

DECEMBER 2021 | NEWSLETTER 1

VISITOR

VIRTUAL MUSEUMS IN THE COVID ERA



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Project code: 2020-1-FR01-KA226-SCH-095600

What is the purpose of VISITOR?

THE CONSORTIUM

The project is made up of 5 partners from 4 countries, coming from both the private and public sector. All partners are involved in virtual learning, education innovation, intercultural awareness and inclusion.

Interactive4D (FR)
Serious Games Labs

HELLENIC OPEN UNIVERSITY (GR)

The Open University (UK)

idec (GR)

LogoPsyCom (BE)

The VISITOR project aims to alleviate the challenges facing the education and cultural sector in the wake of COVID-19. For many in these sectors, coping with the 'new normal' has meant adapting to prohibited, infrequent and/or heavily regulated class visits to cultural and science centres, most notably museums.

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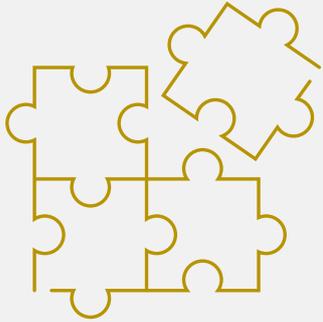


According to UNESCO, nearly 90 % of museums had been closed for an average of 155 days in 2020, and 43% have continued with closures since the beginning of 2021.

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The light at the end of the tunnel has come in the form of embracing digitisation to make up for a lack of in-person cultural visits. By using digital content already provided by museums, VISITOR will allow teachers and their classes to create their own personalised educational scenarios.

This will be achieved through the creation of:



- a digital library for teachers to use existing digital content from museum or add their own
- a gaming app that transports classes to virtual museum exhibits of their own making
- a training course to support teachers in engaging with the digital exhibits and gaming app

To read more about the project's objectives and intended outcomes, check out the articles:

[Virtual museum activities can adapt to your curricula and students' needs](#)

[Bring the museum to your classroom!](#)

Finding inspiration in virtual museum tours

Amit Sood first started Google Art project as a way to make museums more accessible for those unable to visit them in person.

Now known as [Google Arts and Culture](#), this free online platform of artworks enables users to tour galleries and explore the artworks' contextual information.

The platform also includes advanced search capabilities and educational resources (such as quizzes and art history timelines).



Amit Sood talks about how the virtual museum tour project began

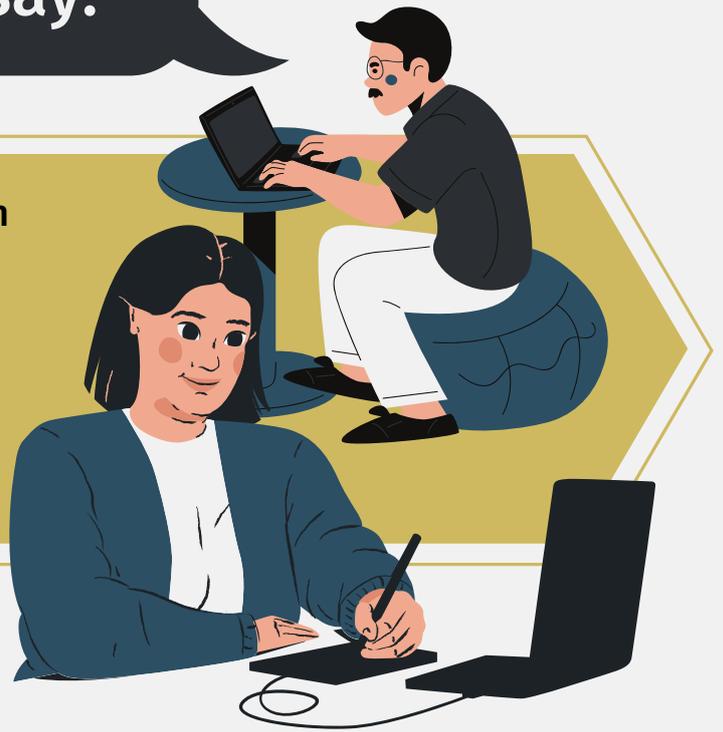


A portrait by Rembrandt seen from the virtual tour of the 2nd floor of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

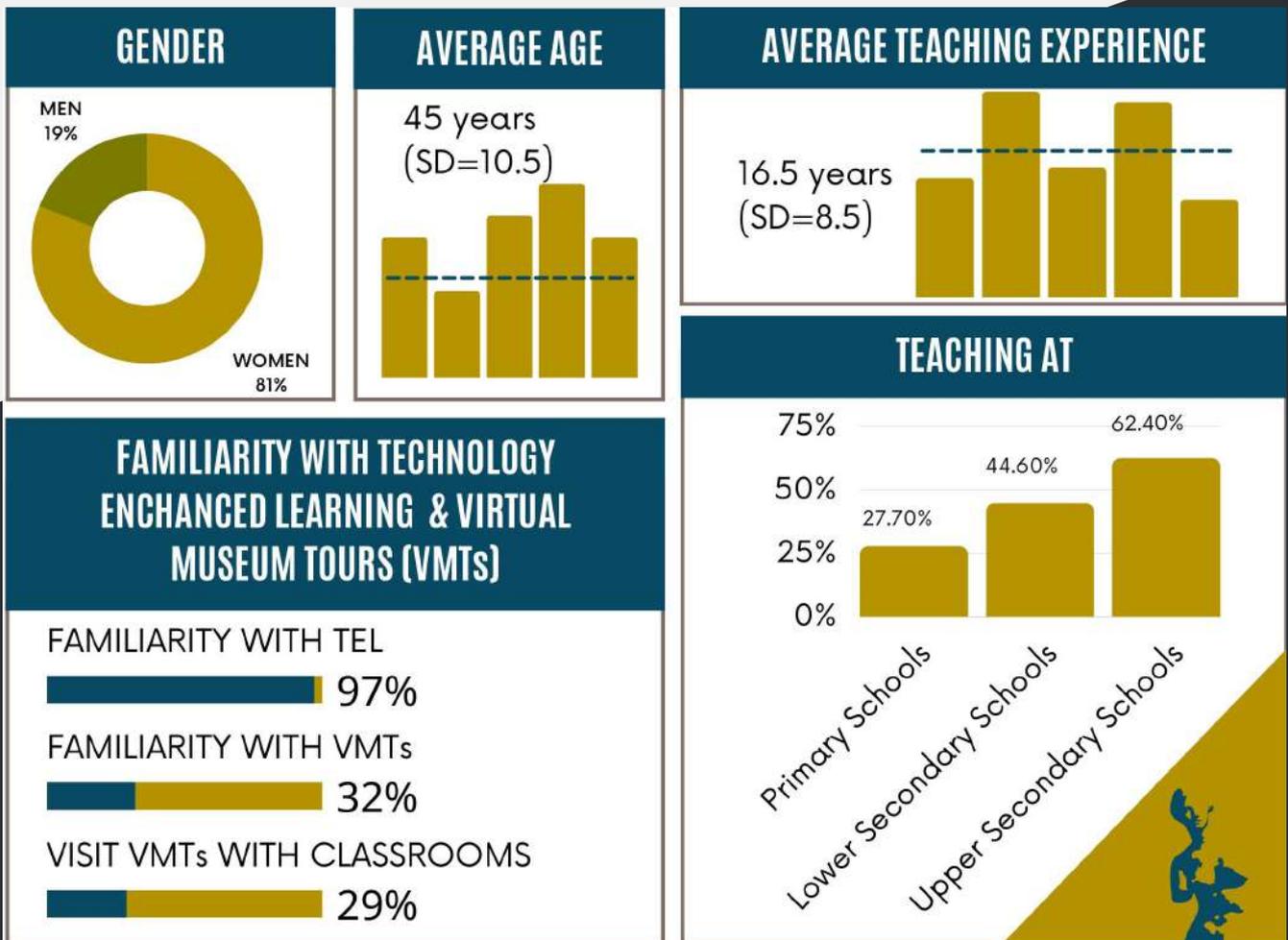
Letting teachers have a say!

Over 100 teachers were surveyed to help with the development and design of our tools. With the help of their responses, the gaming app and digital library will be created to match the needs of their classes and curricula. Check out their responses below!

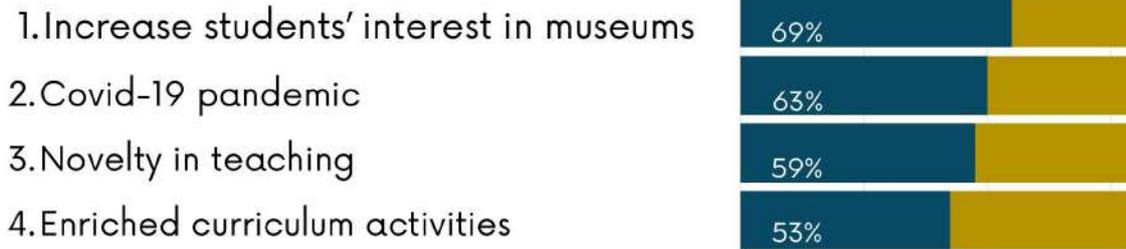
(respondents from the UK, Greece and Belgium)



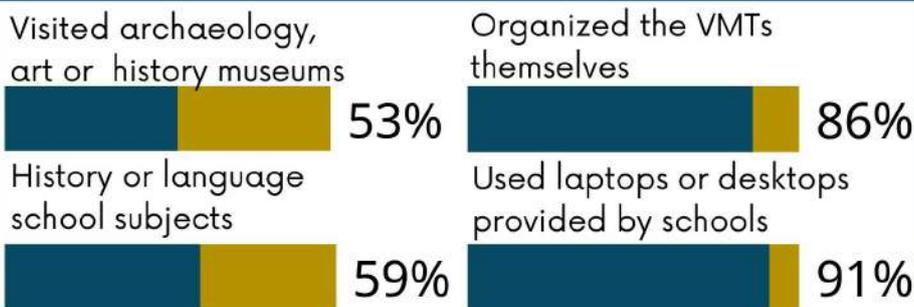
SURVEY - Virtual museum tours (VMTs) for schools



MOTIVATION FOR JOINING VMTs (n = 32)



EXPERIENCED TEACHERS (n = 69)



MAIN CHALLENGES

- Securing a good Internet connectivity
- Design learning activities around the visit

INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS (n=32)



MAIN CHALLENGES

- Design learning activities around the visit
- Finding devices for my students
- Finding time to organize the visit

Joining semi-structured VMTs

WOULD YOU JOIN VMTs WITH YOUR CLASSROOM?



Main factors

- Link to the curriculum
- Teaching experience
- Teachers' age

NO

- Lack of devices
- Time consuming

EXPECTATIONS FROM VMT

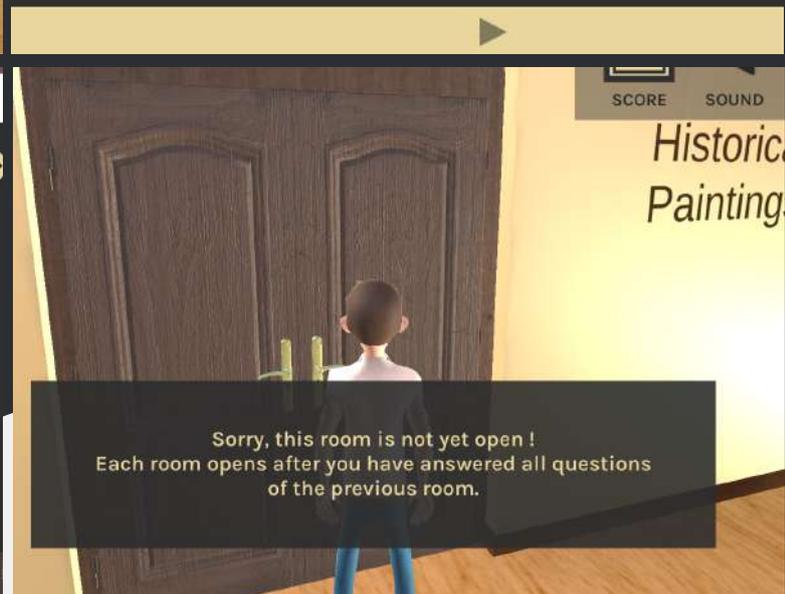
- Use cases and lesson plans for the artifacts
- Integrated assessment tools
- Activities in linear order
- 3D interface

A 'sneak peek' of what's to come

We are hard at work on the creation of an interactive gaming app that is aimed at teachers (TEACHER mode) and their students (STUDENT mode - seen in the screenshots below).

To get the game ready for students, teachers will use TEACHER mode to either add content from the digital library to the game or upload their own images. Adding digital content also means arranging and creating exhibitions to their liking.

In STUDENT mode, students enter their information, pick their avatars and start playing the exhibitions created by their teachers. They navigate around the different rooms of the museum and answer questions in order to get badges and unlock the final reward.



We invite all teachers interested in testing the gaming app to contact Maria (maria.aristeidou@open.ac.uk).

To keep up-to-date on the results of the project, please visit our website: <https://visitor-project.eu/>



The VISITOR (Virtual muSeums In The cOvid eRa) project has been co-funded with support from the European Commission, and it will be implemented from March 2021 to February 2023. The project content reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.