Using E-learning in Intercultural Non-formal Education Activities

mapping study for identifying quality criteria

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Background

Information and communication technologies (hereinafter ICT) and specifically E-learning are essential nowadays for a number of reasons, of political, sociological and economical order, and have marked a crossroad in the current learning and communication paradigms. E-learning is also part of this tendency. E-learning has been defined, following the Lisbon European Council, as a learner-focused approach to "the use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services, as well as remote exchanges and collaboration"[1].

It is beyond doubt today that E-learning is an evolving concept, following the pace of technological innovation. Some experts have seen the development of E-learning as a shift in learning paradigm. In 2001, Manuel Castells was raising awareness about the capacity of information flows to affect the consciousness of society and cultural movements[2]. This requires, for example, that providers of online learning, while encouraging active, critical and discerning use of these technologies, maintain the same quality levels as in other forms of learning.

As far as the Council of Europe is concerned, its main initiatives regarding the use of the Internet and ICT concern the concept of e-democracy, the process of combating cybercrime, Internet governance and the protection of personal data online, particularly in the case of children. In this respect, ICT are seen as innovative ways of introducing electronic ways for petition or consultation by the governments and administrations to improve the services they are delivering to citizens. In a bottom-up perspective, citizens and organisations can use them as resources to get their voice heard and parties use them for campaigning.

The Council of Europe has also strived for a use of the Internet that be in line with the values the Organisation promotes, and this has taken the form of the 2001 Convention on Cybercrime which defines offences that occur in the cyberspace and demands to the member states of the Organisation to set up a legislative framework and procedures against cybercrime[3]. The Convention on Cybercrime entered into force in July 2004 and it is the only binding international treaty on the subject that has been adopted to date.

The Council of Europe has also developed several standards related to the use of information and

[1] European Commission, 2008, "The use of ICT to support innovation and lifelong learning for all – A report on progress", definition used for the eLearning initiative and its successive developments

[2] Castells, Manuel (2001). Internet Galaxy. Oxford, Oxford University Press

[3] The Convention on Cybercrime is available at http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/185.htm

communication technologies, specifically linking them to the development of democracy and citizenship and what is called Internet governance on one hand, and with the compliance of Internet services with human rights, for example with the protection of personal data. The *Recommendation Rec(2006)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on empowering children in the new information and communications environment* underlines the need for empowerment with regard to information and communication services and technologies and the importance of developing competence in this field, in particular through training at all levels of the education system, formal and informal, and throughout life. Moreover, the Recommendation indicates that member states should develop a coherent information literacy and training strategy which is conducive to empowering children and their educators in order for them to make the best possible use of information and communication services and technologies.

In the European Union, the European Commission issued in 2008 the document "The use of ICT to support innovation and lifelong learning for all – A report on progress". The report pointed out the status of E-learning as under-exploited in adult education and the risk of social exclusion due to the digital divide E-learning can produce. It also supported a more quality–oriented and efficiency–oriented view on E-learning.

These developments testify a growing interest for ICT use for the development of a society of knowledge, on one hand, and on the other hand they promote also a change in the use of online tools for educational purposes. For example, notions such as "community of practice" and "peer produced content" essential in the E-learning processes are significantly relevant also for non-formal education processes. Most of the E-learning infrastructures and softwares include today features based on the constructivist view on the educational process, which is also at the basis of non-formal learning theories and practices. These similarities along with others allowed in the recent years for E-learning to be used in the training practices of the main European youth stakeholders, such as the Council of Europe, SALTO, the European Commission etc.

Changes and innovation in learning paradigms raise new questions of quality and inclusion. Is the E-learning offer today reflecting the same quality standards in residential learning? Is E-learning today as inclusive as possible? These are questions that animate the debate around E-learning and to whom we have yet to find answers. As *E-learning Papers* explains,

"When you really get down to analysing it, the promises of E-learning often have yet to materialise. The question of how E-learning can be successful becomes more urgent as we move from an "early adopter" stage to a more general offering. In a European educational market, it is critically important to gain an understanding of quality in E-learning. Many different concepts and

approaches have been developed so far for many different contexts and purposes."[4]

In relation to quality, the debate runs also in terms of practitioners' learning, not only in formal education, where the field of E-learning has been quite extensively explored, but also in non-formal education processes, where up to the present moment the debate has been carried mostly in terms of compatibility of standards, principles, theoretical ground, values and methods.

E-learning in the youth sector of the Council of Europe

The youth sector developed its first E-learning platform in 2005, when the ACT-HRE platform then became a core element of ACT-HRE (Advanced Compass Training in Human Rights Education). Some 100 applicants took part in the E-learning platform and followed the course on-line and participated in some virtual sessions.

After ACT-HRE, the E-learning platform http://act-hre.coe.int, based on Moodle, was used in several training courses organised by the youth sector, both for preparatory activities of the residential training courses, as a recipient for the courses documentation, and as a tool for joint and follow-up activities of the group of course participants. In this landscape, the platform found its use not only in long-term training courses (where the blended learning element has in the last years been present and evaluated to the same extent as the residential activities), but also for the Trainers Pool of the youth sector, for shorter residential training courses and, to a limited extent, for study sessions.

With the passage from the Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, the possibilities of linking E-learning with social media became easier to use. This change also brought the youth sector of the Council of Europe to the decision of establishing a new E-learning platform based on Moodle 2.0 where most of the training and education activities of the Youth Department will also have an E-learning component.

As for its residential non-formal education activities, the youth sector of the Council of Europe considers the use of quality standard essential also for online learning activities. In 2007 the youth sector elaborated a document on "Quality standards in education and training activities of the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe". This document represents in a nutshell the benchmark for all the activities the youth sector carries out and reflects the importance intercultural learning and non-formal education have in the priorities of the youth sector.

A similar need emerges today to analyse E-learning activities through quality glasses and seek quality criteria for E-learning activities that make them coherent with the values and practices the

[4] www.elearningpapers.eu, Number 2, "Editorial: Quality in eLearning"

youth sector has developed in the domain of learning. The Council of Europe's youth sector needs thus to take stock of its achievements in the use of E-learning and to improve the use of E-learning in its activities, while keeping the principles and practices within a non-formal education framework, in the quest for principles to be implemented when E-learning activities are to be used.

Introduction

The development of E-learning is one of the most rapidly expanding areas of education and training, also when it comes to intercultural non-formal education and training activities. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) defines E-learning as

> *a broad set of applications and processes which include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital.*

The definition of E-learning varies depending on the organisation and how it is used. For the purposes of this study, we will use the previously mentioned definition considering that the courses under study take place via the Internet, via E-learning platforms. We will not consider other possible ones, such as intranet exchange platforms, audio- and videotapes, interactive CDs or DVDs.

However, what is known about E-learning is very limited due to the shortage of consistent evaluation studies. Questions like *Is E-learning effective? In what contexts? For what groups of learners? How do different learners respond? Does the socio-cultural environment make a difference? What problems has E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities?...* have not been consistently answered through evaluation.

This mapping study cannot and does not pretend to respond to those or similar questions; neither to consistently identify tendencies, nor draw clear conclusions for the scope of the considered E-learning experiences. It could not be done: the considered E-learning experiences have not been consistently evaluated, the particular focused evaluations done of each E-learning activities are not systematised or accessible and – as far as I know - quite different, so that the comparison of their outcomes would be challenging.

This study is not of an evaluative nature, but rather of a mapping and explorative nature with a strong focus on the educational aspects of E-learning, having as an end purpose the identification of quality criteria for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities. The fundaments of this study are the qualitative characterisation, the critical analysis of some aspects of E-learning particularly sensitive for intercultural non-formal education, the reflections and views of experts with a consistent experience and the outcomes of the seminar organised by the youth sector of the Council of Europe "Using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities - *Experiences, lessons learnt, challenges and perspectives*" (European Youth Centre Budapest 29 November – 2 December 2011).

Not just intercultural non-formal education and training activities face difficulties in E-learning evaluation. This challenge is a general one particularly linked to the identification of quality criteria against which such evaluation can be carried out. Over one hundred reviews on E-learning evaluation and quality criteria were considered in "Evaluating E-learning - A Guide to the Evaluation of E-learning" Graham Attwell (2006)[5]. After categorising all the analysed literature (case studies of specific E-training programmes, comparisons with traditional learning, tools and instruments for evaluation of E-learning, return on investment reports, benchmarking models, product evaluation, performance evaluation, meta-studies…) the conclusions of that study were:

- There is an overwhelming preponderance of the evaluation of the technological and functional aspects, usually through questionnaires addressed to participants.
- There is a complete lack of any evaluation – or attempts to evaluate – of the pedagogical approaches in E-learning.
- There is a complete lack of any evaluation – or attempts to evaluate – of the curricular approaches in E-learning.

This is the background against which this study has been carried out – the lack of pedagogical-orientated quality criteria – and which is at the same time the gap that - with all its limitations - this study aims to bridge.

Scope, structure and flow of this study

The practices of the Council of Europe's youth sector (mentioned in the previous background section, along with other experiences in this field existing in Europe today) are the subject of this mapping study with the final purpose of identifying quality criteria for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities. At first, this study maps the following seven existing practices in which E-learning is being used in non-formal education and training activities, especially in youth work:

- Youth Department of the Council of Europe
  http://act-hre.coe.int
  http://E-learning4youth.coe.int
- The Network University – North/South Centre of the Council of Europe
  http://hre.netuni.nl
  http://www.netuni.nl/courses
- Universidade da Juventude (University of Youth)
  http://www.unijuv.org.br

[5] http://bit.ly/c40pR5

http://universidadedajuventude.org.br/virtual/

- ETUI, the European Trade Union Institute
  http://www.etuienglishonline.org
- MA European Studies
  http://www.dip.youthstudies.eu
- SALTO EuroMed
  http://www.trainingforaction.com/saltoeuromed
- The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe
  http://pest-prog.ning.com

These experiences have been chosen for this mapping study because they have a non-formal educational dimension, deal mostly with international level activities, have a youth dimension, and have a value framework similar to the one the Council of Europe uses.

Characterisation of the E-learning platforms

The characterisation of the platforms under study follows the form[6] completed by the hosting organisations and improved through feedback. It covers their main technical, structural and educational characteristics: underlying software, access standards, disability policies, educational approaches, examples of training units and quality criteria used.

Critical analysis

The full access to the platforms allowed a deeper analysis of their structure and functioning and particularly of the given examples of training units which I carefully followed as a participant. For a more balanced perspective I have looked at other units and spaces of the platforms focusing on some critical issues in relation to the key characteristics of non-formal education and intercultural learning, such as the educational approaches, the consideration of participants' needs, and the evaluation of the educational processes. Additionally I have navigated in these E-learning activities for getting a general view of their structure, navigation, permissions, vocabulary and support mechanisms.

This deeper analysis was cross-fertilised with the reflections coming from the interviews carried out by myself with twelve experts[7]. Those experts were and are active in the E-learning activities under study and, in some cases, in other activities not necessarily related to non-formal education or the youth field. After mapping their E-learning experiences (activities, courses, roles…) they were asked about the main successes and challenges when using E-learning in intercultural non-

[6] Annex A: Form for the description of E-learning platforms
[7] Annex B: Structure of the experts' survey – interview and Annex C: List of E-learning interviewed experts and their E-learning experience

formal education activities.

Their critical views combined with some aspects of the previously described critical analysis of the platforms and the external literature consulted on E-learning environments made possible the identification of some critical findings for further discussion presented in the seminar "Using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities - *Experiences, lessons learnt, challenges and perspectives"* (European Youth Centre Budapest, 29 November – 2 December 2011).

In the articulation of those critical findings for further discussion some tendencies were identified and some examples are used to illustrate certain ideas and dilemmas. Just as they did in the mentioned seminar, their aim is to stimulate the debate related to successes and challenges in E-learning.

The outcomes of the seminar made it possible to complete the picture of the achievements and remaining challenges when using E-learning for intercultural non-formal education activities. On the basis of all those different analysis, reflections and elements, this mapping study proposes fifteen potential quality criteria when using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities.

Working methods and limitations

As it is described in the previous flow and structure, the working methods for this study have been diverse and in many ways complementary: characterisation of the E-learning activities under study, deeper analysis of these activities -particularly of the educational aspects involved - through direct exploration, interviews with experts, cross-fertilisation with external literature and with the outcomes of the seminar, consultation and feedback. There has been an effort to make links between the information and data coming out of this exploration, so that the study has a certain consistency.

At the same time, there were a certain fragmentation and limitations in the process: no systematic collection of data was done, the main contributors to the study could not be involved in the different steps on a constant basis (for example, the responsible of the study had to be replaced in a critical moment, most of the consulted experts were not in the seminar), the list of platforms under study changed several times, the level of information on the platforms under study was quite different etc.

Additionally, unavoidably, this study has the subjective component of the author. I have a rich and at the same time limited experience on E-learning (host, facilitator and user of E-learning platforms) in non-formal and in formal education and a more consistent one as evaluator in non-

formal education programmes[8].

The conclusive parts of the study (critical findings, achievements and challenges) highlight qualitatively some tendencies and dilemmas without necessarily being statistically significant or structurally consistent. But they hopefully are relevant for the purpose of identifying quality criteria.

All that said, with its potentialities and limitations, I hope that this study contributes to develop quality criteria for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities.

[8] More details on the author background and experience in the field www.trainingforaction.com

Characterisation of the E-learning activities under study

In the following pages the seven E-learning experiences under study are described through a common form including main technical, structural and educational characteristics: underlying software, accessibility standards, disability policies, educational approaches, examples of training units and quality criteria used.

The characterisation of the different E-learning activities is limited but sufficient for the purpose of this section, which is to provide a general overview of their design, functions and use. This characterisation is a pure mapping and does not draw any conclusion beyond the particular ones expressed for each activity by the E-learning hosting organisations. The following sections are reported as sent by the contact persons mentioned for each platform; thus, they neither include the opinions nor any input from the author of this mapping study.

The critical findings will come in the next section after a deeper analysis and the cross fertilisation with the interviewed experts who have a very significant experience in the following characterised E-learning activities and platforms.

1. Youth Department of the Council of Europe

Link

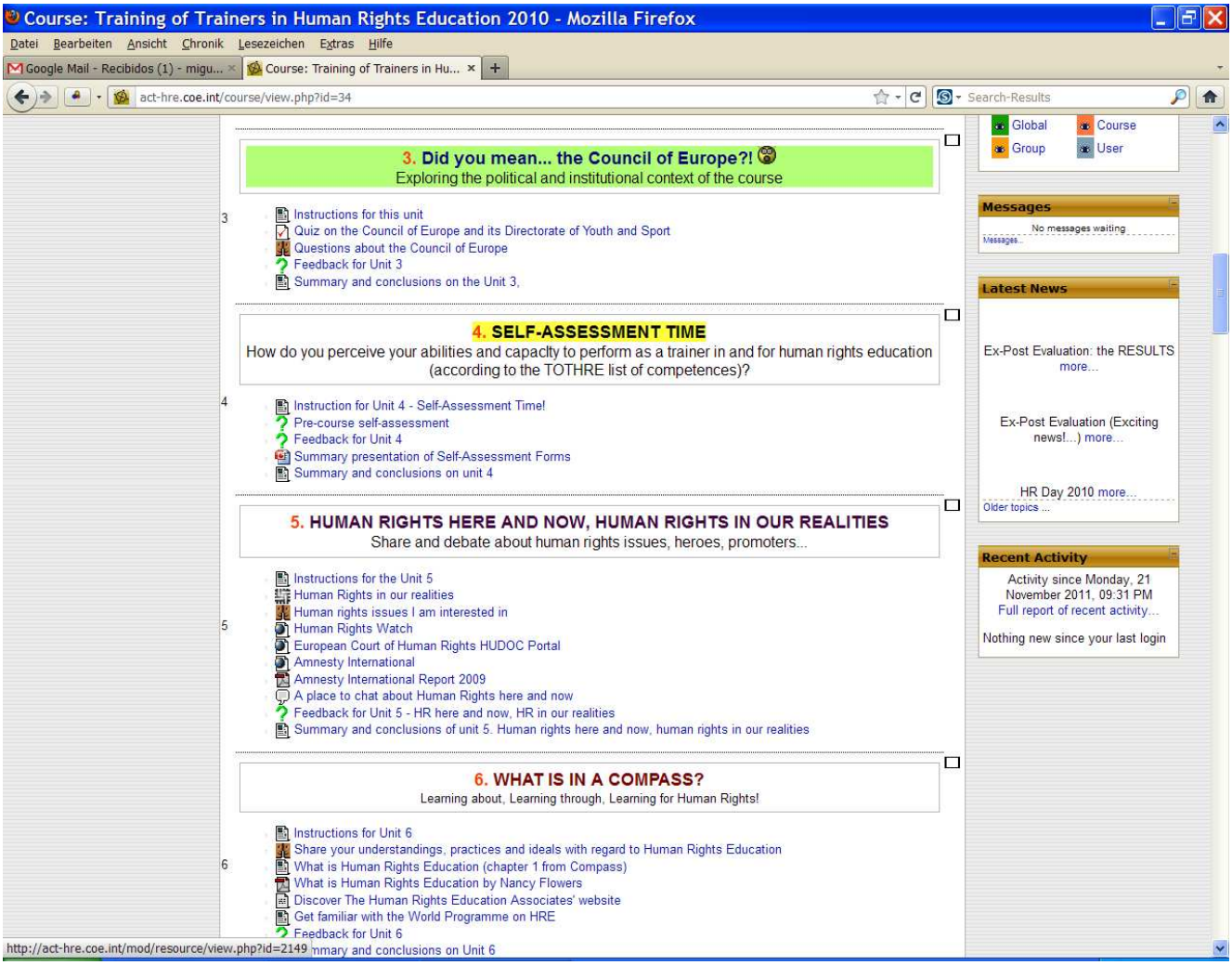
http://act-hre.coe.int/login/index.php (old one)

http://E-learning4youth.coe.int/ (new one, based on Moodle 2.0)

Contact persons

Gabriella Tisza, Rui Gomes, Mara Georgescu, Menno Ettema, Anca-Ruxandra Pandea

Screenshots



Underlying software on which the platform runs

For the first one http://act-hre.coe.int/login/index.php Moodle 1.9

For the second and current one http://E-learning4youth.coe.int/ Moodle 2.0

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

- The first one http://act-hre.coe.int/login/index.php opened in 2005.

