



# BKSTONE

## HIGHER EDUCATION-ENTERPRISE PLATFORM FOR FOSTERING, MODERNISATION AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN NATURAL STONE INDUSTRY IN WESTERN BALKANS

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# CONSORTIUM

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- UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
- UNIVERSITY OF MOSTAR, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
- UNIVERSITY MEDITERRANEAN (UNIM), MONTENEGRO
- FACULTY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF PRIŠTINA, KOSOVO
- UNIVERSITY FOR BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY, KOSOVO
- **UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA, SPAIN**
- **IES RIBEIRA DO LOURO, SPAIN**
- **MARBLE AND NATURAL STONE TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, SPAIN**
- **SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME, ITALY**
- **SCUOLA EDILE – CPT PADOVA, ITALY**
- **NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS, GREECE**
- **TRANSILVANIA UNIVERSITY, ROMANIA**

# RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

- **THE ORNAMENTAL STONE SECTOR REPRESENTS A WORLDWIDE INCREASING MARKET** (OVER A 5% OF INCREASE YEARLY ACCORDING TO THE ITALIAN STONE INDUSTRY). WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION AROUND 60,000 SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESSES WORK WITH ORNAMENTAL STONE IN ALL ASPECTS, PRODUCTION REACHES APPROXIMATELY 35% WITH A TOTAL TURNOVER OF ABOUT 24 BILLION € IN 2015, GIVING WORK TO AN IMPORTANT NUMBER OF EUROPEAN CITIZENS.
- THE STUDY BASIS CLAIMS THAT WHEN CONSIDERING ALL THE FACTORS, INCLUDING THE ECONOMY IN TERMS OF EU GROWTH, THE ENVIRONMENTAL IN TERMS OF CO2 FOOTPRINT AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY, **INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THIS SECTOR IN EUROPE WOULD PAY CERTAINLY OFF.**
- **THIS PROJECT ADDRESSES THE NEEDS OF BALKAN COUNTRIES IN TERMS OF EDUCATION RELATED TO THE USE OF A NATURAL RESOURCE AS THE STONE,** WHICH IS QUITE IMPORTANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY IN THE REMAINING MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES, AS SOUTHEAST OF SPAIN, SOUTH FRANCE, ITALY, GREECE OR TURKEY. THERE ARE HUGE DEPOSITS OF MARBLE AND LIMESTONE ALONG THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST COUNTRIES. SAME HAPPENS IN THE BALKANS, AND ACTUALLY IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA STONE WAS AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY. HOWEVER, AT THAT TIME THE NEW TECHNOLOGY THAT ALLOW THE INDUSTRIAL PROCESSING OF THE STONE STILL DID NOT ARRIVE. THE STRONG INDUSTRY OF THE STONE QUARRYING, MANUFACTURING AND PLACING IN THE SITE HAS RAISE A LOT FROM THE YEARS 60-70'S. BUT THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION OF THE BALKAN COUNTRIES HAS KEPT THEM OUT OF THE IMPORTANT GLOBAL MARKET OF THE STONE.

# DESCRIPTION

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT IS **FOSTERING THE MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STONE SECTOR IN WESTERN BALKANS PARTNER COUNTRIES AND STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE INDUSTRY.**

FOR THIS PURPOSE DIFFERENT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE PROJECT:

- TO BENCHMARK EXISTING TRAINING INITIATIVES & INCORPORATE ELEMENTS INTO PROJECT TRAINING OUTPUTS
- TO SUPPORT TECHNOLOGICAL & PRACTICE-BASED INNOVATIVE TRAINING BASED ON COURSES APPROACH AND FORMAT.
- TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION OF INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS IN OUTPUTS CONCEPTION AND TESTING PHASES
- TO TEST NEW HE POSSIBILITIES OF TERTIARY VET LEVELS IN PARTNER COUNTRIES
- TO CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL/REGIONAL INNOVATION STRATEGIES FOR SPECIALIZATION IN THE NATURAL STONE SECTOR WITH PROJECT OUTPUTS
- TO CREATE A STONE SECTOR NETWORK PLATFORM INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN PROGRAMME & PARTNER COUNTRIES.

