THE VIRTUS HERALD

Education that lasts a lifetime

RECOMMENDED ON WORLD SCHOOLS 2023

VIRTUS HERALD

Volume 3

EASTER

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FATHERS DAY

By Jimena Gutiérrez

Father's Day, or *"El Día del Padre"* in Spanish, is a day dedicated to honouring fathers and celebrating their influence in our society. In Spain, Father's Day is a significant occasion, marked by heartfelt gestures, expressions of gratitude, and family gatherings.
Father's Day in Spain is celebrated on March 19th, which is the same day as the Feast of St. Joseph, as the earthly father of Jesus Christ in Christian tradition. This date holds deep religious and cultural significance, as St. Joseph symbolises the virtues of paternal love, protection, and guidance. Spanish families embrace this day as an opportunity to honour not only their own fathers but also the whole concept of fatherhood in general.

The celebration of Father's Day in Spain often begins with children expressing their love and appreciation for their fathers through various different ways such as: handmade cards, personalised gifts, and thoughtful gestures that are common ways in which children will express their gratitude. These gestures hold sentimental value, reflecting the unique bond shared between the kid and their dad.

Family gatherings play a big role in Father's Day celebrations in Spain. It is a time for families to come together, share meals, and create lasting memories. Whether it's a simple home cooked meal or going to a restaurant to celebrate, the main objective of this day is to spend quality time with the people we love and show appreciation for fathers' roles in the family. It's common for extended family members to join in the celebration, emphasising the importance of familial bonds.

Schools often organise special activities and events to honour fathers, allowing children to showcase their love and appreciation for their fathers. Similarly, businesses may offer promotions and discounts on gifts and experiences for fathers, contributing to the festive atmosphere surrounding the occasion.

Beyond the festivities, Father's Day in Spain serves as a reminder of the invaluable role that fathers play in shaping the lives of their children and in society. Fathers are not only providers and protectors but also act as role models, who support their kinds and teach them to be their best version. Their love, guidance, and sacrifices are always present in their children's lives, and parents show their kids values of resilience, compassion, and integrity.

In conclusion, Father's Day in Spain is a great occasion that honours the bond between fathers and their children. It is a day filled with expressions of love, gratitude, and appreciation support that fathers provide every day. Through heartfelt gestures, family gatherings, and societal recognition, Father's Day serves for everyone to remember the importance of fatherhood and the enduring legacy of paternal love.

Exploring the Origins of Easter

By Jimena Gutiérrez

Easter is a significant Christian holiday, due to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death. It is celebrated with great joy by millions of people around the world, but the origins of Easter are deeply rooted in history, linked with various cultural, religious, and seasonal traditions.

The origins of Easter can be traced back to the pre-Christian times when the ancient civilisations celebrated the arrival of spring. Around March 21st in the Northern Hemisphere, it symbolised the end of winter and the rebirth of nature. There were festivals honouring fertility gods and goddesses, such as Ishtar in Mesopotamia, Eostre in Germanic paganism, and Aphrodite in ancient Greece, that were very common during this time.

Eostre, in particular, is often associated with the modern Easter holiday. According to folklore, Eostre was the goddess of spring and fertility, which was celebrated with feasts and rituals to ensure a successful harvest and life. The tradition of decorating eggs is a symbolism of fertility and new life, and may have originated from these ancient customs.
The early Christian Church, wanting to spread its message and integrate with their local customs, adopted and transformed many pre-existing traditions. The celebration of Easter, wanted to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the 2nd century, Christian communities began observing Easter as a religious festival, although the exact date and customs varied among many different regions.

As Christianity spread throughout Europe, Easter absorbed different elements from various cultural traditions, enriching all its symbolism and rituals. The symbolism of eggs, representing new life and rebirth. Over time, this practice of decorating eggs evolved, with many different designs, with vibrant and pastel colours representing this unique holiday.

Also the Easter bunny, is the popular symbol of Easter in many Western cultures, likely originated from German folklore. The bunny is known for its fertility and rapid reproduction, that's why it became associated with Easter celebrations, bringing eggs and treats to children, in a similar way to Santa Claus.

Today, Easter is celebrated in diverse ways across the globe, reflecting a blend of religious observance, cultural traditions, and commercialism. For Christians, Easter holds profound religious significance, marked by various church services, prayer, and reflection on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Families gather together for festive meals, often including lamb, ham, and many other traditional dishes, while children participate in chocolate egg hunts, candies, easter themed decorative paintings and other seasonal activities.

The origins of Easter are deeply rooted to ancient customs, religious beliefs, and cultural traditions. Easter has evolved over centuries, embracing diverse rituals, symbols, and interpretations. Today, Easter continues to be celebrated with joy and enthusiasm by many people, serving as a reminder of hope, and the triumph of life over death.

PRIZE GIVING

On Friday 26th, our school gathered together to celebrate the dedication, perseverance, and excellence of our students. The essence of Prize Giving Day lies not only in honouring the academic achievements of our students but also in acknowledging their growth and improvement throughout the academic year. Every teacher, representing their respective subjects, meticulously selected two outstanding students: one for demonstrating remarkable improvement and another one for consistently achieving top grades in that subject.

Throughout the ceremony, the air was filled with anticipation and excitement as students had great intrigue of whose names would be called out. The school made personalised certificates and gave each student a 20 euro Amazon gift card.

One of the most inspiring aspects of Prize Giving Day was to be able to see all the diversity of talents and achievements celebrated in our school. From the sciences to the humanities, from the mathematics to the languages, each subject area boasted its own exceptional students in their respective fields.

Moreover, the emphasis on recognizing improvement, alongside academic excellence is a way of growth and development in all its students' confidence and motivation. It served as a reminder that success is not always measured by where we have started, but by the distance we travel and how we overcome the obstacles and improve through the way.
Beyond the tangible rewards of certificates and gift cards, Prize Giving Day served as a powerful motivator for all students to strive for excellence in their academic pursuits and also make those who didn't receive any rewards, to believe in themselves and put more effort into their work.

Prize Giving Day was a great moment to share our peers' success, and remark on each student's achievements and their growing process. It reaffirmed our school's dedication to fostering academic excellence and celebrating the diverse talents within our community.

Congratulations to all the winners, and may their achievements serve as a source of inspiration for us all!

MANIK DANCE SCHOOL

By Jimena Gutierrez

Interviewer: Welcome to our Virtus readers! Today, we have the pleasure of introducing you to Manik Dance School, Sanchinarro's newest gem in the world of dance and fitness. We're here with the founder of Manik Dance School to learn more about what makes this studio a special addition to the community. Thank you for joining us today.

Founder: Thank you for having me! I'm thrilled to share more about Manik Dance School with our Virtus community.

Interviewer: Firstly, can you tell us a little about the inspiration behind opening Manik Dance School in Sanchinarro?

Founder: Absolutely! The idea for Manik Dance School came from a passion for dance and a desire to create a welcoming space for people of all ages to explore their love for movement. Sanchinarro is a vibrant community, and we wanted to offer something unique that brings people together, especially given its proximity to international schools and the convenience of being just a few minutes drive from Virtus.

Interviewer: It sounds like you've chosen an excellent location. What kind of classes can dance enthusiasts look forward to, at Manik?

Founder: We're very excited about the variety of classes we offer. For those looking to improve their fitness and flexibility, our Pilates classes are perfect. We also have Latin Rhythms for those who love the energy of Latin dances, Hip Hop for those who enjoy a more urban style, and Contemporary Dance for those who appreciate expressive movement. There's something for everyone, whether you're a child, a parent, or just someone looking to have fun and stay active.

Interviewer: That's quite a diverse range. Can you tell us more about the instructors who will be leading these classes?

Founder: Our instructors are truly the heart of Manik. They are not only highly skilled dancers with impressive backgrounds in their respective styles, but they are also passionate educators. They bring incredible energy and enthusiasm to every class, ensuring that each session is not just about learning to dance, but also about having a great time and building a sense of community. Our teachers are dedicated to helping students of all levels improve their skills and confidence on the dance floor.

Interviewer: It sounds like a wonderful environment. Beyond the dance and fitness aspects, what other benefits can members expect from joining Manik Dance School?

Founder: At Manik, we believe in fostering a sense of community. Joining our dance school is a fantastic way to meet new people, whether you're a parent connecting with other parents or children making new friends. The social aspect is just as important to us as the physical benefits of dance. We want our members to feel like they're part of a supportive and fun community where they can share their passion for dance and fitness.

Interviewer: That community aspect is so important. Finally, what message would you like to share with those who are considering joining Manik Dance School?

Founder: I would say, don't hesitate to take that first step onto the dance floor. Whether you're a complete beginner or an experienced dancer looking to refine your skills, Manik Dance School is here for you. We're committed to providing a positive, fun, and energetic environment where everyone can enjoy the benefits of dance and fitness. Come join us and be part of our vibrant community!

Interviewer: Thank you so much for sharing all of this with us. Manik Dance School truly sounds like a fantastic addition to Sanchinarro. We wish you all the best and hope to see many people taking advantage of what you have to offer.

Founder: Thank you! We can't wait to welcome new members to our dance family.

MEDIA COURSEWORK SHOWCASE

By Jimena Gutierrez and Elena Alvarez

Celebrating Creativity with The Virtus College Year 12 Media Coursework Showcase!

At Virtus College, the Year 12 Media Studies students have once again demonstrated remarkable enthusiasm and creativity in their annual Media Coursework. This year has been full of dedication, innovation, and the diverse range of skills they have developed throughout their coursework. Each student, whether working individually or in groups, brought a unique perspective to their media projects, resulting in a showcase that was both inspiring and thought-provoking.

The Media Coursework is a highly anticipated event at Virtus College, offering students the opportunity to learn and present their work to peers, teachers, and industry professionals which will then mark their Media Portfolios. This year's showcase featured impressive media products, including short films, digital magazines, podcasts... Each project reflected the students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical tasks, demonstrating a deep understanding of media production and analysis of their own personal media tastes.The professionalism of their production, camera skills, from sound quality to editing, impressed everyone who listened and observed each student's hard work.

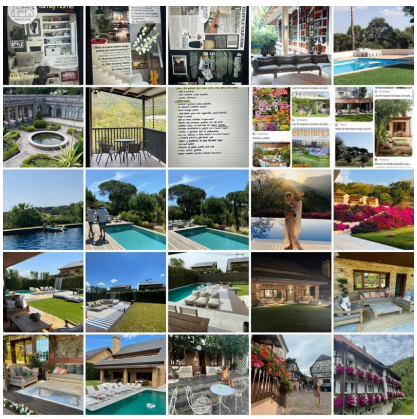
The enthusiasm of the Year 12 students was outstanding throughout the whole year's media challenge. Their willingness to experiment with different media forms and their commitment to producing high-quality work was evident in every portfolio. The collaborative spirit among group projects also stood out, as students demonstrated excellent teamwork and communication skills.
In addition to showcasing their technical abilities, the students also displayed awareness of contemporary social issues. Many projects addressed topics such as gender inequality, physical and mental health, societies popular trends through the years, and environmental sustainability, reflecting the students' engagement with the world around them. This awareness, combined with the media, equipped them to create content that was not only entertaining but also meaningful and impactful.

The success of this year's Media Coursework can be attributed to the supportive environment at Virtus College, where students are encouraged to explore their creativity and push the boundaries of their skills to achieve their full potential.

In this year there was 4 groups with three of them did a magazine and the other one did a film opening. As all of them being new in the school and not knowing many people, it helped them bonf with their peers and create a comuinty.

In conclusion, the Year 12 Media Coursework at Virtus College was a success, highlighting the talent and dedication of the students. Their projects have their enthusiasm and creativity, and they have set a new benchmark for excellence in media studies. As they move forward, these students are well-prepared to navigate the ever-evolving media landscape, armed with the skills and knowledge they have gained during their time at Virtus College.

here is an exmple of what a Magazine cursework and blog looks like, fro the student Jimena Gutierrez Y12 :



NATIONAL WOMENS DAY

By Elena Alvarez

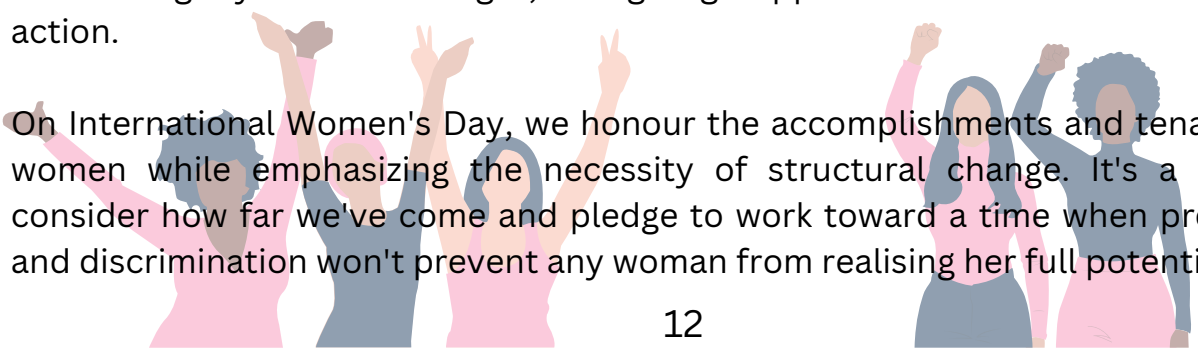
Celebrated on March 8th, International Women's Day (IWD) calls for gender parity while honoring the social, economic, cultural, and political accomplishments of women. Over a million people attended rallies in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland in 1911 to commemorate the first International Workers' Day (IWD), which had its roots in the labour movements of the early 20th century in both North America and Europe.

After labour demonstrations in the United States in 1910, the International Socialist Woman's Conference suggested holding an annual Women's Day celebration. IWD gained international recognition in 1975 after the UN declared it to be a day to raise awareness of gender issues. Annual themes, like "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality" in 2024, represent the objectives and challenges of the present.

Women's rights have advanced significantly in the last century. Today, women have greater access to economic and educational opportunities as well as the ability to vote and work in almost every nation. The Beijing Declaration of 1995 and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) are two significant turning points in history.

Even with advancements, women still deal with problems like the gender pay gap, low representation in leadership positions, and pervasive violence. The COVID-19 pandemic made these disparities worse. In numerous areas, cultural customs and legal limitations still hinder the advancement of women's rights.

In order to achieve gender equality, policies that support economic empowerment, equal pay, and protection from violence are called for, and International Women's Day serves as a reminder of this. Campaigns on social media magnify these messages, energising support worldwide and motivating action.



On International Women's Day, we honour the accomplishments and tenacity of women while emphasizing the necessity of structural change. It's a day to consider how far we've come and pledge to work toward a time when prejudice and discrimination won't prevent any woman from realising her full potential.

HIDDEN TALENTS

By Nico Davis

In the corridors of Virtus, hidden talents often go unnoticed among the grit and grind of a students life, particularly for a A Level student. One of these hidden talents is Jorge Vega-Penichet, one of our year 12 students who plays football and has been playing football since the age of 5 and started taking it much more seriously at the age of 8 when he was selected for an academy team. Jorge now plays for Adarve FC as an offensive midfielder, after having played in Canillas and was accepted to try out for Real Madrid's academy. Like the other student-athletes in Year 12, and is swarmed with A-level work as well, which is quite demanding.

Jorge Vega mentioned "Maintaining my good grades is a challenge. I have to organise my time well in order to be able to study and do my homework, on top of going to practices and games. Sometimes it's difficult but with discipline and the help from my coaches and parents, I can maintain my grades." This is a struggle for all student athletes, especially ones doing the A-level which is a very intensive 2 years filled with university applications, mock exams followed by the real ones in May, group projects like he does in his Media Studies class and much more.

Despite this Jorge can maintain his academics to a high level, but accolades aside, and despite not making it into the Real Madrid academy, Jorge remains motivated, disciplined and ambitious for more. His goals for the future are to "get to play on any D1 team and if possible, to play in Real Madrid and represent my country on the national team. I want to win the champions league, and some day, lift the World Cup."

This makes sense as he wants to follow in the footsteps of his footballing idol, an attacking midfielder, Mesut Özil. He said this to say about the retired German midfielder "My inspiration is Mesut Özil. I admire his ability with the ball, his vision of the game and how he gives his all in each match he plays. I want to be as influential on the field as him." Jorge also mentioned that he always loved "passing between the defenders and making a play with my passes. I love creating plays and doling out assists, aside from scoring goals when I get the chance."

One of his goals in academics is to get high enough grades and head off to a great university, but to get high enough grades and have good enough playing ability as a midfielder to go along with a nasty highlight tape of his best plays. Jorge mentioned that he "would like to play football in university if i'm given the chance, in the US ideally, because I think there are many opportunities to improve and many paths that can get me to accomplish my goals and dreams. I think its a good way of evolving as a player, and simultaneously, getting a great education." Jorge thinks that the US is his best chance at gaining experience and playing at the highest level he can so later in his career he can get to playing football in Europe, representing his country and hopefully being given the honour to be wreathed in a white Real Madrid uniform on the field someday.

Best of luck Jorge!

HOUSE STANDINGS

By Elena Álvarez

Since the start of the year, the houses have been fighting for house points to lead their house to the top. We have had inter-house competitions in debate, padel, football, and baking, where the houses have competed to gain the most house points. However, they also collected many house points throughout the school year in their classes when shown good collaboration and enthusiasm and for outstanding behaviour and homework. The individual house points have been added to the ranking at the end of the term. Now that the term is nearly over and most pupils are about to graduate there is a firm winner. **Please give a huge applause to Seacole.** They have worked hard this year in every competition and have achieved a huge amount of positive points throughout the year, they have shown great leadership and teamwork and deserve the win. But will they be on the top next year? I guess we will see.

Newspaper Editor: Elena Alvarez

Deputy Editors: Nicolás Davis & Jimena Gutiérrez

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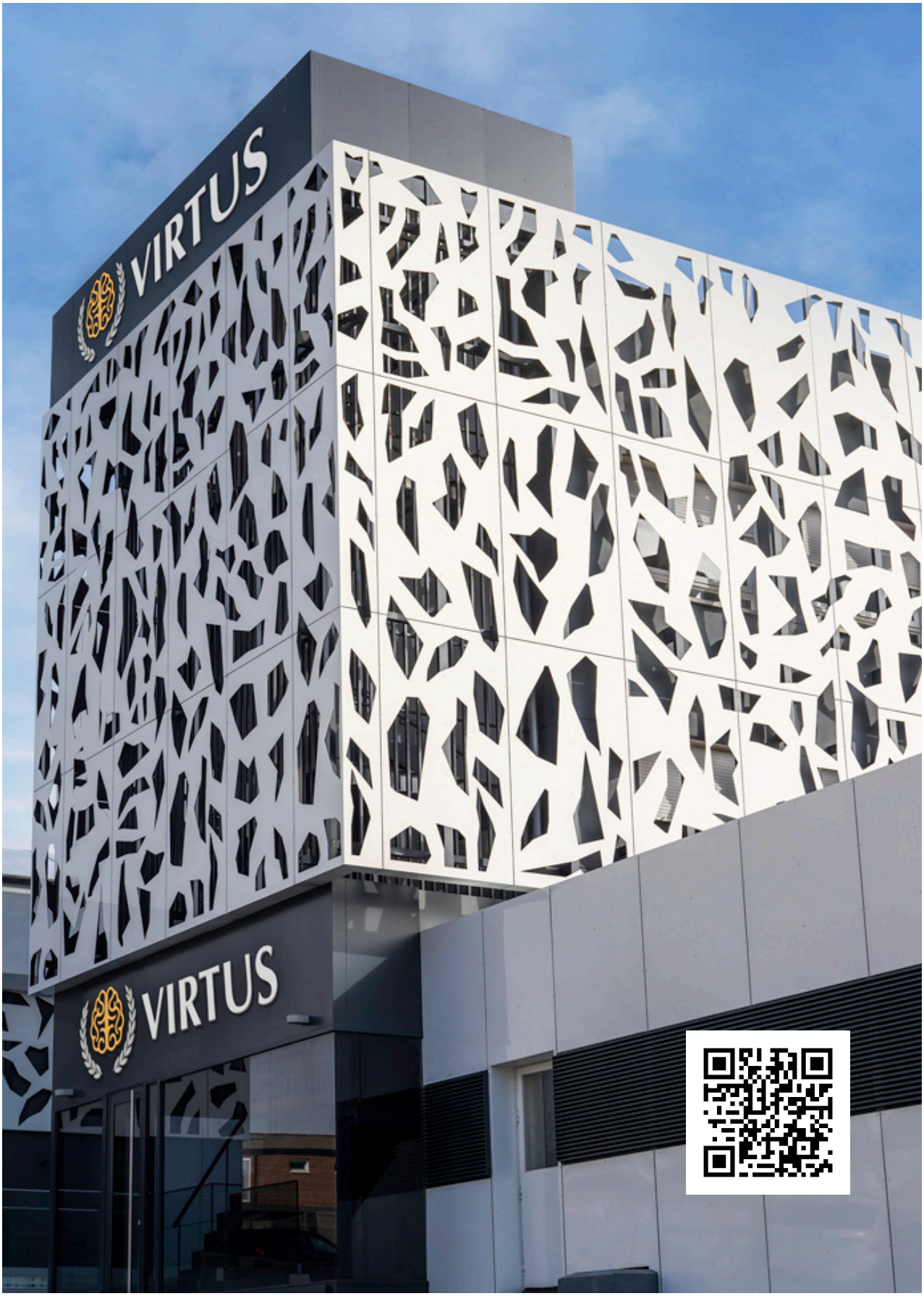

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