It was initially open for the ACT-HRE long-term training course for trainers on human rights education. With time, it became the main platform for most of the courses of the youth sector. Very rarely, it also included the online learning for some study sessions and courses of the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

The platform includes as well a space for the Trainers Pool of the youth sector, where trainers can exchange, be informed about new calls for trainers and where the information from the consultative meetings with trainers is stored.

- The second one http://E-learning4youth.coe.int/ opened in 2011 spring

It includes all the new courses from 2011 on.

For the moment, there is a try to improve its links to the priorities of the youth sector and create „clusters“ of courses related to specific priorities, e.g. human rights education, youth participation and youth policy, new media and E-learning etc.

With the time, due to specificities of the learning approaches, the platforms included some customising work, namely in terms of organisation of the different blocks in the platforms, links with wikis and blogs etc.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

Constructivist learning, non-formal education for youth workers/leaders/trainers…, in general people involved in youth work. Blended learning, as most of the courses has also one or more residential phases.

For short term residential courses, the platform has usually been the place where participants started some preparatory activities before the course, learnt more about the Council of Europe for example, wrote their expectations etc. During the courses, the documentation of some of the residential sessions was done online (for example, working groups uploading their reports online). After the short course, the platform was a space for networking, gathering of documentation and report and further communication among participants and between organisers and participants.

For long-term courses, the platform has assumed a stronger educational function, being not only the above mentioned for short courses, but including specific and planned learning units. Most of the times, the platform has included „E-learning units“, within a given time, and some of the times also ongoing activities (project groups for example).

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

In several cases, what was sought was to adapt non-formal education methods to the possibilities offered by the online platform. This means, in concrete terms, working groups were used, or simulations were used, etc.

In other cases, the learning has had an individual dimension, including readings for example and sharing within the whole group of participants etc.

The most used forms of activities in Moodle were: forum, wiki, choice, feedback, chat and assignments.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

Technically: Learners have an “interface” for support, which are usually trainers or the educational

advisor of the Council of Europe. An online tutor is also available for specific technical questions.

Pedagogically: trainers provide support. In some courses, there were also systems for peer support, thus including the creation and ongoing activity of some stable peer groups that were assigned also some activities.

In some long-term training courses, trainers have had the role of mentor, so each participant is assigned a mentor from the trainers' team for the whole duration of the course. This means that a specific trainer became the "interface" for pedagogical support.

With the system of E-learning units (hereinafter, ELUs), for each ELU one or two trainers were the specific persons to address with questions regarding that particular activity.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

Within the systems of ELUs, the online activities have a timeline defined from the moment when the ELU is introduced. This means that for individual tasks the learning is mostly asynchronous and depends on the personal availability. In some cases, when group activities are carried out, the format proposed is mostly asynchronous (forum, for example), which means that learners have flexibility in terms of time. However, in some cases, synchronous activities have been carried out, requiring the presence of all participants online at the same time. But this has mostly been as exception than the rule. In some cases, ELUs have been given more time, if the response from participants was assessed as too low (this also happens in specific times of the year, for example in summer).

The structure of the learning offer is rather flexible. In some cases, when it was assessed that a specific learning unit has received little response, future learning units may have picked up some of the topics again or the topic was put higher on the agenda of the residential seminars, if it was considered essential in the learning process.

The learning units include, most of the times, an evaluation feedback, that allow the trainers' team to adapt future learning units to the feedback got from participants.

How autonomous are learners?

On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (totally), around 6, which means in many tasks and learning units they are autonomous, but this happens in a timeframe. For example, one may have a whole week to elaborate and upload an assignment, so there is a temporal flexibility, but after that week, only rarely when it becomes a group issue, is the time allowed prolonged. The use of

individual learning also allows for quite a lot of flexibility. When there are group tasks included, the autonomy drops quite a lot, as there is interdependency between the individual and the group.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

Short courses: usually a residential course of up to 10 days with a preparatory online phase and a short follow-up phase online. In this case, participants have up to 1 month on preparatory E-learning activities, and then there is the residential course, and a time for follow-up, with a dimension of networking, continuous communication.

Long-term training courses: This may take anything from 1 up to 3 years. Usually, there are 2 or 3 residential seminars, with in between online learning's phases. In this case, as mentioned, the online phases become an integral part of the learning process.

The target groups are multipliers, youth leaders, youth workers, trainers, people involved in youth work, sometimes even institutions.

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

There is no overall evaluation of it. It depends very much on the different courses. In general, for the courses combining residential seminars and E-learning, it was observed that the participation is much higher around the residential seminars.

Information about the main stakeholders

Council of Europe, youth organisations, youth work structures, youth policy institutions, etc.

Information about the languages and translation possibilities

Most of the times, the platform has been used for monolingual courses, usually in English. In some cases, there have been bilingual courses, English-French or English-Turkish, to give just two examples. The platform allows having the settings in most of the languages.

Information about accessibility standards and disability policies

The access takes place through the invitation and it is restricted to the actors of each course: team members, participants and in some cases guests and institutional partners. There are no explicit disability policies.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

Example 1: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Intro: Projects are dynamic, changing and evolving systems. They hardly follow a linear process and occasionally include an element of surprise. The exercise we propose aims at helping us to look

into our project plans and set parameters (measurable factors, indicators and criteria) that would help in following-up the progress of the project vs. the action plan (and timeline), anticipate possible risks, evaluate the different stages of the project as we go, and make changes and updates as we see fit and necessary. The unit looks at different questions (at different stages of the project) to find the needed information to ensure a maximum fulfilment of the action plan as well as project aims and objectives.

This exercise may seem a bit dense due to the numerous references and documents we propose either for the practical exercise or for further reading. Nevertheless, we suggest that you read the documents step by step, possibly following the different steps proposed hereafter. The most important is for you to develop a common understanding of monitoring and evaluation principles and mechanisms, and to try to apply those to your project in the most concrete manner possible.

Objectives:

- Provide information on what is monitoring and evaluation
- Hints and questions to consider and look into throughout the life-cycle of the project
- Provide tools (and theory) to enable you to assess the quality and impact of your project

Content/learning areas:

- Definitions of M&E
- Brainstorming questions for the different stages of a project
- Examples of action plans/strategic plan

Course competences to be addressed:

- Defining and better understanding the concepts of M&E
- To be able to use and implement M&E in the project
- Develop an improved action plan for the project
- Sharing best practices and information on M&E methodology, tools, and techniques

Timing:

This space will be open for you to keep exchanging updates, information and discuss monitoring and evaluation methods and tools

How to use this space?

1. Read the introduction on Monitoring and Evaluation with tips and idea's which can be found here.
2. Read the documents listed below, comment on the related forums and complete your outcomes table:

* “Ongoing monitoring and evaluation” (T-Kit 3, pp. 83-93 of “Chapter 3”) click here
* "Project Cycle Management (PCM) – Brainstorming questions" click here
* Your Outcomes Table: The Outcome Table can be a useful and helpful tool for you to plan the different steps and stages of your project. Please find the Outcome Table here. Try to complete

and answer the different questions. Please submit your answers and share how you can use these tools in your projects, how does it reflect in your action plan and needs analysis and share with us your feedback on some of the outcomes. This is a collective learning process and it would be great to share comments, ideas and suggestions.

3. As you are planning the different steps and stages of your project please take a look at the following links and websites for more tools and information about the topic:
Your Project and Its Outcomes
Glossary of Monitoring and Evaluation Terms
OUTCOME MAPPING Building learning and reflection into development programs

Outcome mapping refers to the changes in behaviour, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and/or organizations with whom your project/activity worked directly with. The changes can be intended or not intended, positive or negative. For more information about outcome mapping visit the following website.

Important: *Please note that these manuals are downloaded from the web and not for dissemination and most likely have copy rights. Therefore please use them for your own readings and work. If you copy, share or publish any part of them please make sure that you make the adequate reference to the original source*.

4. As to complement your knowledge and support your practices, we encourage you to have a look at the T-Kit on "Educational Evaluation in Youth Work" (T-Kit 10) developed and published by the partnership between the European Commission and Council of Europe in the field of youth. You can download the T-Kit from the following link.
If you have any questions, please send them to Maram and/or Gisele
Thank you for your contributions and looking forward to reading your input.

Example 2: Let's talk about Human Rights!

Intro: After having presented and discussed about human rights (HR) in our context (unit 4), what is Human Rights Education and how we educators look at it (unit 5), after we reflected on HR dilemmas or HR in conflict (unit 8), it is time to share about what do we think human rights are! Of course, somehow this appeared already in the discussions throughout the forums, but let's presents them from the trainers' perspective.
This unit aims to reflect and share on the human rights concept and principles, setting a common ground to be further explored in the training seminar.

The objectives of this unit are:

- To introduce the concepts and principles of human rights
- To allow participants to discuss and share their knowledge and awareness of human rights' history and philosophy
- To provide participants with background information on evolution and history of human rights
- To consolidate the creation of a common ground before the training seminar
- Content/learning areas:
- Human Rights' concept and principles
- Historical evolution of human rights
- Working co-operatively

Course competences to be addressed:

- Knowledge and understanding of human rights principles, associated values, as well as history and philosophy on human rights
- Understanding of HR-base approaches in their applicability in education and youth work
- Practice in and awareness of the use of information and communication technology in learning and training, and the related human rights issues.
- Course objectives concerned by the unit:
- To deepen participants' understanding of key concepts of human rights in Europe today and their applicability in youth work
- To support participants in further developing their potential as learners and facilitators in human rights education
- To motivate and empower the participants to actively use information and communication technology as part of their own learning before, during and after the training course.

The unit is articulated in 3 steps which, we hope, will motivate you to share, discuss and work on human rights' concept and principles.

Instructions:

1. Chose a target group Urgent Open Call for Trainers!

2. Prepare a presentation. When your team of trainers is ready, please work together (i.e. meeting in a chat, forum, email or Internet phone or even using cooperative tools such as Google docs) and elaborate a presentation of the main concepts and principles of Human Rights. Remember to adjust your presentation to your target group and to their needs and previous knowledge. The presentation should be agreed by all the team members. It should be also short and creative. The presentation can take several forms: a slide show (e.g. PowerPoint), an Internet page, a video, or similar...

3. Once you are ready please post your presentation (or the hyperlink to it) in the dedicate FORUM. Everyone is supposed to ask questions about others presentations and giving feedback.
P.S "You will see that one team member is already part of each group, mainly as facilitator. The role of the facilitator is to make sure that you do not encounter difficulties while working on the task, intervening when/if the discussion doesn't progress rather than organising the processes".

Are quality criteria already used here? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?
The online learning has followed the quality standards for the non-formal education in the youth sector. For example, in the E-learning processes developed there are also the concerns for relevance to the youth policy and priorities of the Council of Europe, transparency in the learning and training process, accountability towards stakeholders and participants and reproducibility of good practices.
Just to give examples, taking our quality standards for non-formal educational activities, most of them have been applied in the E-learning processes:

- A relevant needs assessment;
- Concrete, achievable and assessable objectives;
- The definition of competences addressed and learning outcomes for the participants;
- The relevance to the Council of Europe programme and youth sector priorities;
- An adequate and timely preparation process;
- A competent team of trainers;
- An integrated approach to intercultural learning;
- Adequate recruitment and selection of participants;
- A consistent practice of non-formal education principles and approaches;
- Adequate, accessible and timely documentation;
- A thorough and open process of evaluation;
- Structurally optimal working conditions and environment;
- Adequate institutional support and an integrated follow-up within the youth sector programme and its partner organisations;
- Visibility, innovation and research.

However, further adaptation to the online learning specificities is needed. The question of intercultural online learning is still an open one. The question of how to accommodate non-formal learning with minimal requirements for participants' presence online is also an open one. The question of learning preferences is relevant when applied to E-learning etc.
Infrastructure questions are as well relevant.

2.The Network University – North/South Centre of the Council of Europe

Link

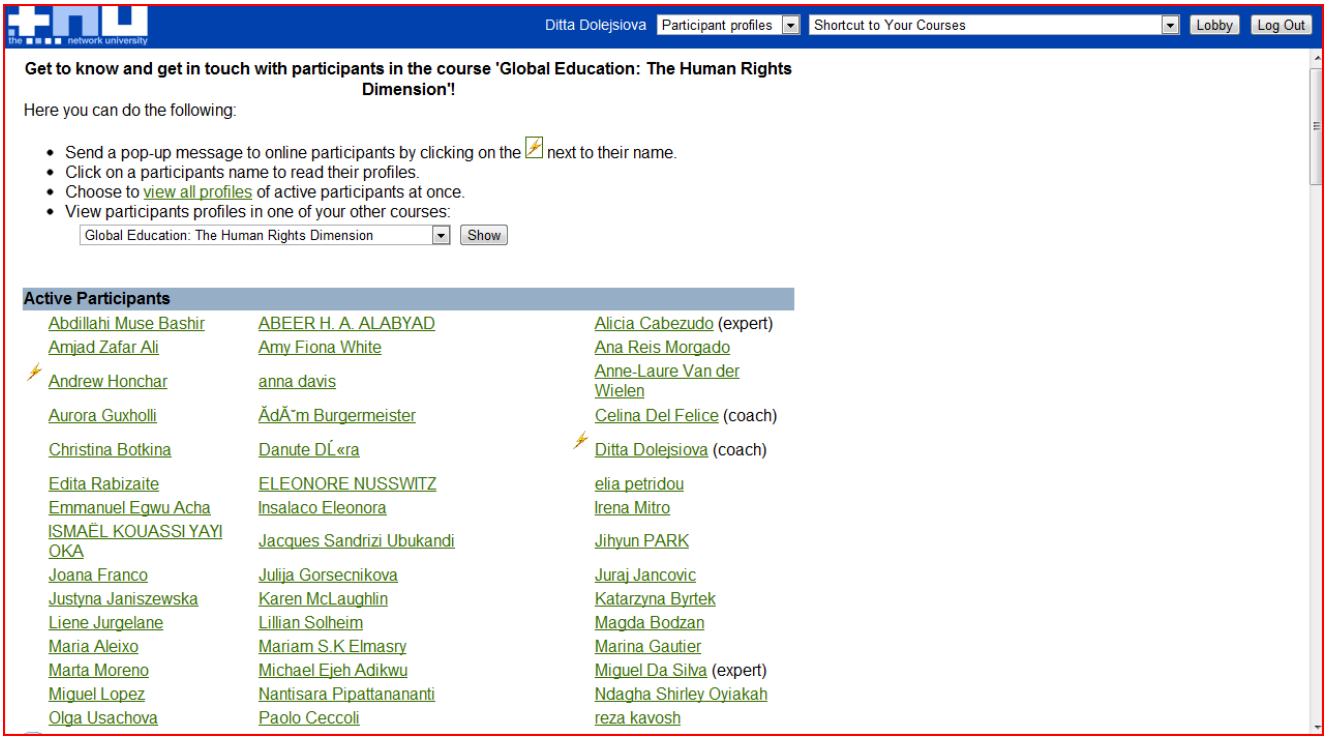
http://hre.netuni.nl

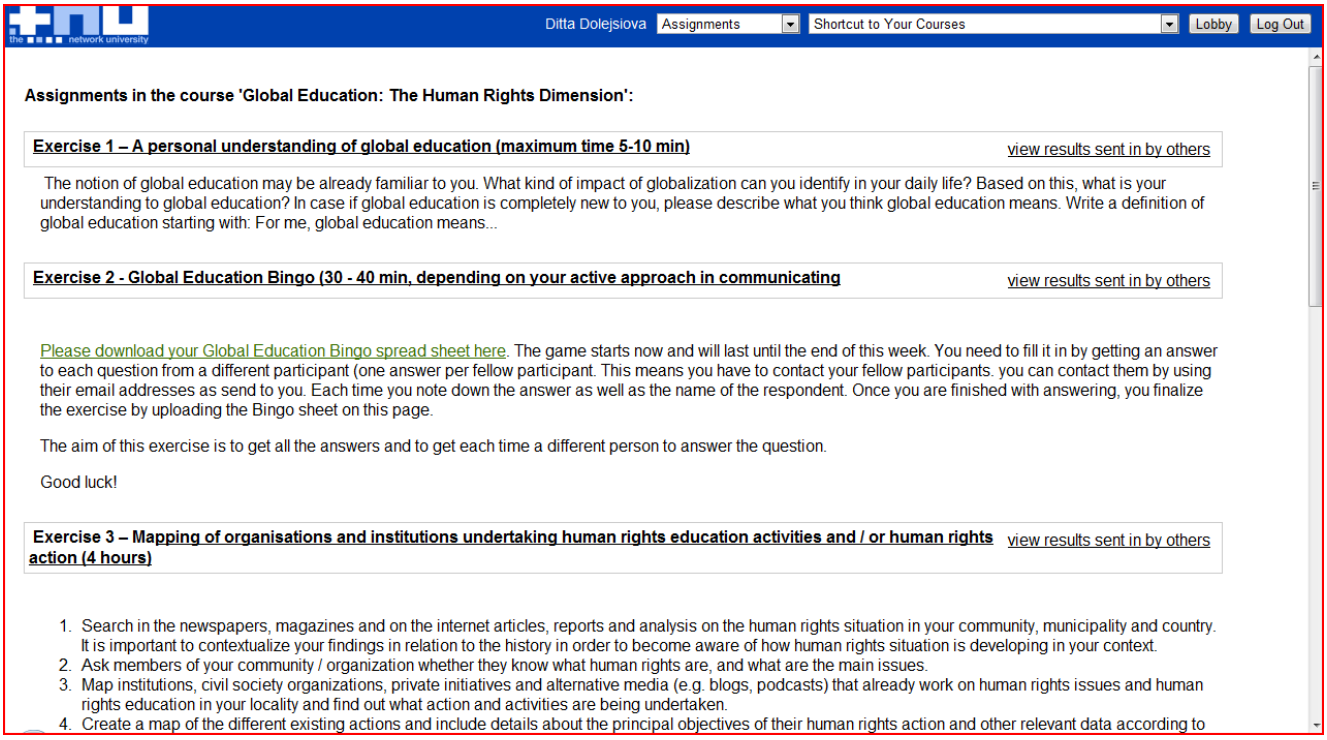
http://www.netuni.nl/courses

Contact person

Vic Klabbers, vic@netuni.nl

Screenshots





Underlying software on which the platform runs

Html, python, php, mysql

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

TNU's learning environment was independently developed in 1998 since at that time there was only blackboard and web CT which were developed for use in formal education settings. Since the platform promotes collaborative learning and address a global audience these tools were not appropriate.