- THE PROJECT AIMS AT HIGHER EDUCATION, AND THIS IS THE REASON WHY MOST PARTNERS ARE HEIS, BUT IT INCLUDES ALSO A VET TERTIARY LEVEL AND A STONE TECHNOLOGIC CENTRE, MARBLE, NATURAL STONE AND MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE (CTM), SEVERAL ASSOCIATED PARTNERS WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT, MAINLY CITY HALLS AND SMSE'S.
- MAIN PRODUCTS OF THE PROJECT ARE TRAINING CONTENT FOR UNIVERSITY COURSES, A TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR VET TERTIARY LEVEL, AN ONLINE RESOURCE CENTRE AND MULTIMEDIA HANDBOOKS.
- THE PROJECT WILL LAST FOR THREE YEARS AND INVOLVE PARTNER FROM ALBANIA, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA, KOSOVO AND MONTENEGRO, AS PARTNER COUNTRIES. FROM PROGRAMME COUNTRIES, PARTNERS FROM SPAIN, ITALY, ROMANIA AND GREECE.

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- BKSTONE PROJECT HAS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF **FOSTERING THE MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STONE SECTOR IN WESTERN BALKANS PARTNER COUNTRIES** THROUGH STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND THE INDUSTRY, AND INTERNATIONALIZING CURRICULUM AND METHODS.
- TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL DEMAND OF NATURAL STONE PRODUCTS ACCORDING TO EU STANDARDS, **THE PARTNER COUNTRIES INDUSTRY HAS TO PERFORM IMPORTANT CHANGES IN QUARRYING METHODS, PROCESSING METHODS, QUALITY CONTROLS FOLLOWING EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (P.E. CE MARKING, ASTM, ETC.), MARKETING STRATEGIES, INTERNATIONAL TRADE, E-COMMERCE ETC.**
- THESE CHANGES REQUIRE **THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL LOCAL AGENTS**, INCLUDING THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEI) AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR TRAINING STRATEGIES TO MEET THE CHALLENGES EXPLAINED IN THE RATIONALE OF OUR PROJECT IN TERMS OF QUALITY, DELIVERY AND ESPECIALLY RELEVANCE, IN RESPONSE TO THE INDUSTRY NEEDS.

# SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- IN CONCLUSION, THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT TO ACHIEVE THE MAIN GOALS ARE:
  - TO CONTRIBUTE THROUGH THE OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT TO DEVELOP NATIONAL/REGIONAL INNOVATION STRATEGIES FOR SPECIALIZATION IN THE NATURAL STONE SECTOR.
  - TO PUT IN VALUE EACH COUNTRY/REGION'S STRENGTHS, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES AND POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE STONE SECTOR THROUGH BENCHMARKING EXISTING TRAINING INITIATIVES AND INCORPORATING ELEMENTS INTO THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO BE DEVELOPED IN THE PROJECT.
  - TO SUPPORT TECHNOLOGICAL, AS WELL AS PRACTICE-BASED INNOVATIVE TRAINING BASED ON THE APPROACH AND FORMAT OF THE COURSES TO BE DEVELOPED.
  - TO CONTRIBUTE TO GET STAKEHOLDERS IN THE STONE INDUSTRY FULLY INVOLVED, ENCOURAGING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE CONCEPTION AND TESTING PHASES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIALS.
  - TO PROMOTE AMONG STUDENTS ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE LEARNING AS A NECESSARY MEANS TO WORK IN THE STONE SECTOR, TESTING NEW POSSIBILITIES IN PARTNER COUNTRIES LIKE TERTIARY VET LEVELS.
  - TO CREATE A NETWORK PLATFORM INVOLVING STONE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES, HIGH EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEI) AND VET ORGANIZATIONS OF EU PROGRAMME AND PARTNER COUNTRIES BASED ON THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT.