\<education in a digital world\>
\<reducing Inequalities through lifelong learning\>

31.05-01.06.2017 - Tallinn University - Estonia
LLLPlatform Annual Conference - www.lllplatform.eu

\<report\>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<DAY 1> TEACHERS' HOUSE

WELCOMING WORDS

</> David López, President of the LLLP

David López opened the Lifelong Learning Platform Annual Conference stating that the LLLP is delighted to organise the AC in Tallinn, and this for two reasons. First, because Estonia will hold the Council Presidency in the second half of 2017, and the second reason is the fact that high-level speakers were able to attend from both the Maltese and Estonian representations. He proceeded outlining the **holistic vision of education** that the LLLP promotes daily in their work, as well as inclusiveness in education.

Moreover, he stated that the LLLP believes **education should be the central point of the debate regarding social issues and changes**.

The digital revolution is a fact and this is the main theme of the Annual Conference this year. Experts and high-level speakers will deliver interventions and light up discussion, emphasising the main issues that education is facing in the digital era. Bearing in mind, of course, that **lifelong learning is key in developing the citizens of today and of tomorrow**.

<3>

Istel Rillo - Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

Ms Rillo outlined the strategies and the motivations of the Estonian Presidency to take on the upcoming challenges in the digitalisation of education. In her speech, she highlighted the great committment of the Presidency towards education. She pledged for intersectorial cooperation and proposed the Estonian model, as opposed to the European way.

The digital developments in education are an important point of focus of the Estonian Ministry; digital skills and infrastructure are key in addressing the issue. The debate still remains what should be first. Nevertheless, Estonia does very well in both aspects. According to the PISA assessment method, Estonia is one of the highest-scoring countries in Europe in that regard. Innovation takes place in Estonia in schools and this score dates back twenty years, as **the process of digitalising education was initiated in 1997**. All schools were equipped with computers and internet. That was not yet the case in the households, so **schools paved and led the way for the digitalisation of the whole country.**

Another important aspect of Estonian success is the cooperation of different stakeholders: civil society, public sector and private sector. **In Estonia, all relevant actors managed to agree in common objectives and goals regarding digital skills**. The rest of Europe understands digital skills differently: the European Commission did support the objectives through the digital-comp framework. Nowadays, digital skills are key competences and everyone's right in order to cope with all the information and the practicalities of everyday life.

In 2014, Estonia introduced the key competences framework. The link between labour market and digital skills is still a challenge to define: in fact, it is difficult to identify the link between ICT skills for students now and the needs of the future labour market.

The third dimension that the Estonian Ministry is focusing on in the digital era is to actually create technology, for example robotics and different IT solutions. As a consequence, cooperation between different stakeholders, as well as the cooperation and flow of knowledge between the different levels of education and of different sectors (formal informal and non-formal), are all key elements for the future. That is why, **for us, it is very important that an organisation as powerful and active as the LLLP focuses on digital skills and inclusive education**.

> **A very important aspect of Estonian success is the cooperation of different stakeholders. Civil society, public sector and private sector. In Estonia, all relevant actors managed to agree on common objectives and goals as per the digital skills.**

Istel Rillo
Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

<4>

Mario Cardona - Maltese Ministry of Education and Employment

The way to succeeed in lifelong learning is to tackle the digital devide. Malta has done so both internally and at the European level, and is still trying to prepare citizens for the world of tomorrow through the power of education

The dialogue to establish links between education training and labour market/ employment is very important to Malta, said Mr Cardona opening his speech. He went on to mention that Malta is developing its policy framework on digital education. Up until 2013, all primary and secondary state schools were equipped with computers and digital tools were distributed to teachers. There was a lot of investment for digital education in Malta, but also only a first step: results are likely to come out in the next years.

The will and intentions of the Maltese Government are to focus on human potential and development, based on the works of Paulo Freire when proceeding with the policy development. Digital skills go beyond preparing learners for employment. Beyond the labour market are communities. Education is about preparing citizens for the future communities as the world has become fast-changing due to the digital revolution. The digital divide for example should be tackled. The concern to build inclusive societies is still relevant, the point of digital skills is to prepare functional citizens and not a new elite. All education and societal changes need to happen in the framework of lifelong learning. Teachers' training and investing in teachers and educators is key in order to achieve these goals.

Moreover, **there are legitimate concerns that technology with its fast pace has been overwhelming for all policy makers, teachers, students and parents**. Furthermore, we must take into account that what matters is not technology by itself, but rather what technology can do for education. How can it be more relevant , more reliable, and more effective?

Another point to mention is what specific changes has digital technology caused to pedagogy. To what extent has the digital world influenced it? **Pedagogy should drive technology and not the other way around.** Moreover, creating communities of learning through the connected learning paradigm that technology can offer. And, last but not least, digital skills are and should remain an entitlement, a right for all.

> *Digital skills go beyond preparing learners for employment. Beyond the labour market are communities. Education is about preparing citizens for the future communities as the world has become fast-changing due to the digital revolution.*

> *Mario Cardona*
> *Maltese Ministry of Education and Employment*

<5>

KEYNOTE
SPEECH

Mart Laanpere, Tallinn University

Attempting to answer the focal question, Dr Laanpere explores ways in which the digitalisation of education and competences is affecting our lives.

Dr Laanpere was a teacher and school principal, but for the last 15 years he has been a researcher in Tallinn University. He began his keynote speech stating that people have different views on the role of technology when it comes to teaching and learning.

We can very well identify eight metaphors on the use of digital technology in education:

•"Soap": washing the hands before lunch for example makes a decent behaviour and human being but overdoing it does not really help: the same applies with technology and education.
•"Painkillers": quick relief, as technology can be useful immediately
•"Surgery": technology has meant a radical intervention in pedagogy and education
•"Vaccine": one-time education, and then no more is needed.
•"Vitamin": it is admitted that digital technology in education strengthens your capabilities to do more with yourself and with the others around you.
•"Viagra": but, on the other hand, it is also a temporary boost of performance when needed.
•"Genetic engineering": radical evolution of human species by the use of

technology in and on the body for example.

• "Placebo": it helps if you believe it helps. Let's take the MOOCs for instance: if some learners believe they are a learning tool it can be useful for them even though their educational and pedagogical capacity has proven to be limited.

Policy makers get often stuck in one of those approaches. In Estonia, for example, there is a law that states that each and every textbook that is published on paper should have a digital form too. Parents are concerned that children will be spending too much time in front of a screen, which is harmful for them. But this concern is not really relevant as there are fortunately many things that happen in the classroom apart from reading the textbooks. The "vitamin metaphor" applies best in this case.

Educational innovation and most of the instruments that policy makers develop are either based on macro or micro level. Macro level is evaluation of the textbooks content, evaluation of teacher and student performance, etc. Micro level is training individual teachers by providing courses. What this approach lacks is the "meso" level: the school institution. The school, its teachers, its administration (including parents and students) is the

core of innovation in the educational process.

The debate is whether teachers and educational stakeholders spend too much time on the "spectacular" at the expense of the "fundamental". That is a trap that policy makers often fall in order to win elections. The sectacular is for example Virtual Reality, interactive whiteboards and in general it has to do with numbers.

The idea might be good but sometimes there is a need for something more fundamental, more concrete. Some solutions that the digital technology has provided are considered "silver bullets".
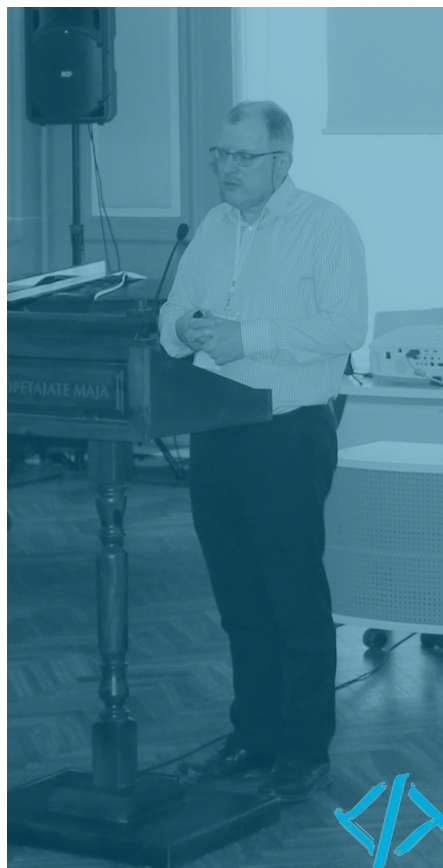
and only technological solution that is enough to make a huge breakthrough. The example is what was - and perhaps still is - perceived as such: Moodle MOOC e-textbook, OER Fundamentals, formative assessments, STEAM methods, online gradebook, all those could be achieved through relatively simple technological solutions such as Google services. It does not change learning as a whole, but has a huge impact on communication and the way of evaluating the teaching and learning techniques. Every teacher in Estonia is used to logging in to the system 5 or 6 times per day in order to work.

New technology is not only about making or creating something more effectively and more quickly. It entails social transformation, some people will lose their jobs, new jobs will be created, and there is a cultural dimension to it too. It is important that educators are granted enough freedom to experiment with technology. For example, some will experiment with MOOCS, some others with whiteboards, etc. The next phase is the use of the most effective one and then the development of the policy framework. Take the evolution of the phones: the third generation phones are basically multimedia computers that everyone has nowadays. This constitutes

<7>

> *The debate in digital technology is whether teachers and educational stakeholders spend too much time on the "spectacular" at the expense of the "fundamental".*

Mart Laanpere
Tallinn University

a huge cultural and learning change compared to the previous years.

Another example is the evolution of computers. **Even today, in the education sector, people still remain in the old concept of computers, according to whoch a special room with computers is needed in order to teach students digital skills**. In spite of this, the use of digital tools has changed as you can buy an Apple product through the Mac inside the Apple Store; the use of digital tools could be similar as everyone should have access to digital tools and the digital skills to use them.

Nonetheless, there is still the concern if that is the right solution. For example, if a school provides all students with tablets, then the cost is huge not only because of the purchases but also because of the maintenance, the training of the teachers on how to update them, and so on. In Estonia, it was decided at a national level that students should bring their own devices to the classroom and use them

for school/educational purposes. The inequalities that don't allow households to acquire the everyday basic digital tools should be tackled by the state.

One of the ways to achieve educational innovation is taking away textbooks from teachers. Teachers rely too much on textbooks because they see it as the point of the whole curriculum. E-textbooks , on the other hand, should be different than just a pdf textbook version, it should have different features. Or for example when implementing the online gradebook, most schools follow different stages and complicated procedures combining traditional methods and the online gradebook. This latter in particular offers teachers great advantages, as it is easy to use and a time-saver. Digital infrastructure is of concern too, as many schools have outdated technology, such as computers operating with Windows XP. There has been research and experiments testing the classroom arrangements and physical placements in order to

foster the "bring your own devices approach".

Sometimes students are more knowledgeable and competent than teachers and this leads to a twofold direction of the learning process which is more effective: in this way, teachers learn from students and – of course – students learn from teachers.

Dr Laanpere thanked the audience, the LLP for the invitation, and wished a very fruitful conference to all participants.

ERASMUS+ 30TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION

Kalmar Kums, Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

The year 2017 also marks the 30th anniversary of the Erasmus Programme. The LLLP wished to celebrate this special occasion with Archimedes, the Erasmus+ agency in Estonia. Mr Kums, from the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, joined the celebration in the historic Teachers' House.