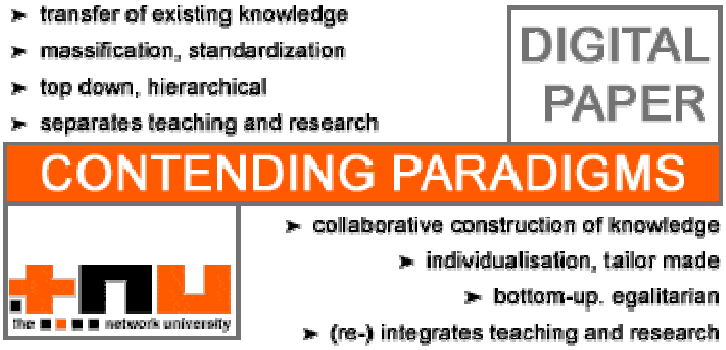
Throughout the years the platform has been updated and additional tools were added. However, since the platform serves a global audience it aims at low bandwidth functionality and therefore keep the functionalities simple.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

Contending paradigms

Sometimes it is easier to explain what something is by clarifying what it is not. In the following slide a number of key words have been given. The top block of concepts leads to what TNU often refers to as 'digital paper'. This is what TNU is not.

The concepts in the bottom block of text refer to what The Network University does aspire to and this is what gives learning at TNU its distinctive character.



TNU courses are designed around two key learning strategies namely collaborative learning and competence based learning. Within this framework ICT is utilised to promote innovation in education.

Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning programmes are not based on individualised reading and a single final examination but rather on multiple interactions leading towards common and negotiated understandings based on differences in ideas, knowledge and attitudes amongst the participants and the coaches. At TNU the educational experience should be process and not just product oriented. In order to achieve this active learning is promoted. In other words participants should ask his/herself: 'What do I need to know to solve the problem at hand and how do I gain access to this information', rather than 'what is it that you are going to tell me today?

The collaborative learning experience is structured primarily through the assignments. In an online environment students are asked to work together in order to answer the assignments at hand. In a normal course, participants are asked to submit 2 - 3 assignments per week. In the assignments students are required to constantly query, challenge and/or seeking justification for what they are hearing, reading or discussing. Assignments can take the form of debates, simulations, games online presentations as well as written papers or other research oriented questions.

Competence based learning

Recent research[1] has estimated that the current shelf life of professional knowledge lies between 5 and 6 years. In our view, this should have direct consequences on the learning experience. When the direct applicability of professional knowledge has a shelf life that fails to reach the double digits it would imply that the ability of a student to select, judge and imbibe new information is of equal value to the quantity of knowledge originally held. This awareness in the importance of combining a strong content oriented approach with a focus on competences lies at the heart of TNU.

Competence based learning places concrete emphasis on the acquisition of competences during the learning process by matching competences to assignments. A competence can be broadly defined

as: "the ability to apply knowledge, skills and values to relevant workplace/study-place environments based on the standards/success criteria required by that environment". In other words, a competence is always a marriage between knowledge and skill. Core competences are those that are relevant to a number of different settings. These empower learners to be able to adapt and transfer their learning from one setting to another. TNU has identified 5 key areas relating to core academic competences. These are analytical skills; the ability to combine and organize information; the ability to articulate ideas and arguments appropriate to the context; the ability to think self-critically and profession specific skills.

Coaching and Call Centre

One of the main differences between traditional distance learning programmes and courses at TNU is the intensity of coaching and guidance. Students get almost immediate feedback to their assignments, questions and suggestions via the Internet Call Centre(s).

Intensive coaching is provided mainly by advanced Ph.D. students who staff the Call Centre(s), by senior university teachers who are responsible for similar academic programmes at their home university (participating in The European Network University) and by outside experts who add additional insights, based on their professional experience.

The common responsibility for high level reactions to the participants implies that also a lot of mutual coaching takes place among Ph.D. students, senior university teachers and professionals from other institutions

Edutainment

TNU aims to make programmes intellectually challenging but at the same time entertaining and fun. The courses offer a variety of approaches, didactical tools, forms of interaction, experiments, role plays, and simulation exercises, to satisfy the "homo ludens" as much as the "homo sapiens".

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

Most of the courses are based on non-formal methodology applied online and based on above-mentioned principles. The methodology is based on individual as well as collective and collaborative learning: individual and e-group assignments, discussion, review of each others assignments, chat, instant messaging, role plays and other team building exercises.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

Participants are coached by specialists and have an eventual access to external experts. If needed, technical help is also provided. Most of questions from participants take place through the call centre. Individualised and tailor made feedback is given based on the assignments and the discussion forum.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

The course structure is set; mostly it concerns a four week course with a new module each week. Learning is in principle flexible and asynchronous. Yet participants have to follow the weekly deadlines in relations to the assignments and participation in the weekly discussion fora.

How autonomous are learners?

Within the module structure participants are autonomous, however, when they have to participate in group work they need to set their own agenda with their fellow group members.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

The *Global Education: Human Rights Dimension* course consist of four modules which last four weeks. The target group are people that are connected to non formal education and/or global education. In other words; practitioners in the field of education and development, teachers, social and youth workers, as well as policy-makers, civil servants and local and regional authorities.

Course requirements:

Please note that all participants should:

- be in command of the English language;
- be able to spend a minimum of 10 hours per week (every week) on course work;
- have basic ICT skills and a minimum of Internet access.

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

In each *Global Education: Human Rights Dimension* course there is a maximum of 55 participants of which in general 35 to 40 successfully complete the whole course. They are expected to spend 10 learning hours per week but part of these 10 hours per week can be done off line.

The *Global Education: Human Rights Dimension* is offered three times per year.

Information about the main stakeholders

This course is developed by The Network University and the North South Centre of the Council of Europe.

Information about languages and translation possibilities

Currently the course is offered in English but it is currently being translated into Spanish for use in South America (mainly). Other languages might be added later (Portuguese, French).

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

No client is needed for this learning environment, it is completely server side. All people need is a

computer and a recent browser and of course an Internet connection.
We do not have a specific disability policy.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

Module 1: Introduction to Global Education: Human Rights Education Basics

1.1 Introduction to Global Education

1.1.1 Concepts of global education

1.1.2 Approaches to global education

1.1.3 Challenges posed to global education

1.1.4 The transformative nature of global education

1.2 Human Rights in the context of Global Education

1.2.1 Importance of Human Rights

1.2.2 Human Rights issues and dilemmas

1.2.3 Human Rights resources

Module 2: Understanding Human Rights Education in your glocal context

2.1 Human Rights education in theory and practice

2.1.1 Human Rights education in glocal dynamics

2.1.2 Approaches to Human Rights education

2.1.3 Principles for Human Rights education

2.1.4 Roles and responsibilities of a human rights educator

2.2 Human Rights Education in your glocal context

2.2.1 Human Rights Education in your context

2.2.2 Human Rights Education in the world

Module 3: Developing strategies for action

3.1 Strategy for Human Rights Education

3.1.1 What is a strategy?

3.1.2 Levels of interventions

3.1.3 Developing partnerships

Assignment: Role Play

3.1.4 Monitoring and evaluation

3.2 Developing strategies for HRE

3.2.1 Existing glocal strategies for Human Rights Education

3.2.2 Glocal HRE strategy in your context

Module 4: Developing Human Rights Education activities

4.1 Development of HR and HRE activities

4.1.1 Preparation of the HRE process

4.1.2 Design of HRE activities

4.1.3 Implementation of HRE activities

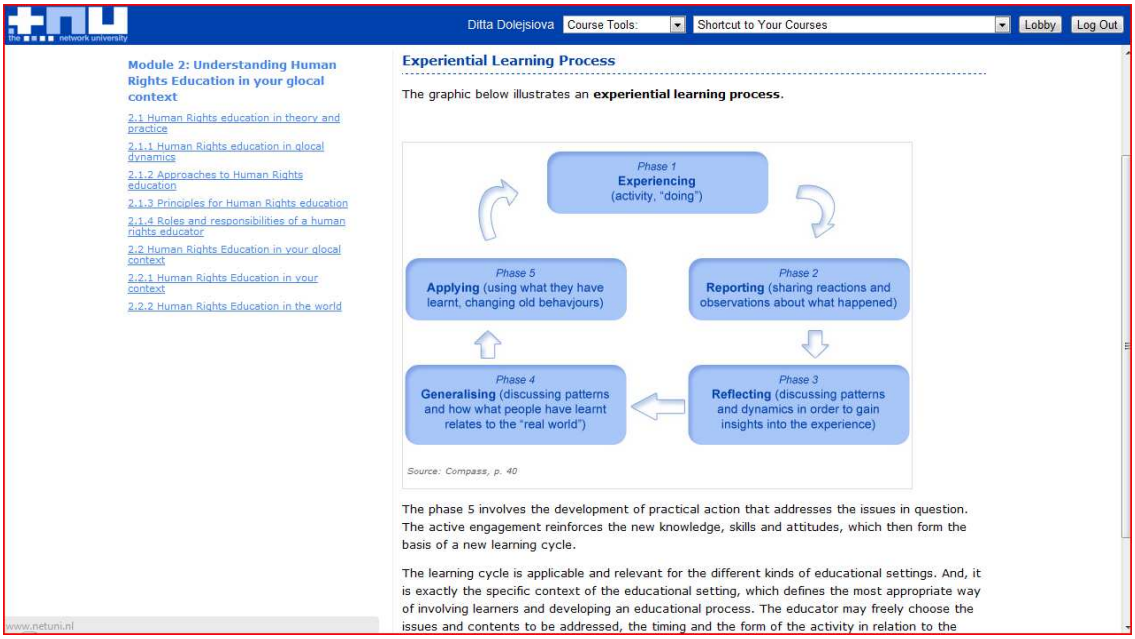
4.1.4 Evaluation of HRE activities

4.2 Action planning

4.2.1 What is action planning?

4.2.2 Planning action for realisation of HRE activities

4.3 Evaluation of the course



Are quality criteria already used here? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?

Diversity of methods and tools and balance between individual and group learning through discussion fora, role plays, Human Rights BINGO, assignments library, glossary…

3. Universidade da Juventude (University of Youth)

Link

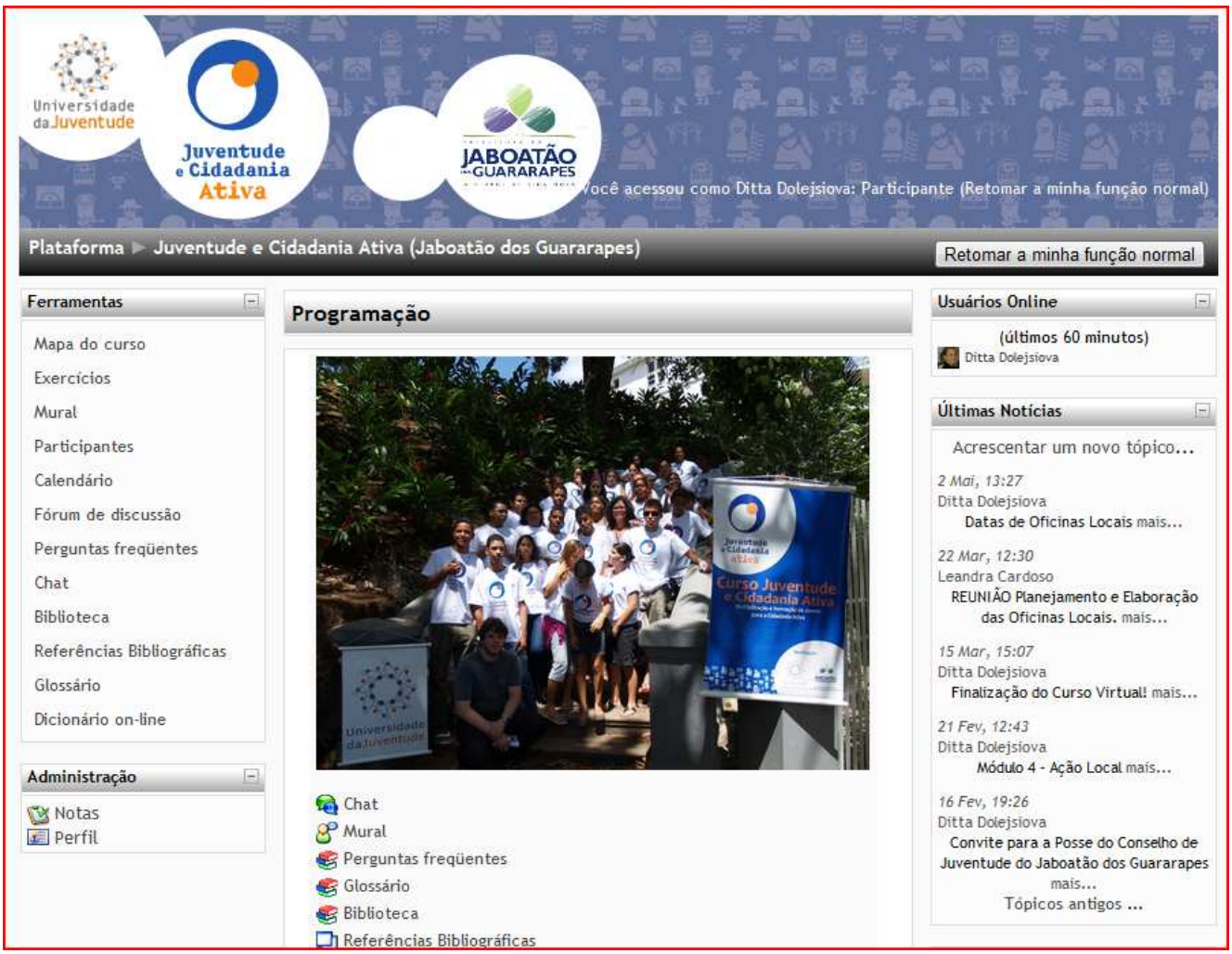
http://www.unijuv.org.br

http://universidadedajuventude.org.br/virtual/

Contact person

Ditta Dolejsiova, ditta@unijuv.org.br

Screenshots


Universidade da Juventude
Juventude e Cidadania Ativa
JABOATÃO dos GUARARAPES
Você acessou como Ditta Dolejsiova: Participante (Retomar a minha função normal)
Plataforma ► Juventude e Cidadania Ativa (Jaboatão dos Guararapes)
Retomar a minha função normal
Ferramentas
Mapa do curso
Exercícios
Mural
Participantes
Calendário
Fórum de discussão
Perguntas freqüentes
Chat
Biblioteca
Referências Bibliográficas
Glossário
Dicionário on-line
Administração
Notas
Perfil
Programação
Curso Juventude e Cidadania Ativa
Chat
Mural
Perguntas freqüentes
Glossário
Biblioteca
Referências Bibliográficas
Usuários Online
(últimos 60 minutos)
Ditta Dolejsiova
Últimas Notícias
Acrescentar um novo tópico...
2 Mai, 13:27
Ditta Dolejsiova
Datas de Oficinas Locais mais...
22 Mar, 12:30
Leandra Cardoso
REUNIÃO Planejamento e Elaboração das Oficinas Locais. mais...
15 Mar, 15:07
Ditta Dolejsiova
Finalização do Curso Virtual! mais...
21 Fev, 12:43
Ditta Dolejsiova
Módulo 4 - Ação Local mais...
16 Fev, 19:26
Ditta Dolejsiova
Convite para a Posse do Conselho de Juventude do Jaboatão dos Guararapes mais...
Tópicos antigos ...

