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OUTSTANDING SUCCESS FOR THE 39TH EDITION OF THE UPV/EHU SUMMER COURSES, WHICH THIS YEAR FINISHED IN AUTUMN

The UPV/EHU Summer Courses appreciate the support and confidence of the 10,074 people who took part in the 170 activities organised despite the situation marked by COVID-19.

The pandemic meant that this year's UPV/EHU Summer Courses ran almost until November. The measures taken made it possible to hold a summer school without any health incidents due to COVID-19.

A highlight this special year was the first edition of the Donostia-San Sebastián Sustainability Forum, attended by leading figures in different sustainability-linked fields. It was well-received by the students who took part and the online platform allowed it to reach a broad audience.

The online transformation of the Summer Courses, which began in previous years, was strongly boosted by the range of new course formats combining classroom and online participation for both teachers and students.

During lockdown the Summer Courses offered online training aimed at professional groups and students, which were very popular. From June the summer season began with live online formats. Classroom courses returned in July with novel formats allowing both physical and online participation.

The option of taking part live online allowed the Summer Courses to reach new students in different parts of the world, especially Latin American audiences, which grew considerably this year.

Another feature of this year's courses was the extension of the period: because of the reduction in the number of courses that could be held at the same time, the programme was extended to run until late October in order to fit in the full range of training planned.

The satisfaction ratings by participants show a very positive result, with an average of 9.1 among students, 9.5 among teachers and 9.6 among course management.

Star subjects at this special edition:

Donostia Sustainability Forum



The new formats of the Summer Courses allowed the debut of the Donostia Sustainability Forum. As well as 25 courses, 5 meetings were held which could be followed by the public. Salman Khan (winner of the 2019 Princess of Asturias award for international cooperation) and Javier Aizpurua (CSIC-UPV/EHU); Matt McGrath, BBC environment correspondent, and Pedro Jordano, (CSIC), held interesting conversations about education and the importance of environmental communication. Participants also included Arantza Aldezabal (UPV/EHU), Enrique Monasterio (development and innovation director at EVE), María José Sanz (BC3) and Rafael Bengoa, who established the link between environmental deterioration and the pandemic.

COVID-19

This hit the Summer Courses when the programme had already been approved, putting our resilience to the test and forcing us to reaffirm one of our characteristics, the ongoing currency of our content. We held specific courses on the legal, political and moral aspects related to the pandemic. The healthcare issues arising and their direct consequences for our economy became an angle that affected nearly all the activities.

Ageing

Seven different courses and events dealt with the problems arising from an ageing population. Health and the role of telemedicine; loneliness and its consequences for health; the role of cities as carers and the social networks necessary in urban areas.

TopaGune

This year we progressed in the creation of advanced Summer Courses incorporating digital technology and ways of taking part thanks to the collaboration of the department of governance of the Gipuzkoa provincial authority. 2 symposia were held. The first centred on the potential use of new technology in education to avoid the problems caused by the pandemic, and the second on constructing a conceptual framework for the circular economy.

The foundation would like to thank the 10,000 students, teachers and speakers who took part this year's edition, the collaborating bodies and its own staff. Having run the Summer Courses in such a complicated year was an achievement in itself, and would not have been possible without the cooperation of everyone involved.

Until next year's edition, online courses will continue to be offered and this Monday sees the start of the period for proposals for Summer Courses for 2021.