

“The world is changing and... our institution is ready to make the change”

Challenges Identified and Solutions Proposed

Summary of the Capacity Building Sessions in Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany and Italy

No one would question that digitalisation is "taking over" education and training via ample access to learning materials and opportunities delivered in multiple formats (audio, video, text, etc). This has massive implications for the educational institutions and the educators. We have reflected together and come out with interesting trends, questions and challenges on the disrupting power of online learning.

- As it incorporates multiple delivering formats (audio, video, text, games, etc), digitalisation allows educators to design learning content that is adaptable and tailored to different learning preferences. Moreover, it is not bound by disciplines. Using MOOCs, students could easily crossover and learn something of relevance from unrelated disciplines. However, a question comes to mind: amidst such an enormous amount of content, how can the teacher select (and ensure) that students receive high-quality content?
- As content can now be accessed from anywhere at any time, educators can spend their time creating more engaging learning experiences and approaching learners individually instead of using all their lecture time delivering content. Yet that raises the question: are lecturers ready and prepared to accept this new role?
- Digitalisation offers incredible opportunities to learn via games, virtual and augmented reality, real-life examples, collaboratively and from each other. The question might be: are lecturers prepared to use these tools?
- Although digitalisation offers almost unlimited access to content from home, the 21-st century economy (still) relies heavily on cooperation and collaboration. Does online learning undermine physical contact and, along with that, the development of collaborative skills? How can the online vs. offline balance be achieved?
- Digitalisation makes learning more democratic. Students without access to first-class material now have it. It is perhaps possible that students from one university attend courses in another. One challenge seems to be: how to recognise the credits earned and how to make a fair assessment of the knowledge gained?
- COVID-19 pushed the online learning agenda forward and is making us think (and experience) it right now. How will this change learning and teaching? Will it be for the better or the worst?

Challenges identified	Solutions proposed
Internet, infrastructure and technology	<p>Ensure sufficient resources to invest in high capacity network infrastructure and digital equipment</p> <p>Consult staff when selecting equipment and technology</p> <p>Organise training for staff to use new equipment and technology</p>
Lack of interest and resistance to change	<p>Allow personal approach and personalised learning</p> <p>Build in possibilities for individual time management</p> <p>Stimulate collaboration by sharing information and collaborative work on common documents</p> <p>Engage everybody equally</p> <p>Avoid abstraction</p> <p>Draw attention by using interactive, dynamic and adaptive content</p> <p>Stimulate learning to learn</p>
Lacking digital skills of both educators and learners	<p>Improve key competencies by upskilling and reskilling based on needs and gap analyses and institutional priorities</p> <p>Stimulate self-directed learning</p> <p>Enhance peer learning</p> <p>Make available guides on how to search for information and verify its accuracy</p>
<p>Access to content and tools</p> <p>Abundance of content and tools</p>	<p>Enhance the access to information by providing the necessary infrastructure and technology</p> <p>Build upon what is already available</p> <p>Maintain complementarity and compatibility</p>
<p>Lacking physical contact</p> <p>Hiding behind the virtual identity</p>	<p>Enhance efficiency and collaboration in the learning process by using a variety of</p>

	<p>formats and tools (e.g. audio-visual tools, virtual and augmented reality, polls, etc.)</p> <p>Provide for interactivity in communication and receiving feedback</p> <p>Diversify the process by using ice-breaking, gamification, funny content, humour, art, etc.</p> <p>Stimulate creativity</p>
Engaging the learners and keeping them focused	<p>Personalise the learning process</p> <p>Allow the possibility to make a choice</p> <p>Take advantage of different formats and tools</p> <p>Use examples and visualisation</p> <p>Keep it short and interactive</p> <p>Get feedback</p> <p>Stimulate team and project work</p> <p>Make fun</p> <p>Build trust by demonstrating understanding, accessibility, and openness</p> <p>Encourage curiosity</p>
Balancing different needs and time schedules	<p>Agreement on communication protocol (time for answering questions, contact hours, etc.)</p>
Assessment and recognition	<p>Use a variety of assessment tools aligned to what needs to be assessed</p> <p>Take into account homework</p> <p>Give a number of distinct and not too much time-consuming tasks as homework</p>
Institutional cooperation	<p>Enhance institutional cooperation by participating in projects funded by the EU or other donors</p>

This publication has been prepared as part of the e-Leadership Trainer Accelerator (eLead Speed) Project (Code: 2018-1-BG01-KA203-047957) co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme, Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education, Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices.

