

## **Kick-off for Erasmus + Capacity Building in Higher Education Project**

The project started officially end of March

Everyone knows the pictures of crowded Asian roads: cars, tuk tuks and pedestrians crowded together on Sri Lanka's roads. The country is currently facing many challenges in terms of transport. Sound transport concepts and good education in transport and mobility should lead to higher standards and a better quality of life.



At the end of March 2021, the Erasmus project LBS2ITS was launched. TU Wien (TUW) is responsible for the entire project management and, together with the Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) and the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) as well the four universities in Sri Lanka, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL), University of Moratuwa (UOM), University of Sri Jayawardhanapura (USJ) and General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU), will develop new courses and curricula for higher education in the field of transport over the next three years. The aim of the project is to train geodetic scientists as well as transport and mobility experts in order to improve the quality of life in Sri Lanka, both in the city and in the country. In addition, a regional cooperation network in the LBS-to-ITS training is to be established and existing LBS and Smart Transportation course modules are to be modernized and further developed. It is also planned to modernize the equipment. Students should benefit from this and increase their employment opportunities on the national and international labour market.

The specific objectives of the LBS2ITS project are:

- (1) establishment of a regional cooperation network in LBS-to-ITS training;
- (2) the modernization of existing and the development of new LBS and Smart Transportation course modules;
- (3) the further training of the teaching staff by means of targeted training on the project topic;
- (4) modernize equipment, including digital resource kits for interacting with students;
- (5) the strengthening of problem-based learning (PBL) and the introduction of e-learning tools;
- (6) promoting interaction and cooperation between universities and other relevant actors;
- (7) increasing the reach and employment opportunities of students in national and international markets; and
- (8) implementation of quality assurance procedures in training.

'Location-based services' (LBS) are mobile computer applications (e. g. with smartphones). They record the respective location and, if necessary, additional information, e. g. about users and the environment. With the integration of mobile information and communication technologies (ICT), 4A 'services' (anytime, anywhere, for anyone and anything) are being developed. Examples of emerging mobility services based on location information range from travel and traffic information, public transport and emergency management to personal mobility, the use of commercial vehicles, road user charges and driver assistance systems. In short: LBS promote healthier, greener and more active mobility through Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). They provide innovative services related to different modes of transport and traffic management, enabling users to be better informed and to use transport services in a safer, more coordinated and "smarter" way.

According to Günther Retscher, Professor at the Institute Department of Geodesy and Geoinformation at the Vienna University of Technology, 'the aim of this major EU project is to further develop the education of geodesists as well as transport and mobility experts. It is also a good example of how international cooperation can be successful.' Professor Retscher also emphasises that 'further development and education in the field of transport will make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life in Sri Lanka in the future.'

#### **About Erasmus+**

Erasmus + is the EU's programme for education, training, youth and sport. In the field of higher education, it aims to support the European education agenda, to advance the modernisation, internationalisation and qualitative improvement of higher education in Europe, to strengthen international skills, personal development and employability of students, to increase the attractiveness of the EU as a place of study and science, and to contribute to the sustainable development of higher education in third countries.