<DAY 2> TALLINN UNIVERSITY

PANEL
DISCUSSION

Tiit Land, Rector of Tallinn University

David López, President of the Lifelong Learning Platform, opened the second day and welcomed the new guests. He reminded all participants of the main theme of the conference – "Reducing inequalities through lifelong learning" – and immediately gave the floor to Prof. Tiit Land, the rector of Tallinn University to explain his views on the theme.

Prof. Tiit Land started by thanking the organisers for both inviting him and most of all for bringing this insightful event to Tallinn University (and more broadly to Estonia). As a matter of fact, Estonia is now well-known internationally as an e-country, thus making it a very good location to discuss digital issues. In his words, Estonia scores quite high in the PISA assessment, but not so well in the PIAAC.

Estonian population is ageing – that is why digital technologies and lifelong learning are more important than ever.

In 2013 and 2014 there were broad discussions in Estonia about digital skills and competences, and the main argument was that **the goal for every graduate and employee should be to have digital competences.**

He further added that, today, there are a lot of skills to be mastered by learners, as everything is measured according to the capacity of the individual to carry out tasks. Digital skills should go along the generic sets of skills (teamwork, communication, organisational skills) because of their transversality in all learning fields.

He concluded his speech with a special observation: digital skills are of course to be a reality in all fields, but it is in education that the digital revolution can really change the way we learn and perceive the surrounding world.

<10>

Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, European Commission

Digital technology is a core priority for the European Commission. Ms Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, Director for Innovation, International cooperation and Sport at Directorate-General (DG) Education, Youth, Sport and Culture in the European Commission is invited to present the EC's initiatives..

The digital era is yet to be thoroughly addressed and its impacts are still unclear. The LLLP has been promoting efforts, drafting a digital paper to be fed with inputs from this very conference. There have also been recent developments in the EU to tackle these challenges: which is why Ms Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, Director for Innovation, International cooperation and Sport at Directorate-General (DG) Education, Youth, Sport and Culture in the European Commission is invited to speak.

Ms Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva reassured that **digital skills are at the top of the Commission's priorities.** Indeed, digital technologies are now a reality, quickly shaping a new world. And if on one hand the change can be scary, it brings risks and challenges, but on the other hand we feel the need to use the potential of technologies, because they can make our lives easier. This will certainly happen, but only if people are well prepared for it: citizens need to be digitally competent,

and **no one should be left behind.**

In Juncker's speech on the Future of Europe, he addressed a very specific question: **what should Europe look like?** Education will have a privileged spot in the debate. Having high quality education comes through a fast-going digital transformation. To this extent, it is worth recalling that all the presidencies are committed to cooperate on the topic, and that it is of course the will of the current Commission to boost it.

However, we need to be aware that digital pedagogies are immature, and that **the digital divide is not closing up but is instead widening**. In order to counter this, we need qualitative, inclusive and future-oriented schools; excellent teachers and school leaders; governance of education systems is also essential, and inclusiveness. Those elements will be of great importance, especially considering that **digital technology is innovating the classrooms, and will continue to do so in the**

future.

Ms Angelova-Krasteva then mentioned two recent initiatives:
• SELFIE – self assessment tool
• European Agenda for Higher Education: graduate skills relevant for economy, utilising resources...
1. Rising inequalities – Erasmus+ programme for opened intercultural understanding
2. Lifelong learning focus – and support to teacher training
3. University business partnerships

She stated that the Commission will continue to work with LLLP and other stakeholders, and invited LLLP and other stakeholders to explore how the Commission's tools and funding opportunities, in particular Erasmus+, can support their work towards innovative, digital and open education.

<11>

> **"**
> *Citizens need to be digitally competent, and no one should be left behind.*
>
> *Antoeaneta Angelova -Krasteva*
> *European COmmission*

Michael Horgan, European Commission

Michael Horgan from DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion took the floor to present the initiatives of the European Commission regarding digital skills. Equipping citizens with the rights sklills for the new digital world is a focal need for the EC. His presentation illustrated the main aspects of the New Skills Agenda, the Key competences and the Upskilling Pathways, and most of all the reasons why these initiatives stemmed from the need for digital technologies. He also put forward the two competence frameworks that already exist: the "Digital Competence Framework for Citizens", which should enable people of all ages to acquire basic digital skills, and the "Entrepreneurship Competence Framework".

