beyond its completion.

HIGHLIGHT

- 4 SSC MEETINGS
- 1 INTERCAMPUS LAB VISIT
  2 TRAINING OF TRAINERS
- 24 UPDATED COURSES
  12 NEWLY DEVELOPED COURSES
- 6 XR LAB INAUGURATIONS
- 7 INFO DAYS
  4 DISSEMINATION EVENTS
- 100 INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE





SSC #3 meeting in Jordan

Date: 12 February 2026
University: Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU)
Location: Irbid, Jordan (hybrid)

The 3rd Steering Committee meeting brought all consortium partners together, on site in Irbid and online, to review progress and plan the next implementation phase. Hosted by BAU and coordinated by Ovidius University of Constanța, the official project coordinator, partners assessed the progress of the work packages, reviewed key deliverables and aligned strategic priorities for the coming period. The meeting reinforced the consortium's shared commitment to innovative, inclusive and hybrid learning across all partner institutions.

SSC #4 meeting in Spain

Date: 15–17 June 2026
University: Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Faculty of Mathematics and Statistics
Location: Barcelona, Spain (hybrid)

Partners met on site and online for three days to review progress, share good practices and plan the next steps. The programme included visits to the Faculty's Virtual Reality Center and its Augmented Reality Laboratory, where participants tested XR headsets and explored immersive applications in live demonstrations led by Prof. Jordi.











ToT Phase 1 – Barcelona

Date: 19–23 January 2026
University: Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC)
Location: Barcelona, Spain

The first phase of the UPTAKERS Training of Trainers brought together academic and technical staff from all partner universities for intensive, hands-on training in immersive technologies. Participants worked with VR and AR equipment and XR applications, building skills they are now passing on to colleagues and students at home through info days and technical sessions. Trainees praised the programme for its rich content, practical experience and international collaboration.

ToT Phase 2 – Rome

Date: 26–30 January 2026
University: Sapienza Università di Roma (UNIROMA1)
Location: Rome, Italy

The second phase continued the capacity-building programme at Sapienza, further strengthening participants' skills in immersive technologies and their shared commitment to the UPTAKERS objectives. Together, the two ToT phases have prepared a core team of XR trainers in every MENA partner university, made possible by the European Union's Erasmus+ co-funding.











Immersive Tech Lab – BAU

Date: 17 May 2026
University: Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), Al-Huson University College
Location: Al-Huson, Irbid, Jordan

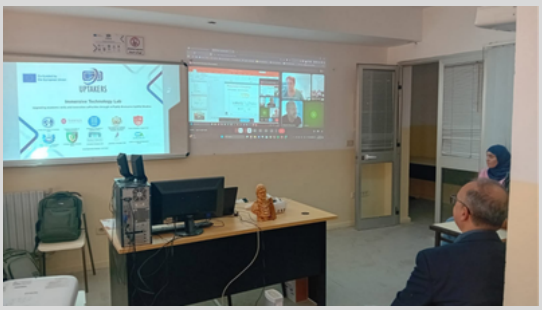
The UPTAKERS Immersive Technologies Lab (ITL) in the Al-Baeroni Building was inaugurated by Prof. Bashar Ammari, Dean of Al-Huson University College, on behalf of BAU President Prof. Ahmed Fakhri Al-Ajlouni, as part of the project's orientation day. Around 30 faculty members, staff and students attended. Prof. Rebhi Damseh presented the project's objectives, Dr. Ma'moun Al-Smadi introduced the lab's equipment, and participants explored VR, XR and AI applications for immersive learning and electrical engineering.

UPTAKERS Lab – ISITCom

Date: 19 May 2026
University: University of Sousse, ISITCom
Location: Hammam Sousse, Tunisia

ISITCom opened its UPTAKERS laboratory after receiving and installing all equipment, setting up the lab infrastructure and completing operational testing. Projects developed within UPTAKERS were demonstrated to guests, including Director Prof. Hichem Chaabane and University of Sousse Vice-President Prof. Ouajdi Korbaa, with partners joining online. Special thanks to Sami Ben Amor for his dedication to the lab's implementation.











AR Studio – Monastir

Date: 25 May 2026
University: University of Monastir, Faculty of Pharmacy (FPHM)
Location: Monastir, Tunisia

The Faculty of Pharmacy inaugurated its new augmented reality studio in the presence of the University President, two Vice-Presidents, several deans and directors, and experts from ENIM, ISIMM, ISIMA, FMDM, FPHM and FMM. An Info Day held alongside the opening introduced the project to professors, PhD students, students and staff, followed by a hands-on demonstration of the first AR applications. Similar labs will soon open at ENIM, ISIMM and ISIMA.