Underlying software on which the platform runs

The platform runs on the Moodle Platform.

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

The platform has been developed in 2009 and since has been adapted by integrating new tools.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

The main pedagogical approach is based on learning based on participants' previous experiences and knowledge on the topic, it uses individual and collaborative learning, learning among participants and coaches, it has a tailor made approach to individually reviewed assignments and given feedback, and generally stimulates participation. Participants are encouraged to apply the contents presented throughout the course and adapt it to their reality as part of the assignments.

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

Part of the methodology is based on participation and collaboration among participants, part of it is based on individual reflection followed by a presentation of contents and then an application of

the obtained knowledge through the assignments which requires analysis, new knowledge development or application of offered contents to participants' reality.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

Participants are supported by the course coordinator, tutor and technical help. The coordinator of the course sends periodical briefings and stimulates participation through regular mailings and personal emails. Each participant has a personal tutor who accompanied his or her learning. There is also a technical expert available in case of doubts in relation to the online tools. All assignments and well as the discussion forums are facilitated by tutors and coordinated by the course director, who is guaranteeing the quality of the pedagogical approach.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

During the actual period of the course, everything is based on asynchronous learning, so participants have total flexibility to combine the learning with other responsibilities (work, study, etc). There is a weekly structure of submitting assignments and participation in the discussion fora, where much less flexibility is allowed. Chat is available once or twice a week but participation is optional.

How autonomous are learners?

The course demands quite a high level of autonomy and motivation for learning from participants. Yet in some cases (given some participants' profiles and their access to Internet) there is extra support provided via phone calls, SMS, MSN chat or Skype.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

The Youth Policy course is a four week course, although an additional week is usually offered to finalise the assignments. In some cases an additional time can be negotiated. Its target audience is civil servants, youth leaders and other professionals working with young people in Brazil. One course can be offered to a maximum of 50 participants.

The Youth and Active Citizenship course is part of a larger project for youth multipliers, who first undergo a face-to-face training and only then participate in the E-learning course, after which they implement educational activities in their communities (during 6 months). At the end of this period they come back together to take part in a 2 day long face-to-face evaluation seminar. This E-learning course is dedicated to 30 youth multipliers, who are then offered CD-ROMs to be disseminated and used during the local educational activities in their communities.

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

As all participants went though a selection process, no statistics were needed so far.

As it often goes in this type of courses, around one third of participants spend some times online everyday, about one third enters 2 -3 times a week (often in the evenings or during the weekend) and around one third that enters occasionally.

Information on main stakeholders

The Youth Policy course has been initially developed with the support of Joao Mangabeira Foundation and piloted through a different Moodle platform, which was very badly developed after which UNIJUV brought it to its own platform where it is now. It is offered as a paid course to a general public, although there is a selection process and participants can request scholarships.

The Youth and Active Citizenship has been so far offered twice – once in partnership with the State Secretary of Youth and Employment of Pernambuco and the second time with the Municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes. This course has received the World Aware Education Award from the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe for excellence in coordination, partnership and networking in the field of global education.

Information on languages and translation possibilities

So far both courses are run in Portuguese, but there is a possibility and even an interest in translating and adapting them in Spanish and eventually English.

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

So far, there is no specific accessibility policy. When checking, the main problems so far are represented by Facebook access, images and pop-up windows, which facilitate the learning for most but de facto make the platform not fully accessible.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

Youth Participation in Brazil – A historical view

This historical view on youth participation is the result of a research, of information compiled from articles and books and of conversations with different youth actors. It is an historical view under construction because there is a certain lack of research in the area of youth participation and there is little specific literature to draw conclusions about youth participation in each historical period of the Brazilian political construction. Each historical view implies new ways of understanding history according to the demands, dreams and needs of each generation based on the social, political, economical and cultural situation of each time.

Exploring a bit the history of youth participation implies knowing its characteristics, being open to the new, taking risks, experimenting, observing the challenges, provocations and critics through the time. Youth and its participation in society can be considered a mirror of each generation which reflects the problems and achievements in many moments.

The development of youth participation will be presented from the years 20 on, continuing until the first decade of the XXI century. The historical overview offers some references to each time, to the context in Brazil and when possible a focus in Pernambuco.

- Years 20: Between wars
- Years 30: End of the "White Coffee" policy
- Years 40: Second world war
- Years 50: The project of economic development demands the implementation of structural policies.
- Years 60: After the economic growth and the re-democratisation – the oppression of the coup d' État
- Years 70: Period of deceleration
- Years 80: Economical crisis
- Years 90: Construction of democracy, re-starting of civil society and participation
- Years 2000: The current history: the articulation of youth policies

Optional exercise 02: Youth Participation in 2020

Youth Participation in Jaboatão dos Guararapes

This part of the course is aimed to apply the acquired knowledge and to implement them in their context. By doing so, there will be the possibility to better understand and start to work on the youth participation at local level. To be able to learn those contents in a most effective way you should do the following two practical exercises:

- Mapping of the existing organisations and youth groups in your context
- Mapping of the participation opportunities which allow you to better intervene and improve the necessary conditions for enlarging youth participation in your town - city.

Mapping of the existing organisations and youth groups

In order to improve your actions as strategic actor of youth development in jaboatão dos Guararapes, you need to know the associations, organisations and youth working with young people or offering services to them. One of the tools that you can use is to make a map to the actors that you have access. A mapping implies to understand who does what, with these or those objectives. Now try to visualise a global picture of how the actors in your town-city influence youth.

After that, start to research what it is happening in your town-city and do your own mapping.
Mapping of organisations and youth groups in Jaboatão dos Guararapes

Are quality criteria already used here? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?
Yes. There are other learning tools that are not part of this example – they involve the library, the glossary, the forum, among others.

4. ETUI, the European Trade Union Institute

Link

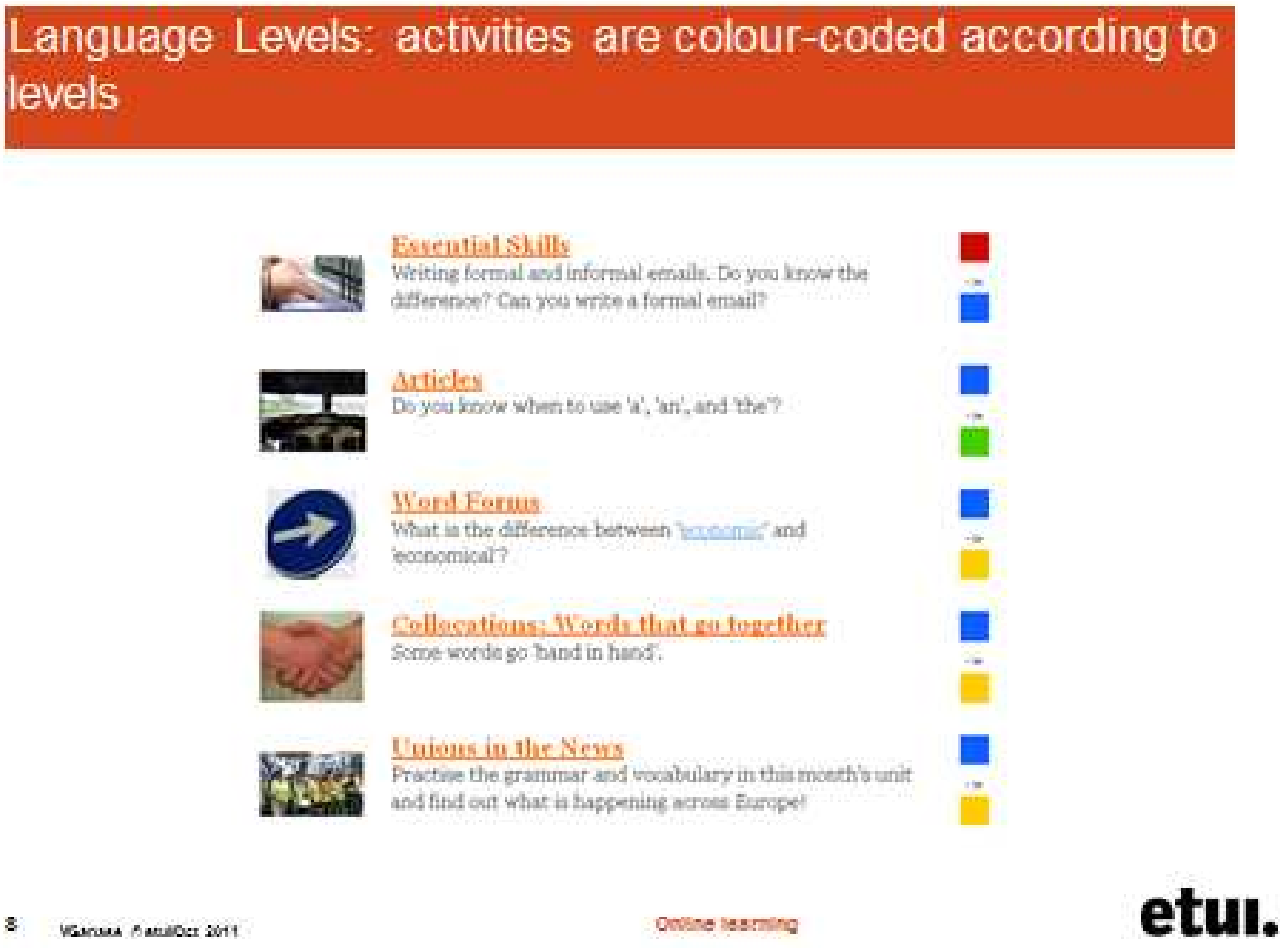
http://www.etuienglishonline.org

An E-learning English language programme for European Trade Unionists

Contact person

Vidia Ganase (vganase@etui.org)

Screenshots



Underlying software on which the platform runs

Moodle

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

The E-learning programme has been running for one year and a half. There are presently around 150 users.

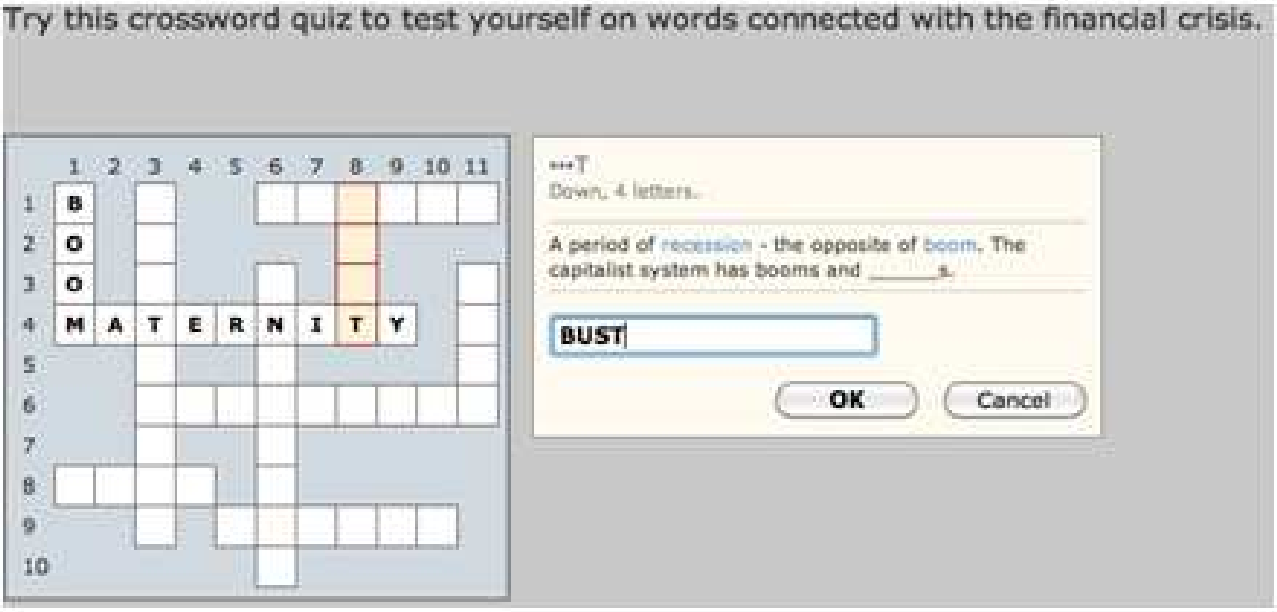
Information about the main pedagogical approaches

The course is theme-based catering for learners of English from elementary to upper-intermediate level. The course is similar to an electronic monthly magazine. Every month there is a new unit and a new topic. Exercises and activities are built around the topic. The use of examples guides the learners in their choices and answers. All the activities encourage the learners to go further in their reflection about trade union issues.

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

Activities/exercises are short and concise with immediate feedback enabling learners to login for short periods of time and still complete an exercise... A variety of material (sound, video, text, speaking facilities) is used and simple manipulation of objects on the screen. Learners are encouraged to submit one assignment a month and take part in discussion forums.

Word games



etui.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

There is a dedicated e-tutor. Learners receive individualised and personalised feedback on their assignments. Discussion forums enable the learners to correspond with other trade unionists.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?
100% self-managed

How autonomous are learners?
At present there are 150 users. About 1/3 send in assignments. Users tend to prefer activities that do not require involvement with others. Exercises that require the learner to "tick the box" are the most popular. Discussion forums are not very active, despite of the tutor's regular reminders.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)
Each monthly unit represents roughly 6 hours of learning.
Target group: European Trade Unionists with an elementary-intermediate level of English. The course is not designed for beginner level.

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)
Moodle provides these statistics but they have to be quantified "manually" or the moment.

We need to find a way to provide individual reports on users' performance.

Information on main stakeholders

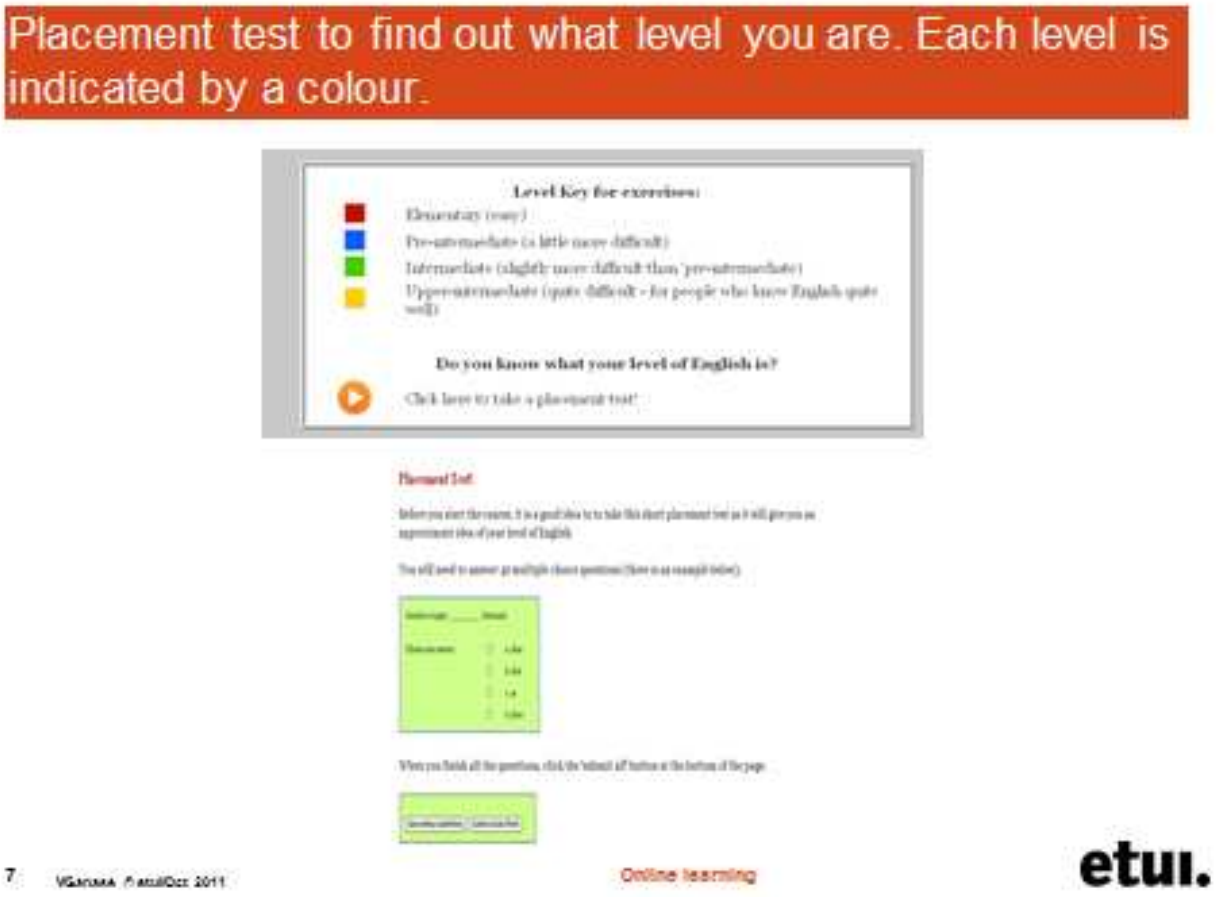
The course is financed by the European Trade Union Institute. The participants who belong to trade unions organisations pay a participation fee to join the programme.

