**The UP is the first Eastern European university to participate in a transcontinental international engineering sustainability project**

An international team of engineering students from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology of the University of Pécs and undergraduate engineering students from a partner university in the UK and the US has to find solutions to the urban management problems of a disadvantaged South American municipality. All this in the online space, in partnership with experts from different disciplines, countries, and companies. The students from Pécs are the first from Eastern Europe to take part in this transnational, cross-continental collaboration, in which they will have to learn the appropriate methodology of digital communication in addition to developing a professional assignment. This will play an increasingly important role in engineering cooperation not only in the current epidemic period but also in the future.

An English-language course entitled International Engineering Project, launched this academic year at the Department of Civil Engineering of the Institute of Engineering and Smart Technologies of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology of the University of Pécs, aims to facilitate teamwork and joint learning between Hungarian and international students. The task is a complex one: to find engineering solutions to the urban management problems of a disadvantaged coastal municipality in South America, including the built environment, water supply, wastewater treatment, energy supply, waste management, food supply, transport, and digital development. They must do so in a way that minimizes the environmental impact of the solutions they come up with, taking sustainability into consideration. The specific problems have to be identified by the future engineers, who will be given a wealth of data and information to work with, and then use this to develop their solutions, first at a conceptual level and then in increasing depth. They are supported by mentors from different disciplines and from different countries and companies. At the end of the project, which also serves as an international competition, the teams have to come up with a well-documented engineering solution, supported by calculations and designs. In previous years, similar engineering projects have mainly involved Anglo-Saxon countries, and this is the first time that a university from Hungary has been invited to join the challenge.

Through the project, students learn to work in a team, which is a major advantage for their future employment. Their experience will also contribute to their ability to structure the approach to the task, to see how to work around the problem, how to collect data, what concepts to follow, and what tools to use. They will also learn to communicate in an international environment, as they will have to find common ground with students from different continents and cultures.

Sustainability is a global issue today, so engineering education has a huge responsibility to develop the commitment of the future generation of engineers to sustainability and to provide the knowledge to do so. Sustainable development is both a challenge and a necessary pathway for developing and developed countries, so cross-continental professional cooperation will be essential in the future. The current project is an opportunity for future engineers to understand their global responsibilities. It will help them to become aware that solving technical challenges in a sustainable way requires taking economic, social, and environmental aspects into account. This approach is particularly needed in areas where climate change threatens the safety or quality of life of local communities.