Immersive Realities Lab

Date: 19 May 2026
University: Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AASTMT), College of Engineering & Technology
Location: El Alamein, Egypt

AASTMT Alamein opened its UPTAKERS Immersive Realities Lab, a milestone for immersive technologies in architectural education. The Dean, the Vice Dean for Educational and Student Affairs and the Head of the Architecture Department launched the lab and explored its VR headsets, motion-tracking systems, 360° cameras and workstations, joining students in live XR demonstrations.











Virtual Anatomy XR Lab

Date: 25 June 2026
University: Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)
Location: Irbid, Jordan

JUST inaugurated its Virtual Anatomy XR Laboratory, a milestone in the digital transformation of medical education. Equipped with VR hardware, high-performance computers and virtual anatomy software, the lab offers students immersive learning and supports innovative teaching, training and research. Representatives of King Abdullah University Hospital, Hikma Pharmaceuticals and the Jordan Chamber of Industry joined the event, opening dialogue on future collaboration in digital health, education and innovation.

VR Lab – FUE

Date: 10 June 2026
University: Future University in Egypt (FUE), Faculty of Engineering and Technology
Location: New Cairo, Egypt

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology officially inaugurated its Immersive Technology (VR) Lab, established through the UPTAKERS project with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme and Future University in Egypt.

The ceremony was held in the presence of Prof. Ebada Sarhan, President of FUE, alongside university leaders, faculty members, researchers, students and project partners.

The new lab gives students and researchers cutting-edge technologies that enhance practical education, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation across engineering and beyond.









Info Day #1 at JUST

Date: 12 May 2026
University: Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)
Location: Irbid, Jordan

The UPTAKERS team at JUST held an introductory Info Day presenting the project's vision, objectives and educational innovations to undergraduate students, faculty and administrative staff. The session introduced the new and updated UPTAKERS courses and how they fit into the curriculum, and explored VR, XR and AI in higher education. The workshop was delivered by Eng. Ebtisam Ababneh and Eng. Sinan Nassar, drawing on their UPTAKERS training in Italy and Spain. More than 35 participants attended.

Info Day #2 at JUST

Date: 14 May 2026
University: Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)
Location: Irbid, Jordan

Two days later, the JUST team organised a second Info Day on Immersive Technologies and Digital Learning for students, faculty and administrative staff.

The event opened with remarks by JUST Project Manager Prof. Fahmi Abu Alrub on the importance of integrating advanced digital technologies into higher education.

Eng. Mohammad Al Qoudah and Eng. Senan Nassar then shared practical insights from the UPTAKERS training in Spain, introducing VR, XR and AI applications for interactive, future-oriented teaching. Around 25 participants attended.









Info Day at BAU

Date: 17 May 2026
University: Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), Al-Huson University College
Location: Al-Huson, Irbid, Jordan

Al-Huson University College hosted an Info Day on Immersive Technologies and Digital Learning for staff, faculty, students and representatives of industry and academia. Dean Prof. Bashaar Ammary opened the event, and Local Project Manager Prof. Rebhi Damseh presented UPTAKERS and the role of XR in linking higher education and industry. Participants toured the new Immersive Technology Lab, and Dr. Ma'moun Al-Smadi and Eng. Mohannad Al-Hefnawi, both trained at the UPTAKERS ToT in Spain, led a technical session on VR, XR and AI in education.

Info Day at FUE

Date: 15 July 2026
University: Future University in Egypt (FUE)
Location: New Cairo, Egypt

FUE hosted an UPTAKERS Info Day bringing together university leadership, academic staff, engineering departments, architecture and interior architecture students, and socio-economic partners.

The event introduced the project and FUE's newly established XR infrastructure. A highlight was the live demonstration of XR applications, where faculty and partners showcased immersive learning environments and interactive teaching methods.

The day closed with lively discussions on the future of XR in higher education.









Info Day at FUE Architecture

Date: 16 April 2026
University: Future University in Egypt (FUE), Architecture Department
Location: New Cairo, Egypt

The Architecture Department at FUE hosted a dynamic day connecting academic research with professional practice, where students explored emerging digital tools and real-world project delivery. A dedicated session presented the UPTAKERS Erasmus+ project, introducing the new and updated courses with a focus on the digital concentration track, alongside the launch of the Extended Reality (XR) Lab. The day closed with a public lecture by leading industry experts, moderated by Dr. Dina Khater.

Info Day at AASTMT

Date: 11 May 2026
University: Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AASTMT)
Location: El Alamein, Egypt

The UPTAKERS team held an introductory session for Architecture students enrolled in the new 144-credit curriculum, which offers five specialised concentrations.

The team presented its contribution to the "Digital Design" concentration: 2 new and 4 updated courses on immersive technologies, XR applications and digital workflows in architecture.

Students were also introduced to the new lab equipment, including VR headsets, KAT Loco motion-tracking systems and 360° cameras.









Technical training at AASTMT

Date: 24 April 2026
University: AASTMT, College of Engineering & Technology, Immersive Realities Lab
Location: El Alamein, Egypt

The AASTMT team completed hands-on technical training on the newly acquired equipment at the Immersive Realities Lab (IRL) in Alamein. The session focused on setting up, operating and integrating advanced tools, including VR headsets, motion-tracking systems and 360° cameras. The training is a key step toward using the lab effectively in teaching and research, and strengthens the team's capacity to deliver innovative, technology-driven learning in the updated architecture courses.

Romanian visit to BAU

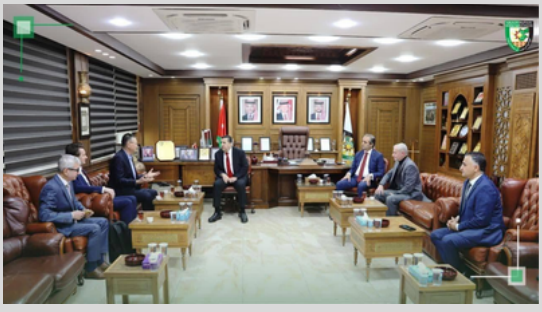
Date: 12 February 2026
University: Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU)
Location: Jordan

BAU hosted a delegation led by Prof. Eden Mamut, UPTAKERS Project Director (Ovidius University of Constanța), with Deputy Ambassador Sorin Nicolescu and Minister Plenipotentiary Robert Rosculescu of the Romanian Embassy, and BAU Vice President Prof. Khaled Al-Zuabi.

The meeting presented the project's results and discussed the virtual reality lab at Al-Husn College, extending applications to the Faculty of Medicine, research partnerships with Romanian universities, and hosting an international conference on AI and XR.











CBHE Cluster Meeting

Date: 30 September 2026
Organiser: Erasmus+ National Office Tunisia
Location: Mövenpick Hotel du Lac, Tunis, Tunisia

UPTAKERS was presented at the Thematic Cluster Meeting of CBHE Projects 2022–2025, dedicated to governance and digitalisation in higher education. The meeting was an opportunity to share the project's progress and achievements, exchange with other Erasmus+ CBHE projects involving Tunisia and share good practices. Warm thanks to all UPTAKERS partners for their commitment, and to the Erasmus+ National Office Tunisia for its continued support, its invitation and the excellent organisation of the event.

BTEC meeting at BAU

Date: 28 April 2026
University: Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), Al-Huson University College
Location: Al-Huson, Irbid, Jordan

As part of UPTAKERS, BAU hosted a coordination meeting at Al-Huson University College to explore collaboration in technical education and BTEC programmes.

Academic leaders and representatives of local education directorates discussed partnership, skills development and alignment with labour-market needs.

The meeting also highlighted the role of EU-funded projects in capacity building, knowledge exchange and advancing technical education through international collaboration.









UPTAKERS courses go live

Date: Fall semester 2026
Universities: all 6 MENA partner universities
Location: Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia

This fall, the UPTAKERS courses are being delivered for the first time at all six MENA partner universities: FUE and AASTMT (Egypt), BAU and JUST (Jordan), and the Universities of Monastir and Sousse (Tunisia). Students are following the 24 updated and 12 newly developed courses, taught by staff trained in Barcelona and Rome and supported by the new XR labs. From virtual anatomy to immersive architectural design, VR, AR and AI are now part of everyday teaching.

Watch us on YouTube

Channel: @uptakers-eu
Link: youtube.com/@uptakers-eu/shorts

Relive the highlights of this issue in short videos: training of trainers, lab inaugurations, info days, and steering committee meetings across Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Italy and Spain.

Click the title above or visit youtube.com/@uptakers-eu/shorts and subscribe to follow the project as the UPTAKERS courses roll out this year.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X: @uptakers

Featured shorts

▶ ToT Rome – participants' feedback

▶ ToT Barcelona – VR trial







2027
JAN
SSC #5

Tunisia

2027
JUL
SSC #6

Romania

2027
SEP
Final Exhibition

& Forum

Achieved activities

- SSC #3 meeting in Jordan
- SSC #4 meeting in Barcelona
- Romanian visit to BAU
- Training of Trainers at UPC
- Training of Trainers at UNIROMA1
- Development of detailed courses content
- Installation of equipment
- Official inauguration of XR labs and info days

Upcoming activities

- Technical seminars with EU guest speakers
- Delivery of 36 courses over Fall-Spring 2026-2027
- SSC #5 meeting in Tunisia
- SSC #6 meeting in Romania
- International training of students
- Final exhibition & forum