Information on languages and translation possibilities

The course is entirely in English as the aim is to learn this language.

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

There is an introduction instructional video for new learners. Learners are guided to the exercises that correspond to their level after having done the placement tests and then by colour codes.



Are quality criteria already used here? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?

-

5. MA European Studies

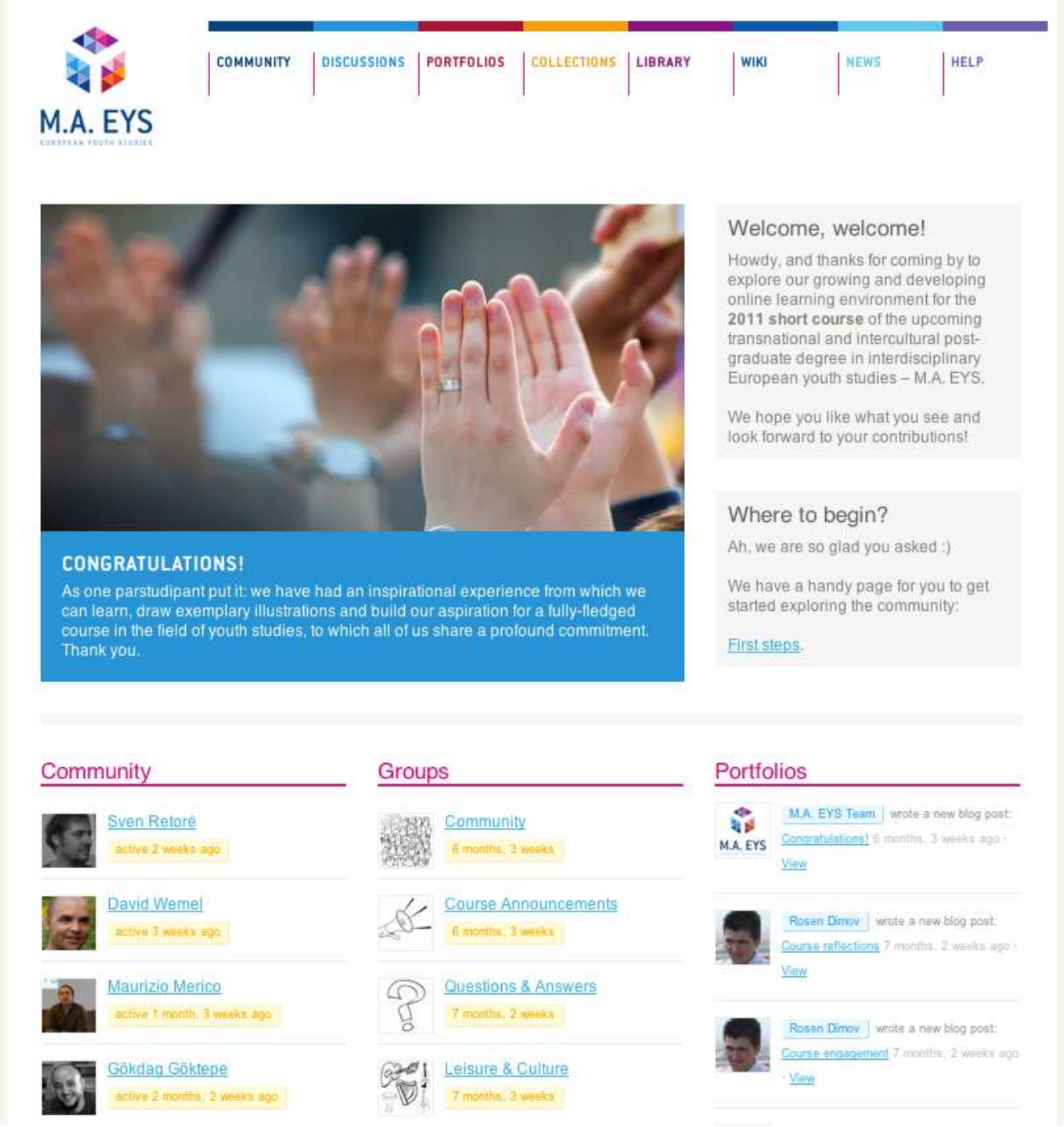
Link

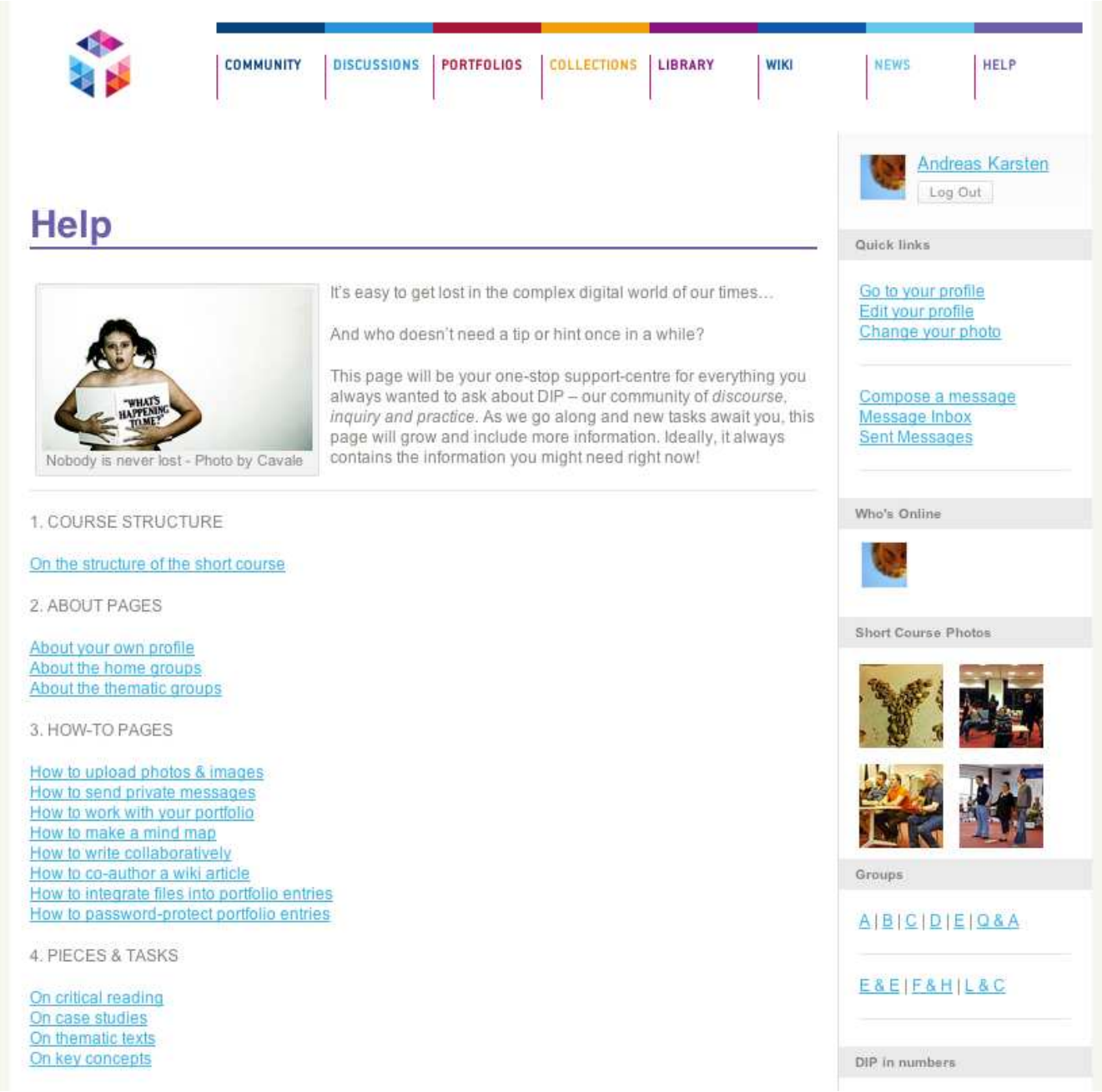
http://www.dip.youthstudies.eu

Contact person

Andreas Karsten, andreas.karsten@youthstudies.eu

Screenshots





Underlying software on which the platform runs

The platform is built using open source software and open access principles. After comparing a range of possible software options (specifically Drupal, Moodle, Joomla and WordPress), the option taken was WordPress. The platform uses a WordPress Network Install, also called MultiSite install to allow each learner to have his or her own blog, with BuddyPress to facilitate the social networking and group cooperation functionality. We have amended the system with a range of plugins, some of which were available, some of which were custom-coded (and subsequently made available in the spirit of open-source, of course).

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

The platform was conceptualised in late 2009, early 2010. It was technically developed between May 2010 and January 2011, with a prototype available in September 2010. The platform was used in full action for the so-called short course, a three-month test-run of the upcoming M.A. on European Youth Studies. It remains in active development and will continue to be used for the M.A.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

The two main principles underlying the pedagogical approach are constructivism - considering learning as a contextualised, active and social process built around constructing meaning out of experiences - and connectivism - considering learning as a continuous process of making connections between a diversity of opinions - in a combination that seeks to produce maximum concordance and integrity between course content, pedagogy and teaching/learning relations. We grounded the pedagogy in a series of key questions as a basis for inquiry, so that the ideas and the content that learners encounter become really useful knowledge - rather than dormant and static knowledge.

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

The main principle of our online learning methodology was collaboration. We had a wide range of instruments and tools available - from podcasts and mindmaps to videos and wikis - and invited learners to use them in teams, aiming to overcome the potential loneliness of individuals behind their computer screen.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

For the short course, there was permanent technical and pedagogical support, practically 24/7, with turnaround times of less than an hour for questions. We might have to dial down the intensity of the support in the future, but the intention remains to maintain this level of support. The technical and pedagogical support has several components: (1) a system of tutoring, providing each learner with a tutor at a ratio of 1 tutor : 5 learners; (2) a question and answer group for learners to ask questions and get responses, both from educators as well as fellow learners: http://dip.youthstudies.eu/discussions/questions/ and (3) an extensive help section integrated into the platform: http://dip.youthstudies.eu/help/.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

Timing and structure are very flexible: there are only few and collectively-scheduled online events requiring everyone's presence, and only one ultimate deadline for the portfolio completion of learners; all else is up to students and their own rhythm.

How autonomous are learners?

The pedagogy of the MA commands a high level of learner autonomy, not only in terms of timing and rhythm, but also in terms of self-organisation and self motivation. We built several features into the learning process to aid and support learners, of course, from the above-mentioned help and support offers to organisational units such as home groups to allow for collaborative work and peer support.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

We cannot really classify learning events into a useful typology - our attempt to creatively mix and re-mix various tools, methods and instruments makes for a combination of learning events that defies classification…

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

As the platform serves, for now, a select group of users for a specific purpose there was not the need to collect actual data on the platform's usage. We have observed, however, various usage patterns: (a) learners who spent some time online practically every day, almost always in the evening; (b) learners who concentrated their online engagement in one or two time-slots per week - often this would be either the weekend or 1-2 evenings; (c) learners who had periods of active engagement with daily usage, interspersed with periods of total absence.

Information on main stakeholders

The platform was developed in the framework of an EU-financed curriculum development project. The main stakeholder is the MA EYS Consortium, headed by the University of Innsbruck:

- M.A. EYS Institutional Partners
    - EU-COUNCIL OF EUROPE Youth Partnership, Strasbourg (Europe)
- M.A. EYS Associate Partners
    - University of Malta, Department of Youth and Community Studies (Malta)
    - University of Trnava, Centre for European and Regional Youth Studies (Slovak Republic)
    - University of Warsaw, Youth Research Centre (Poland)
    - University of Ljubljana, Centre for Social Psychology (Slovenia)

Information on languages and translation possibilities

The course language of the MA EYS is English, so there was no need to include any translation possibilities, but WordPress allows for the integration of multiple languages should the need occur in the future.

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

While it was not a condition to make the platform fully accessible in this first phase of its existence, an effort was done to get as close as possible to applying current web accessibility guidelines. In its current state, the web accessibility checker http://achecker.ca/checker/ only notes two problems that could easily be (and will soon be) addressed and resolved.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

Here are two examples of learning unit instructions:

1. - On essay writing
This task covers component 7 of your portfolio.

Writing an essay requires focus - Photo by Margo Conner

You are expected to write a reflective essay of around 3,000 words (+/- 10%) that integrates your work during the Short Course on the three exemplary core modules: European Youth Realities and Policy; European Youth Research; and Theoretical Foundations.

Your discussion should relate significantly to the three cross-cutting issues that anchor the foundations of the Short Course:

- The relationship between youth practice, youth research and youth policy (in terms of the potential for collaboration and positive development, as well as acknowledged tensions and ambiguities);
- The links between local, national and European levels (what is possible and/or desirable with respect to coordinated action and practical activity, policy-making, and the research agenda in the youth field);
- The aspiration for the development of transnational, intercultural and multilingual approaches to youth studies.

Your essay can draw broadly on wider youth studies but should make full use of your learning and thinking around your chosen area for thematic inquiry (education and employment; family and housing; leisure and culture). You should provide evidence of critical reading.

An essay needs to contain all of the following:

- clear structure and coherence (including an introduction and conclusion);
- relevant, appropriate and integrated content;
- persuasive and supported argument and analysis;
- accessible layout and presentation;
- properly recorded sources and referencing (Harvard).

Recommended literature:

Andrews, R. (2009), the importance of argument in education, University of London: Institute of

Education.

2. - On your development
This task covers component 10 of your portfolio.

Looking at your personal and professional development – with a colleague & peer

You are expected to reflect on your learning gained through the participation in the short course and to identify priority areas to guide and support your personal and professional development in the future. You are required to produce and submit a short audio or video report summarising your personal and professional development.

(We recommend finishing your personal essay before starting this task.)

In producing the report you are encouraged to use a partner to share, discuss and receive feedback on your reflections about your learning and development. The role of your partner is to act as a 'sounding board' in support of your process of reflection. The final report should be an audio or video recording of a conversation with your partner focusing on the three steps outlined below.

(Alternatively, if you do not have access to technical resources allowing you to record the audio or video of your conversation, you could also submit a text transcript.)

The three steps for your reflection:

- What are the key aspects of your learning and development throughout the short course under each of the following headings? Try to be as specific as possible:
  - knowledge (e.g. empirical data, descriptive accounts, case studies, comparative insights; theories, models and concepts relating to youth policy, youth research, 'youth practice' of various kinds, and to 'youth' in general);
  - skills (e.g. in observation, fact-finding, recording, reflection, communication, peer support, group work, planning and evaluation, management and organisation);
  - personal qualities (e.g. self-awareness, intercultural sensitivity, values and attitudes appropriate to educational and developmental work with people, confidence, sociability, discretion and dependability).
- How do these three key areas of learning and development (knowledge, skills and values) connect and relate to each other? Can you give examples (such as how newly acquired knowledge has had an impact on how you think about or 'value' something; how a personal quality such as confidence was boosted by the acquisition of a new skill, leading to further new opportunities, and so on)?
- Which areas for personal and professional learning and development would you consider priorities for your future learning? How do you intend to progress your learning in these priority areas?

<u>Are quality criteria already used? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?</u>

Yes and no. We developed a set of initial demands before the platform was built; and then chose the open-source software accordingly. We did not, however, develop a reliable set of indicators from this list of demands. We may do so in the future, taking into account the results of the evaluations of the platform that are currently being conducted.

6. SALTO EuroMed

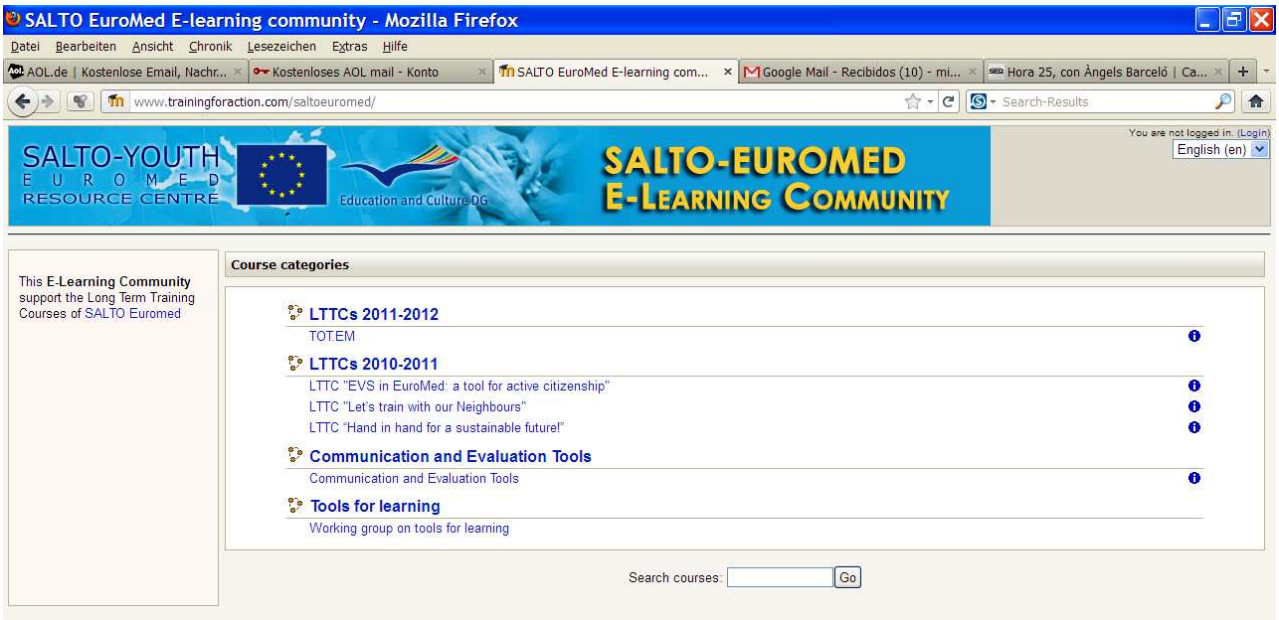
Link

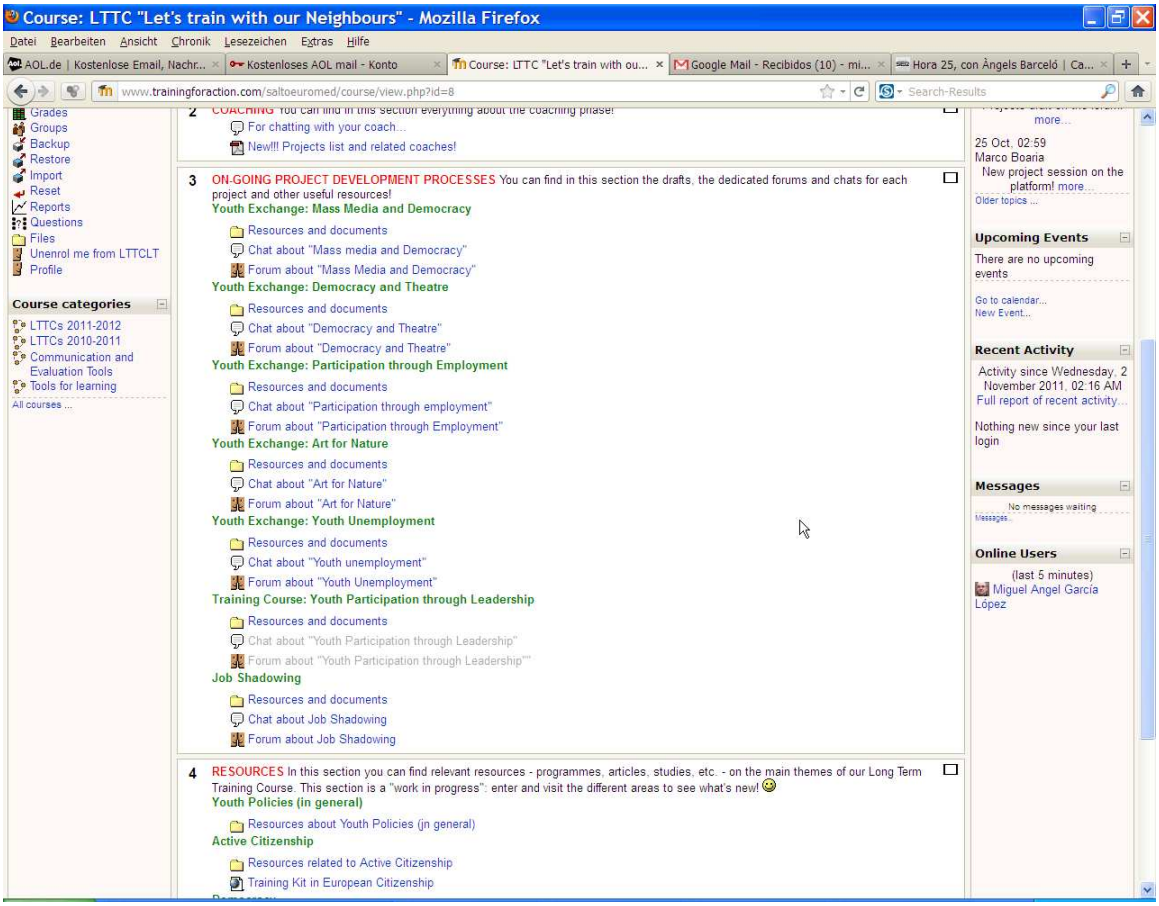
http://www.trainingforaction.com/saltoeuromed

Contact person

Federica Demicheli, demicheli@injep.fr

Screenshots





Underlying software on which the platform runs

The platform is built using the open source software Moodle 2.0.

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

The platform is four years old. In the first two years it was used for most of the SALTO EuroMed educational activities (seminars, training courses, conferences) for the preparation and the documentation of the activities and partly as communication-networking tool. After some technical and educational difficulties and based on some good practices, the platform evolved and it is only being used for the long-term courses reinforcing the E-learning aspect.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

The main pedagogical approach is to promote the exchange and peer learning of participants. The participants are involved in an interactive preparation, exchange of experiences and support in their learning process. The team facilitate that exchange through preparatory works to be done, tasks and relevant information-documents for the learning purposes.

In a second stage, for their projects, groups of participants get their own spaces with full editing capacities.

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

File sharing, surveys, chat, forum, wikis

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

The team of the course supports participants both technically and pedagogically. The platform administrator supports technically and pedagogically the teams of the different courses and particularly the person in the team in charge of the E-learning.

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

There is a certain time limit deadline for most of the units. The informative ones (e.g. on the EuroMed Youth programme) are not limited and they are regularly updated. The structure of the platform changes and evolves according to the needs of the course; new space distribution, new headings, spaces reserved to project-groups of participants…

How autonomous are learners?

The units and tasks are fixed by the team. Learners are autonomous in the way of achieving them.

For their projects, in their own spaces, learners are absolutely autonomous; they have full editing capacities.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

All the activities are addressed to the whole group of participants in the long term courses. It is difficult to cluster the different activities but a possible grouping could be:

- Preparatory or follow-up activities of a seminar. Their length is normally around two weeks.
- Further exploration on different topics; they consist on further reading, research and discussion. They are more open and often unlimited in time.
- Activities within the projects groups – self managed by participants. Diverse and with variable timing according to their needs and rhythm

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

There are not precise personalised statistics on the intensity and use of the platform. There is however a monitoring follow-up to detect accessibility problems.

It is clear that the participation is much higher around the residential seminars and when starting a new phase of the course (e.g. project phase).

Information on main stakeholders

SALTO EuroMed is the main stakeholder. Co-organising national agencies have access and monitor the development of the platform.

Information on languages and translation possibilities

Moodle allows having the navigation menus in different languages but since the training courses are in English this is the only language used in the E-learning platform.

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

The platform is reserved to the participants of the courses and related stakeholders (national agencies, technical teams). Just the platform administrator and SALTO EuroMed have full administration capacities.

The accessibility to the project group spaces is restricted to the members of those groups and the team member supporting each of them.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

- Preparing Intercultural Evening. In order to prepare the group to work together and to support their exchange before the training course, the team asked to participant divided in subgroups to prepare their own intercultural evening. Each group had its own forum group in order to prepare their work. The aim was to organise their evening, sharing aims and objectives and so on. The preparation online was very fruitful.

- Preparing session about Democracy in the countries of participants. Participants using wiki system developed a common text about their understanding of democracy, the situation of democracy in their own country and the role of youth in developing democracy.

Are quality criteria already used? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?

Not explicitly, but the co-responsibility, role differentiation and fluent-quick communication-reaction between the team of each course and the platform administrator have been very much promoted in the last two years.

7. Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe

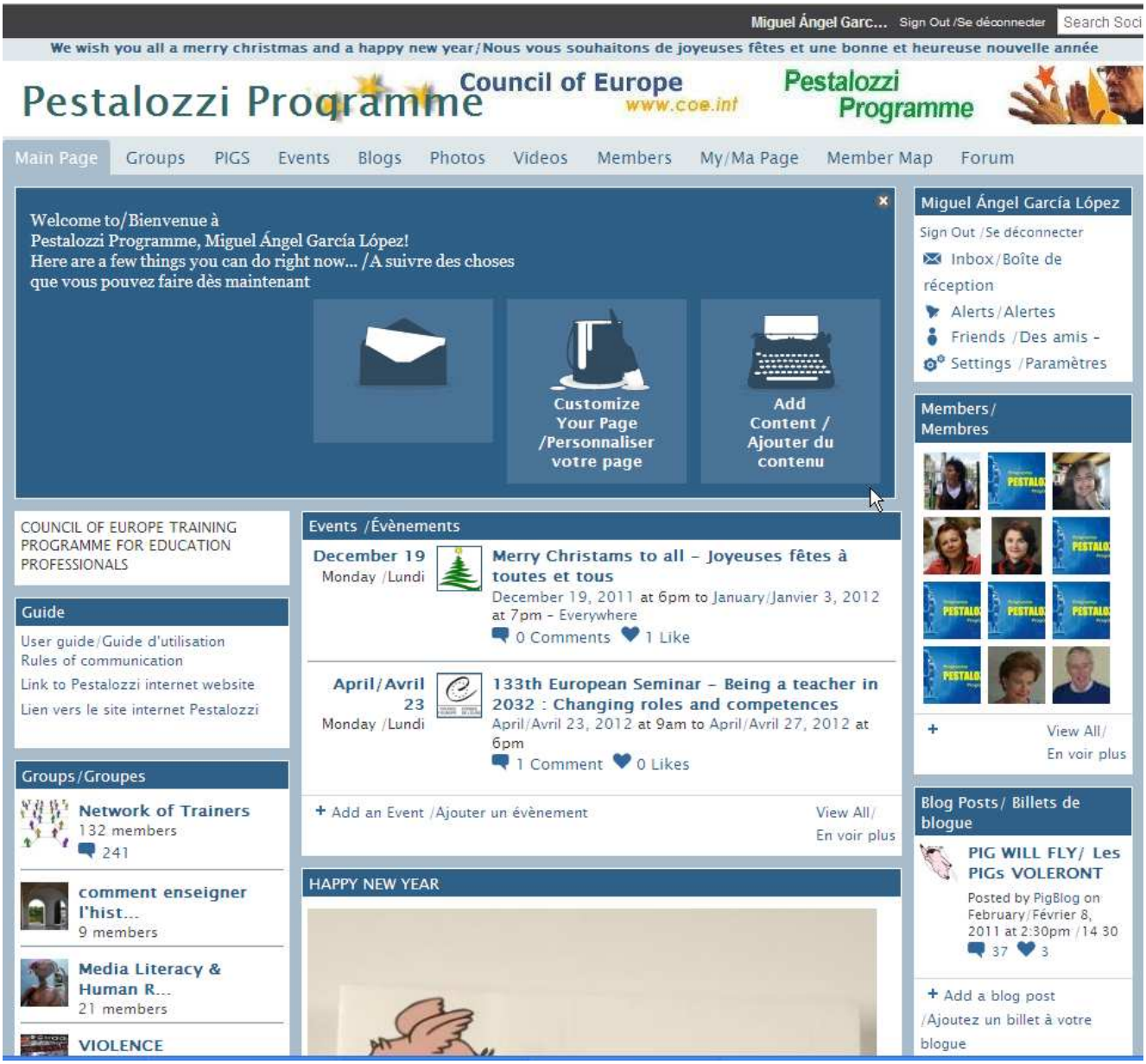
Link

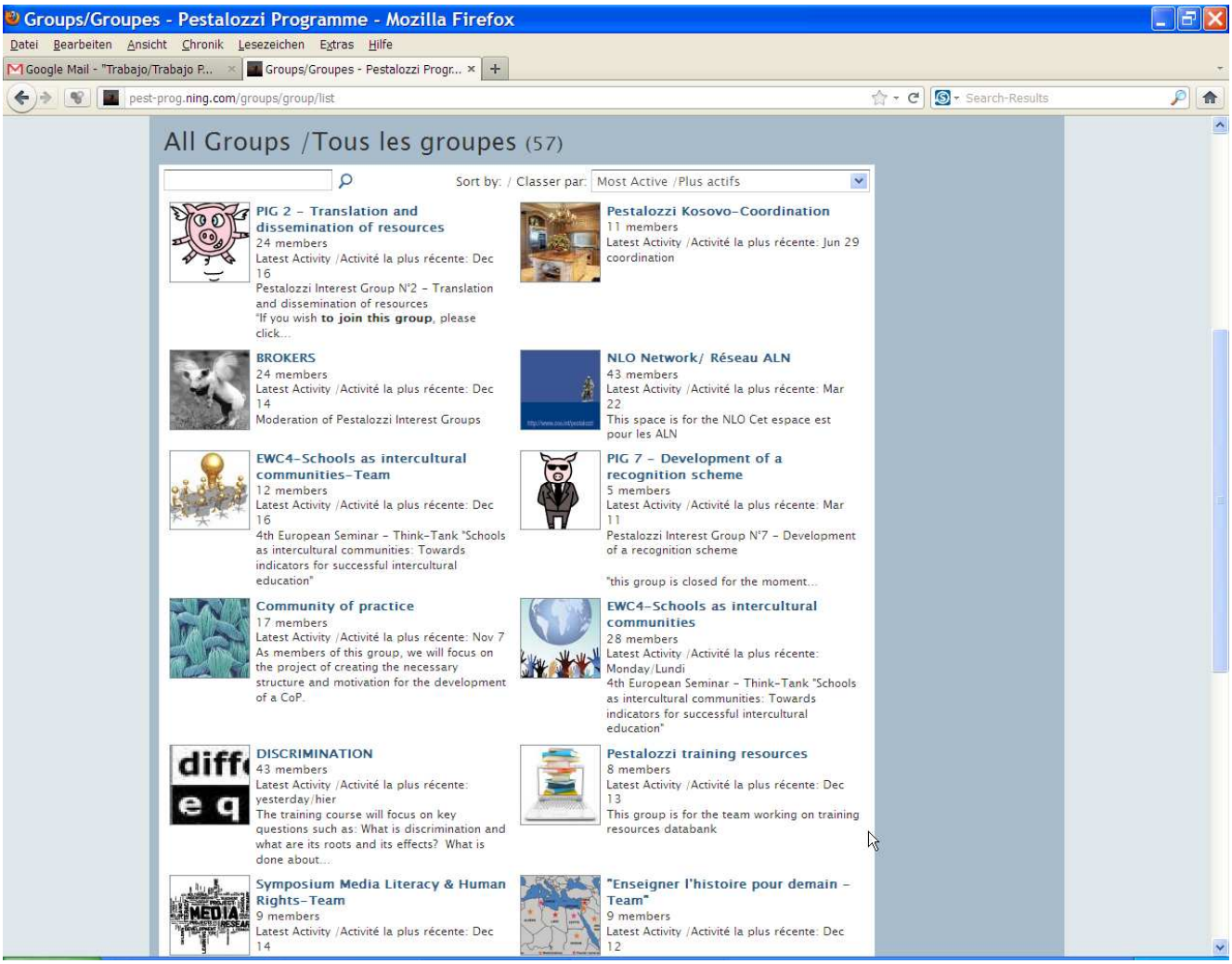
http://pest-prog.ning.com/

Contact person

Didier Fauchez, Didier.fauchez@coe.int

Screenshots





Underlying software on which the platform runs

Ning is an open source software for social network.

Information on the age and evolution of the platform

It started in 2009.

Information about the main pedagogical approaches

Community of practice – collaborative learning.

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

Most of the activities hinge on preparation, on-going and follow up of face-to-face training courses and events or other program meetings, international and local (national and regional). Some activities function outside face-to-face encounter: namely the translation of materials and the

conceptual work around the development of a European glossary on education for democracy.

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

Council of Europe secretariat members as well as free-lance consultants support the members of the online community of practice technically and pedagogically on an on-going basis linked to the processes of the different projects (training and other projects). The Core of the CoP (the network of trainers) has a separate informal space to share resources.

How flexible and (a-)synchronous is the timing and structure?

Very flexible.

How autonomous are learners?

This depends on the phases of participation. When engaged in training members of the CoP are fairly tightly driven through activities and steps of a learning process. Outside of these training activities members collaborate loosely (loose structure such as, planned cascading, topical discussions or special interest groups) either in connection to their local activities or their international networking.

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

The target is education professionals. Teacher trainers are engaged in 18 months of structured work.

Information on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

There are not precise personalised statistics on the intensity and use of the platform.

Since July 2009, 400 000 visits. More than 900 people are registered on the platform now. It started with 50 users in April 2009. More than 1/3 is active because they are involved in an activity running.

Information on main stakeholders

Council of Europe secretariat members, general rapporteur, facilitators and brokers are main stakeholders (20 to 30 people).

Information on languages and translation possibilities

Ning allows having the navigation menus in different languages and personal pages in a particular language but there is no internal translator.

Information on accessibility standards and disability policies

Ning is only on invitation but allows a public page. There are no disability policies.

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

For example Pestalozzi trainer training modules:

18 months:

- Preparation phase: team preparation, nominations and invitations, prep tasks
- Module A: conceptual /methodological foundations, team building and setting the frame
- Between module A and B: collaborative development of materials (participants AND facilitators)
- Module B: strengthening of concepts, and methodology, improving the materials, building a network
- After Module B: finalising draft materials, editing and dissemination, building the network

Are quality criteria already used? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?

Participation and work products are the quality criteria:

- Monitoring of the training process for the teams of trainers and for participants;
- Peer feedback and coaching;
- Monitoring of the cascading process in the member states.

Support for the development of local/national networks and multiplier effect: local/regional and national training events, local networks around appointed national liaison officers.

Critical analysis of the use E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities

As explained in the introduction, after characterising the E-learning activities under study, I proceeded to a deeper analysis focusing on some critical issues in relation to the key characteristics of non-formal education. This deeper analysis was cross-fertilised with the reflections coming from the interviews to twelve experts and the external literature consulted on their expertise in E-learning environments. The result of this triangulation has made possible the identification of the following "critical findings" for further discussion which were presented in the seminar "Using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities - *Experiences, lessons learnt, challenges and perspectives"* (European Youth Centre Budapest 29 November – 2 December 2011).

Critical findings for further discussion

In the articulation of these critical findings for further discussion, I identify some tendencies and I use some examples to illustrate certain ideas and dilemmas. But those examples and findings are not necessarily significant from a statistical or structural point of view. In other words, they cannot be considered consistent for evaluative purposes. As they did in the mentioned seminar, their identification aims just to stimulate the debate in the process of identifying quality criteria for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities.

For structuring them I have taken as a compass the key characteristics of intercultural non-formal education as summarised in the Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe (ATTE) External Evaluation (Volume 2: page 25).[9]

The following reflections on those key characteristics does not have as starting point the challenges of non-formal education in E-learning because of being online but more generally some of the challenges of non-formal education in E-learning. In other words the following challenges are not online exclusive but particularly relevant in E-learning in line with the reflections of experts in the interviews and in the mentioned seminar.

Participatory and learner-centred

In a learner-centred approach, "learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the content of the curriculum and how it is delivered" (Nunan, 1988, p.2). Jurmo (1989) points out that there are different levels of learner participation. A learner may participate by simply signing up for a course and being physically present. What is aimed for, however, in a participatory approach is the highest level of participation, in which learners have considerable control and responsibility for their learning activities.

[9] http://book.coe.int/EN/ficheouvrage.php?PAGEID=36&lang=EN&produit_aliasid=2150

The description of the E-learning activities under study and the experts involved in them declare that the educational approaches used are built on the learning needs of participants and based on participation.

In most cases, the needs of participants and their decisions about their own learning are not articulated or formulated in the E-learning environment. They probably come from other features like mentoring, residential seminars, previous needs analysis…). But if one enters the E-learning platform without necessarily having in mind the whole course – as it was my case - the impression is that the contents are predetermined, given and organised in a sequence without any explanation on how they correspond to the needs of participants. Just in few occasions the participants can choose – for example - among different themes or methods or among differentiated elements or optional activities within a training unit.

The evaluation of participants is just in some cases visible and it is not clear how this evaluation shapes the E-learning format of future activities. Once again this is probably taking place somewhere else, but it would be more transparent to make it explicit where the learning takes place: in the E-learning environment.

The layout/presentation of the contents in most of the platforms reinforces this feeling: list of files – library style - instead of navigation buttons - with hyperlinks and "freedom" to move.

Those aspects taken all together have a strong influence – I conclude - in the participatory and learner centeredness of the E-learning activities under study.

There are some interesting experiences for the "coaching or project phases" where groups of participants get access to a part of the platforms with full editing capacities. Those are "granted" capacities and participants are not free of the inherent "power relationships" of E-learning activities but it improved the feeling of ownership, the level of participation and the learning on E-learning activities.

Relevant to participants' contexts

This characteristic is a consequence of the previous one, but here the focus is not directly on the learning needs. Participants' context refers to the idea that the E-learning happen in the limited technological context of the Internet but, for the benefit of the learning and its transferability, it should consider the social, cultural and organisational context into the educational process so that learning becomes relevant to their realities. As a consequence of it, the transition between the learning process and the "follow-up" would be much easier and the multiplication effect clearer.

In most cases, the participants' contexts are incorporated thought their contribution to the E-

learning activities (e.g. through tasks like sharing the most common violations of human rights in your context, or the reality of youth work in your country…). These strategies for incorporating participants' contexts into the learning process are meaningful and effective, but at times the conceptualisation of participants' realities implies loosing the freshness and attractiveness of those same realities.

The number of activities connecting more directly the E-learning with the contexts of participants (e.g. organise a training session with your group and report the results type of activity, do a face-to-face interview with key actors of youth policy in your country and report back online…) is not so high.

The format of reporting and discussion is almost always the written one. The fresh reality of participants is very rarely shared through videos, drawings or multimedia presentations. The more and more advanced technical possibilities of E-learning platforms, the use of external web-based presentations and the growing digital competences of participants should contribute to increase the use of other ways of expression beyond the written one. There is a possible trap in this tendency and educational strategy: the advanced technical possibilities and the digital competences can be very different in a group. An initial assessment and a progressive technical complexity could help normally to overcome this.

Experiential and oriented to learning-by-doing

Simply put, experiential learning is about learning from experience; making meaning through reflection from direct experience. David Kolb formalised this approach as a cyclical process in four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation.

The descriptions of the E-learning activities under study and their facilitators' opinions agree almost unanimously that the E-learning activities promote experiential learning and learning-by-doing. At first sight, this is so; quite some learning units are related to participants' previous experiences and the different tasks imply "having together new experiences" and developing several competences.

But I think that this should be much more carefully and precisely characterised and evaluated. If I were to characterise the educational approach of a lot of the training units of the different E-learning platforms, I would say that they are built on "task-based learning". Individual and group tasks are proposed and for achieving them, in the way of achieving them, the learning takes place. Is that learning by doing? Clearly yes. Is that experiential learning? On the one hand yes, because it considers the shared experiences that participants get while working on the given task. But on the other hand not fully, because most of those experiences do not come directly from the background

or the current reality of participants. Those experiences are provoked by the given task. This task and even the way to achieve it is very rarely is autonomously decided by them. In other words, the experiential learning is just in few cases based on "genuine-autonomous-direct" experiences of participants. Additionally, in few occasions the reflected experiences of participants are sufficiently conceptualised and applied again into another experience. In other words, the experiential learning cycle is very often not completed. To quote one of my colleagues: *"experiential learning is not experience 1, 2, 3 and 4 but experience, critical analysis, reflection, conceptualisation and application into a new experience"*. This does not mean that one should follow the experiential learning cycle in a strict order; variations and experiments with the phases are at times very stimulating. But all of the phases are to consider for achieving a consistent experiential learning.

For illustrating this tension, as example, we can analyse 3 different possibilities of an E-learning unit on Youth Policy:

- Reading a document, visiting some websites and discuss with the help of guiding questions its relevance in the participants' context. Finally participants share the results with the whole group.
- Participants make interviews to key local or national youth policy youth policy players they cooperate with. They upload the audio-video-text of the interview, and discuss it. Finally participants share the results with the whole group.
- Ask participants to form groups. Give them the autonomy to decide how they want to share their local-national previous and current experiences on youth policy using the possibilities of the platform with the only condition of reporting the findings to the whole group in a certain time.

I am not arguing that one is a pure tasks-based learning or the other pure experiential learning. All are somehow both and certainly all are learning-by-doing. I am –of course- not saying that the one or the other approach is more adequate; this depends on many factors. Based on my own experience and on reflections of the consulted experts, I think that in relation to the values of intercultural non-formal education, especially in the long run, it is very important to carefully consider the autonomy of participants, all the phases of the complete experiential learning cycle and the balance between direct/fresh and indirect/provoked experiences.

It is well known that the key factor of success for task-based learning is the choice of the task, which has to be relevant, challenging and attractive for the individuals and the group. This explains at least partially the successes and shortcomings of quite a lot of training units.

Task-based learning is highly recommended for familiarising participants with the technical aspects of the platforms and probably in the first phases of E-learning. But it should develop – I think -

towards a more genuine experiential learning approach. Otherwise participants will perceive it as a list of "to dos" with deadlines and they might consciously or unconsciously associate it with the characteristics and values of formal education. The evaluation and the evolution of E-learning approaches of long-term training courses [10]seem to indicate this. A "clear and effective" task-based learning at the beginning can be very discouraging in the long run.

Balanced co-existence and interaction between cognitive, affective and practical dimensions of learning

The learning potential depends on the cognitive, affective and practical capacities of learners. All those different capacities are to be considered in the learning process so that learners can integrally develop their competences fostered by motivation.

All the E-learning activities under study tried to mix these dimensions of learning by using different methods and ways of interaction among participants, but the affective and practical dimensions of learning remain underrepresented and underutilised.

The reasons for this are multiple and probably not all of them identified. I have already referred to some of them: the limitations of the computer interface for dealing with emotions, the use of methods based mostly on "writing", the already mentioned uncompleted experiential learning cycle which does not facilitate the application of the lessons learnt online back in participants' offline context…

Some good practices for an interaction of the cognitive, affective and practical dimensions of learning have been the organisation of synchronic meetings, talking not just writing, the use of drawings, mindmaps, videos for certain parts of the training units and the participation in E-actions (E-consultations, E-campaigns…) as a result of the E-learning process.

The personal and social relations via the Internet beyond the informative one are as well important as an incentive for –at least- keeping in touch and interacting with the group of participants in a common E-learning activity.

Linking individual and social learning, cooperation-oriented and symmetrical teaching/learning relations

Social learning implies an individual learning, in other words a development of competences of the individuals involved, but it goes beyond that. It becomes situated within the wider social context or communities of practice and it occurs through social interactions and processes between actors

[10] Long Term Training Courses are courses consisting of two or three residential seminars. In between the residential seminars -in most of the cases- there are periods devoted to E-learning, planning and implementation of projects and peer learning.

within a social network. The promotion of cooperation is a goal, as well as a way of learning in co-operation oriented learning. It takes place through the work of groups of learners when they perform a specific task and the learning oriented reflection about this process. The trainer/facilitator then gives the learners an assignment, often helping them to divide up the work that needs to be done so that each individual in the group has a certain role to play. The end goal can only be reached when every member of the group contributes effectively.

By symmetrical teaching/learning relations we understand the capacity of learners and educators to be able to equally define the task setting and other characteristics of the learning process.

The learning in the different online platforms requires co-operation and collaboration; the individual and the group dimension of learning are well represented and clearly linked.

Regarding the contents, the teaching/learning relations are somewhere between being symmetrical and asymmetrical. In the different platforms, most of the training units offer fixed theoretical frames that participants should linearly explore (one after another in a certain sequence). At the same time, once the framework is set, the learning is very much based on the sharing, exchange and interaction between participants without pretending to conclude with a truth at the end of the learning process.

More symmetrical teaching-learning relations have been set for example in the E-learning of training of trainers courses (for example in TALE[11] or TOTEM[12]) promoting progressively the self-directedness in the learning process. As a consequence of it, especially after the first half of the courses, participants' contributions were not just an "outcome" of the learning process but a "new input" with the potential of modifying the given frames and shaping the learning processes.

Holistic and process-oriented

There is no clear definition of holistic learning but it normally refers to a multi-levelled process of growth characterised by the diversity of methods, the use the intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, and creative potentials of learners and where learners and facilitators grow together.

[11] In 2007, the European Commission and the Council of Europe decided to develop The name of this long-term Training Course TALE is "Trainers for Active Learning in Europe". This was a new generic Training Course for Trainers course at advanced level carried out by the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission and was implemented together by the Council of Europe, the European Commission and its partners (NAs and SALTO networks), in co-operation with the European Youth Forum. This Training Course constituted the first step towards the creation of a coordinated approach of training trainers in Europe.
http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/training/trainingoftrainers.html

[12] TOTEM (Training of Trainers in EuroMed) is a long-term training course within the EuroMed area. TOTEM has been designed to support the learning of those youth workers and youth leaders - already experienced within EuroMed Youth Cooperation - who want/need to develop their competences as trainers in this field.
http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/tceuromed/tceuromed2011/totem/

Process-oriented learning is concerned not just with the output or product of a learning activity, but also with the performance and interactions of the actors involved during the whole activity. Then, the assessment of that process becomes a source or learning.

There is a big diversity in the role and functions of the different E-learning activities. Some of them are thought as a complement to the residential seminars –especially in the preparation and follow-up-, some others have been conceived together with other learning features as part of a "blended learning" process and some others are pure E-learning courses. According to those different functions and roles they play, all of them try to be holistic. There is a clear view and agreement on this; they try to consider and include all the elements and dimensions necessary for the aimed learning.

The most common shortcomings for achieving a "holistic" approach and for that to be clearly visible, are: the technical limitations of the platforms underlining the E-learning activity, the fragmentations of contents and tasks among E-learning facilitators, the unsmooth transition from some training units or parts of the learning to the next one, the unbalanced distribution of the space in the platform and the insufficient customisation and adaptation of the E-learning platforms to the momentum of the course/group.

Regarding the process-orientation, the already mentioned "task-based learning" approach puts a big emphasis on results and production which are the most visible elements online. There is not enough emphasis on evaluation, consolidation of learning achievements or simply on monitoring-sharing "how things are going". This might take place in other features (e.g. mentoring) but it could be as such an enriching additional source of learning if made explicit in the E-learning environment.

Aims to convey and practice the values and skills of democratic life

A learning aiming to promote the values and skills of democratic life, such us the fundamental freedoms, human rights, the ideals of democracy and the rule of law should be coherent with them. This means that the interactions that the learning process implies should take place according to them.

The negotiations and discussions on how to do things in the different courses take place, but in most cases are not visible. A clearer focus on evaluation and co-responsibility (without mixing up the different roles between learners, facilitators etc.) would help to deepen this democratic dimension.

In a vast majority of the occasions, the style of interaction between trainers and among participants is respectful. But it is surprising to find the so called "shouting online" (use of capital

letters, big characters and colours for reminding a deadline or for announcing that it was not respected). This is probably not done, neither perceived with an undemocratic intention, but it should be clearly avoided.

Voluntary participation and (ideally) open-access

Non-formal education is based on the motivation of learners to learn. That is the reason why their participation should not be imposed. This being said, voluntary participation should not be understood as a selfish decision about the participation or not in a certain activity in the middle of a learning process, but as a continuous check and update of the motivations and responsibilities in the learning process.

By open access in E-learning it is meant the possibility of other stakeholders - not primarily involved in it - to benefit from the resources and achievements in the learning process.

Except for the experience of the MA European Studies, all the platforms are not open to externals. There are good reasons for that, but a partial opening, for example offering the results, linking them with other open websites or engaging other stakeholders in certain activities could be interesting in terms of learning, visibility and impact. An interesting pilot initiative was the so called “open day” in the platform of the TALE course (not part of the analysed E-learning activities in this study, but a major experience in the author’s E-learning experience).

The issue of voluntary participation came on the table with all its intensity in several courses in moments of low participation. I am afraid that it was because many other aspects of the E-learning did not work (e.g. clear information before the course, shared motivations and expectations, ground and personal commitment and responsibility, participant-centeredness, process orientation…).

One of the consulted experts declared ironically that “for some participants this is the favourite characteristic of non-formal education”. It might be true, but it is as well true that in other learning contexts it is very rare that this issue comes on the table, even just for one participant, if things go reasonably well.

This issue of voluntarity is a very attractive one for a theoretical discussion and a very controversial if discerned in terms of “principles”. On a more practical level, experience tells us that it is much more constructive to deal with it on the basis of self-assessment, feedback and evaluation understood as support not as mere criticism.

Achievements and remaining challenges

As it was said in the introduction, this mapping study is not an evaluation study. The following compilation of achievements and remaining challenges when using E-learning in intercultural non-

formal education activities is not statistically consistent. It comes basically from the previous analysis of the platforms, from the interviews with the consulted experts and from the outcomes of the working groups of the seminar "Using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities - *Experiences, lessons learnt, challenges and perspectives*", as well as from the author's own E-learning experiences.

The achievements and remaining challenges are of different nature and some of them very similar in their formulation; an expression of the "half full - half empty" bottle.

After the previous critical findings, this compilation of achievements and remaining challenges provides us a certain view of the current situation before identifying – in the next section - potential quality criteria.

Without necessarily being fully representative, they are primarily achievements and challenges of the E-learning experiences considered in this study.

Achievements:

- Significant steps in developing and adapting the E-learning activities to the specificities and characteristics of intercultural non-formal education have been done.
- For the courses combining E-learning and residential seminars, the platforms have supported, complemented and gave continuity to the learning processes without dominating them.
- The E-learning activities have contributed to a more consistent preparation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up of residential activities.
- The E-learning activities have reinforced the motivation, communication, group atmosphere and networking among the groups of participants. They have contributed to introduce a new dynamism in the group processes.
- The E-competences of participants have been significantly developed.
- Meaningful and adapted contents have been delivered and made available in many training units.
- E-learning has contributed to improve learners' practice and change in the participants' context.
- E-learning activities have contributed to develop of the attitude (and skill) of self-directedness once online units/modules were requiring research, reflection, taking initiative…
- Some E-learning initiatives have managed to reach out to a wider community and promoting cooperation between different stakeholders.

- In some cases blended learning had an added value - not just uploading documents - : clear navigation, a variety of learning tools offered, good written contents based with an engaging approach, visual help (images, videos), exciting and thought-provoking assignments, possibility of choosing assignments, live meetings, simulations, personalised feedback.

Remaining challenges:

- There is still a need of clearly defining the meaning and function of E-learning in relation with the different course formats (online, long term, blended…).
- There is no software which fully responds to the needs, characteristics and specificities of intercultural non-formal education. Currently many platforms in the European youth sector rely on software (Moodle) that was designed to support formal learning processes.
- There is still a need of integrating or at least linking the so disperse different E-tools: online synchronic communication, social networks, E-learning, blogs, links of Moodle platforms to social networks, etc.
- It is still difficult to recreate the motivation, inspiration and commitment experienced in residential training courses, online. How to work with emotions? How to use creative and interactive methods? How to consider the different learning styles and capacities? How to take participants out of their comfort zone? How to keep a platform alive and attractive?
- How to deal more successfully with the time limitations and other priorities back home?
- How to deal constructively with the power relations in the E-learning environment?
- How to promote the autonomy of learners and at the same time overcome the ups and downs of participation?
- E-learning facilitators' competencies need to be further developed.
- How to document online and/or not online the courses and learning processes?
- There are learners who do not have an easy access to technology and the Internet. How to overcome this obstacle?
- Given the limited budgets, how to ensure good quality of E-learning activities with adequate approaches, facilitators and enough working hours? How to measure the financial sufficient provision for an E-learning course?

In front of this picture full of potentialities and successes, but as well of challenges and shortcomings the question is…

Are we doing non-formal education and intercultural learning online? The important shortcomings and tensions are just due to several factors like the limitations of the E-learning environments, the

underdeveloped E-learning facilitation competences…? In other words, are we basically on the right track?

Around 2/3 of the consulted experts say that this is the situation.

"All the activities are developed on the bases of non-formal education principles, building on participants' previous knowledge of the theme (learner-centred), on participation dynamics and offering individual and group assignments, on the use and application of obtained knowledge and competencies (of course not all competencies are to be practiced in an online learning environment), creativity and when possible innovation."

But 1/3 (I include myself) is not sure that we are getting there even if we optimise our approaches, tools and performances. They think that on E-learning we are doing "something" based, inspired on intercultural non-formal education but not intercultural non-formal education.

"What is the real objective with E-learning in non-formal education? Keeping the group together? Having a space to archive documents of the course? Deepening subjects? Non-formal learning lives so much of the social dimension, the "Here and Now", the live-aspect, the emotions supporting learning, the spontaneity … all of which is almost impossible to create online"

Whatever our experience, position and opinion in this question is, the identification and articulation of quality criteria for the E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities should help us to further develop, evolve and get "somewhere else", hopefully to a better place where the potentialities of E-learning are explored in harmony with the core characteristics intercultural non-formal education.

Proposed quality criteria for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities

The following proposed quality criteria are based on all the previous sections and elements of this mapping study: the characterisation of the E-learning activities under study, the critical findings, achievements and remaining challenges, the interviews with the consulted experts, the external literature on learning environments and – very significantly- on the outcomes of the seminar "Using E-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities - *Experiences, lessons learnt, challenges and perspectives"* (European Youth Centre Budapest 29 November – 2 December 2011).

These quality criteria are "potential" ones for two main reasons. The first one is the limitations of this mapping exercise which have been already mentioned in the different parts. And the second and most important one is that none of the E-learning activities in the European youth field context has worked following a complete set of quality criteria before. This means that they have not been consistently proposed, implemented, evaluated and re-formulated. This quality management cycle is what – from my point of view - should be done in the future with these quality criteria.

But the following fifteen quality criteria have the value of being a conceptualisation of the very significant practices, reflections and discussions covered by this mapping study.

In the following fifteen numbered and underlined points are potential quality criteria and the sub points under them possible indicators. They are grouped in four sections (coherence, faithfulness, transformation and innovation) following the broad understanding of *quality* in the social field identified by Harvey and Green[13]. This grouping is on the one hand one of the many possible ones but on the other hand it offers an inspiring perspective for an integrative understanding of quality.

Such a holistic approach to quality is in line with the rationale of this study. As it was explained in the introduction, this attempt of looking for quality criteria is firstly and most importantly of a pedagogical nature given the fact that most of the proposed quality criteria on E-learning focus on technical aspects and pedagogical-oriented quality criteria are quite dramatically lacking today.

Beyond the mentioned grouping, the proposed quality criteria and indicators are strongly inter-connected and they should be considered as a whole. Taken one by one or in groups, they might be too specific or too generic in relation to non-formal education or to young people or to E-learning.

[13] "Beyond Total Quality Management" Journal Quality in Higher Education, 1995 v1 n2 p123-46 http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ575646&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ575646

None of them alone is exclusive to the purposes of this mapping study. At the same time, the combination and articulation of all of them constitutes –hopefully- the specific mix for E-learning in intercultural non-formal education and training activities in the European youth field.

They should be understood in an inspiring and not in a normative way; as a possible motivating horizon to be adapted to each educational programme and to be progressively achieved and not as a check list to disqualify the one or the other existing practices.

Coherence in the function, design and management of E-learning

1. E-learning activities have a clear function

- In relation to the overall format and characteristics of the different courses (pure E-learning course, blended learning, long term training courses…)
- In relation to different areas and phases of an educational process/course: communication, documentation, networking, E-learning as integral part of the educational process, preparation activities for a residential course, follow-up activities to a residential course etc

2. E-learning activities are accessible and user-friendly

- The access procedures and first steps are clear, quick and easy to follow for learners
- The functionalities, language, navigation, layout and structure of the space where the E-learning activities take place (a blog, website, online platform, etc.) are adapted
- There is an ongoing technical and educational support for users and for the facilitators of the E-learning activities, based on an adequate initial introduction and continuous technical support
- E-learning activities consider the time-related limitations in the access to E-learning by learners
- The online underlining environment where the E-learning activities take place is technically inclusive; considering the limitations, special needs and capacities in terms of software, Internet band width and documents size
- A higher technical complexity in the E-learning activities is progressively introduced
- There is a policy for the use of personal data

3. E-learning activities are adequately designed and developed

- The objectives are based on needs analyses, they clearly mention the type of learning and are concrete, achievable, measurable
- They E-learning activities are appropriate and adequate in terms of time investment/learning outcomes, well structured, timed, and sequenced

- The objectives, approaches, programme, workload, methodology, participation criteria and course requirements are clear and clearly communicated to learners
- The different roles and responsibilities within the E-learning activities are clear: administrator, technical support staff, developers/content, coaching/mentor, facilitator/trainer, experts, online tutors
- The functionalities, language, layout and structure are adapted to the specific characteristic of the E-learning activities
- The different learning phases of the E-learning activities are modularly structured
- The content and methodology of E-learning activities govern the choice of ICT tools
- The technology related to setting up E-learning activities is carefully planned in terms of hardware, software, connectivity of all those involved in the activity, the media used, the mode of delivery, etc.
- The time limitations are considered: the time needed to take part in the E-learning activity and in each learning module/unit is carefully planned and communicated
- The E-learners are not overloaded with documents and tasks
- There is a strategy for learning support, including feedback on the learning process or tutoring
- There is a clear and transparent strategy of course evaluation
- There is a clear strategy of self-assessment

4. The management and facilitation of E-learning activities convey and practice the values and skills of democratic life

- The use of language and interaction in the E-learning environment are based on mutual respect and constructive criticism
- The E-learning process progressively supports collective knowledge creation by learners
- The social cooperation online through online discussions and group activities is encouraged
- There is a code of conduct online
- There is a policy for the use of pedagogical materials protected by copyright

5. E-learning activities are based on voluntary participation and (ideally) open-access

- Participation is encouraged through facilitation, technical and educational support, mentoring, evaluation, co-responsibility…
- There is safe/confidential environment for the E-learning and the relevant outcomes are offered to the wider community
- A minimum participation threshold is defined in each E-learning module/unit
- The eventual low levels of individual and group participation are critically and constructively addressed

- The possibilities to involve other interested stakeholders in the E-learning activities are considered

Faithfulness to the key intercultural non-formal education characteristics

6. E-learning activities are participatory and learner-centred

- The needs analysis on which E-learning activities are based is explicitly communicated
- There is an ongoing evaluation of the E-learning modules/units and the processing of its outcomes is clearly communicated to learners and other stakeholders
- The E-learning activities have a high degree of adaptability and personalisation to E-learners
- If adequate, there is the possibility for participants to autonomously manage their own spaces within the E-learning activity
- The educational material is structured according to the needs of E-learners
- The layout and navigation mechanisms in the E-learning activities are inviting and adapted to the group of learners
- The ICT used take into account the socio-economic context of the learners

7. E-learning activities are relevant to participants' contexts

- The E-learning activities incorporate participants' contexts into the educational process
- The E-learning activities take into account the cultural background of participants particularly how is E-learning perceived and evaluated in a given culture
- The E-learning activities take particularly into account transition between the learning process online and the "follow-up" - multiplication in their contexts
- If possible and adequate, the E-learning activities connect directly the E-learning with the contexts of participants
- The E-learning modules/units promote the use of multimedia presentations (not just written ones) for presenting and reporting participants' activities in their contexts

8. E-learning activities are based on experiential learning and oriented to learning by doing

- The direct previous and current experiences of participants out of the E-learning context are incorporated in the learning process
- The proposed E-learning modules/units/tasks are adequate (feasible and challenging, promoting the group interaction and offering new perspectives) so that they which become meaningful and not artificial experiences for the E-learners and for the group
- The different phases of the experiential learning cycle are tackled

9. E-learning activities combine the cognitive, affective and practical dimensions of learning

- All forms of expression and not just writing are used, for example synchronic meetings, audio, video, drawings…
- The affective aspect in the facilitation and in the social spaces are attentively considered in the E-learning modules/units
- There is a constant combination of synchronous and a-synchronous activities
- Possible actions in the Internet (campaigning, consultations, lobbying…) are explored

10. E-learning activities link individual and social learning, are cooperation-oriented and promote symmetrical teaching/learning relations

- Individual and group learning are balanced and cross fertilised through group activities, wikis, glossaries, forum, social network features, opinion pools, video conferences…
- The conceptual and educational frames are flexible, adaptable to the group and integrate the inputs of participants
- E-learning activities promote the critical attitude of users and open spaces of co-responsibility between the facilitators and the learners
- The power relationships in the E-learning activities are critically considered
- The different interests and expectations are considered through dialogue and negotiation

11. E-learning activities are holistic and process-oriented

- An interdisciplinary approach to learning is promoted
- Contexts and frames beyond the obvious ones given in the E-learning activity are considered
- The outcomes of the learning process are integrated in the future E-learning modules/units
- A high attention is given to the key and unobvious issue of facilitation online
- There is a clear emphasis on evaluation and on consolidation of learning achievements

Transformation in relation to learning, growth and social impact

12. Learning processes in E-learning activities are action oriented

- The personal and social dimension of learning are effectively combined
- The follow-up actions and the use of results in the learning processes is carefully considered
- The local realities of participants are integrated in the learning processes and in their follow-up
- The Internet as such is considered as a possible field of action for multiplying the results of the learning processes through E-campaigning, participation in E-consultations, E-lobbying…
- The results are assessed. There is an assessment and taking stock of
- The cooperation and networking with active partners in the field is promoted

13. Learning achievements in E-learning activities are shared with the wider community

- There is a consistent documentation
- The most relevant learning outcomes are transferred to open-linked Internet sites, blogs…
- Specific activities for the exploitation of results are promoted
- The using social media is considered for linking E-learners' actions to the wider community
- If relevant the translation into other languages of the main outcomes is considered

Innovation … beyond the mere use of E-learning

14. There is a continuous exploration of remaining and emerging challenges

- There is a continuous adaptation of the existing available software to the characteristics of intercultural non-formal education
- Spaces for the social and affective dimension of learning are developed
- The E-learning activities use methods and units beyond the "reading and writing" interaction
- There is a continuous exploration of creative facilitation strategies
- There is a strategy regarding E-learning in a development perspective, including research, quality assurance, development activities, as well as strategic networking with other actors in the field
- There are sufficient resources allocated on the basis of educational needs involved in E-learning

15. There is a continuous process of exploration of new visions on E-learning for intercultural non-formal education

- There is a continuous exploration regarding E-learning in relation to lifelong learning and knowledge based societies
- There is a continuous exploration regarding E-learning in relation to E-learning communities and E-learning environments
- There are cross-fertilising initiatives regarding the current use of E-learning in the field with other practices
- There is a reflection regarding new educational course formats based on blended learning
- ….

Appendix

Appendix A: Form for the description of E-learning platforms

Link, contact person, one or two screenshots

Underlying software on which the platform runs

Info on age and evolution of the platform

Info on main pedagogical approach (if available)

What are the main online learning methodologies used?

How are learners supported technically and pedagogically?

How flexible and (a-) synchronous is the timing and structure?

How autonomous are learners?

Typology of learning events (length, target group etc)

Info on usage statistics (people, intensity, recurrence)

Info on main stakeholders (who pays)

Info on languages and translation possibilities

Info on accessibility standards and disability policies

Examples of learning units or similar – to make the mapping more concrete

Any quality criteria already used? If yes, which, if no, what other tools are used?

Appendix B: Structure of the experts' survey - interview

1. - Your role(s) and experience with E-learning platforms so far (e.g. participant, administrator, trainer-team member, documentalist, evaluator…).
Note: If you were involved in more than one, please, list them all.

2. - Requirements that the activities had on the participants (time, availability, language skills…)

3. - Requirements and organisation regarding the facilitators or trainers in the platform (participants-trainer ratio, sharing of responsibilities among trainers/facilitators, any additional support measures as online mentoring or so…)

4. - Were these E-learning activities somehow certified?

5. - Main objectives and approaches of the E-learning platforms (e.g. for communication and networking, as preparation and follow-up of residential seminars, complementary to the residential seminars for contents exploration, blended learning in LTTCs, courses just through E-learning …).
Note: Please focus on one or two that you consider most significant.

6. - How did E-learning activities take into account the key features-characteristics of non-formal education?

7.- Main successes of the platforms (e.g. in terms of learning, participation, networking, visibility, impact in the wider community and/or at local level, development of digital competencies, innovation…) Which were the key factors of success?
Note: Please focus on one or two that you consider most significant.

8. - Main difficulties and challenges (e.g. access, participation, continuity, methodology, individual-group work, assessment and evaluation, in relation with the software …) Which were the reasons behind the difficulties and challenges?
Note: Please focus on one or two that you consider most significant.

9. - From all your experience with E-learning can you identify any remaining "open question, recurring dilemmas and hopes"? Any idea – hypothesis on how to overcome them?

Appendix C: List of interviewed experts and their E-learning experience

Andreas Karsten

- Participant, trainer, team member, evaluator in various courses on the ACT-HRE platform
- Conceptualisation, implementation, technical & pedagogical support, educator of the MAEYS platform
- Participant and educator of the P2PU platform
- Developer and advisor of the CUNY platform

Annette Schneider

- Team member in various courses of the Advanced Compass Training in Human Rights Education (ACTHRE)
- Team member of the Trainers for Active Learning in Europe (TALE).

Darek Grzemny

- Administrator, team member and technical assistant in various courses of the Advanced Compass Training in Human Rights Education (ACT-HRE)
- Team member and technical assistant of the Trainers for Active Learning in Europe (TALE)

Federica Demicheli

- Administrator and team member in various courses of the SALTO EuroMed E-learning platform

Sakis Krezios

- Team member in the Training of Trainers in Human Rights Education with young people, April 2009.
- Team member in the Long term training course of the ENTER project, 2009 – 2011
- Participant in the ACT–HRE, 2006. Partly an online participant.

Laura de Witte

- Participant in the Advanced Compass Training in HRE
- Teacher in the platform of Algarve University

Mohammed Dhalech

- Participant, administrator, trainer-team, and developer in both various formal and non formal E-learning environments

Petter Hoffman

- Team member and main facilitator of the Training of Trainers
- Team member of the Trainers for Active Learning in Europe (TALE)

PJ Uyttersprot

- Participant of ACT-HRE
- Team member of LTTC ENTER!
- Team member of ToTHRE

Giselle Evrard

- Team member of the Trainers for Active Learning in Europe (TALE)
- Team member of the Euro-Arab LTTC
- Team member XL2 (Spanish long-term training for trainers)

Vic Klabbers

- Developer of The Network University platform
- Course developer and tutor in E-learning
- Author of feasibility studies for NGO's and governments on the use of E-learning
- Evaluator of E-learning platforms and E-learning programs.

Ditta Dolejsiova

- Course developer, administrator, facilitator / trainer and evaluator of various E-learning platforms particularly of The Network University – North/South Centre of the Council of Europe and of the Universidade da Juventude (University of Youth)

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