The second part of his intervention focused on the transformations that the digital revolution is provoking in our society. Digitalisation is transforming the economy: from hospitals to industry, and from farming to the classroom. Which is why the target groups of the EC in terms of Digital Skills should be all citizens. Hence, goals for 2020 are:

• Train 1 million young unemployed people for vacant digital jobs
• Support the upskilling and retraining of the workforce
• Modernise education and training
• Reorient and make use of available funds
• Awareness raising

He concluded by admitting that, now more than ever, **the EC needs the support of CSOs to achieve its targets**. Civil society is indeed a privileged interlocutor to the European institutions, as they have contacts, access and knowledge on the ground, something that it is invaluable to policy-makers. When it comes to digital devide, CSOs are the actors to turn to.

<12>

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Steven Stegers, EUROCLIO

Steven Stegers delivered an entertaining and insightful intervention on the role of videogames in lifelong learning. It is in fact undeniable that nowadays the gaming component of learning is a major factor to be acnkowledged. How does lifelong learning address it?

When introducing Steven Stagers, Ms Salomon from EPA emphasised how important it is to have fun when learning: which is why Steven Stegers' presentation is based on "Gaming and Learning".

To begin with, he provided a short background presentation of EUROCLIO and its work in history education. Its role is to develop and promote innovative history education, which can draw from the modernisations in educational systems and techniques.

History is not taught solely in schools, but it is also transmitted through popular films and games. One example is the "Assassin's Creed" game series which managed to capitalise on the public's interest in history with a series of incredible success. "Valiant Hearts – The Great War" is another history-based game from the same company which is more research-based and allows players/learners to develop a sense of what the WW1 era looked like.

Another very popular game is "Call of Duty" which demonstrates the western view and perspective of what happened in WW2. All of those games reflect the real situations and kids can actually learn historical facts while playing. Of course, we have to take into account that they are fictional stories and there might be unreal characters or facts, and that events might even be bent to follow the storyline of the game.

A few numbers to highlight the importance of gaming: 67% of young people and 38% of the older population use the Internet to play games and download movies. This data cannot be overlooked, there is an enormous potential for learning. We, as educators, need to support the learning of students by challenging stereotypes that are resulting from these games, sensitising them about the difference between fact and fiction.

> *67% of young people and 38% of the older population use internet to play games and download movies. This data cannot be overlooked*
>
> **Steven Stegers**
> *EUROCLIO*

There are other games that foster learning that are not necessarily related to history. For instance, "Supreme Decision" is an educational game where a case in court is managed by the players/learners. It is fictional, but the subjects of the cases are real and relevant; the judiciary dimension and the rules of the law are real as well.

Published materials are useful tools for teachers. Our world is already fast-paced, and to push students - for example with strict time limitations – it is not perhaps the best approach. **We should strive more for accuracy than pace**.

Finally, in his presentation he stated that their organisation is currently mapping the tools that are available and free, and that they are in the blog of historians but they also develop their own tools by working with ICT developers. He gave a very interesting explanation on why videogames can indeed support a pedagogical function through gaming.

To this extent, EUROCLIO has developed an eLearning Environment which was financed and developed under different European projects during the last 10 years. It uses open source code, so that it does not involve any copyright. Mr Steger's thanked the audience and welcomed eventual questions.

Gina Ebner from the European Association for the Education of Adults stated that EAEA is holding the debate on how the future of learning will be and one of the discussion was the simulation games that would be good to illustrate and highlight contest but that some fear this innovation.

Shanti George from the Learning for Well-Being Foundation stated that history is not merely the transmission of facts such us dates and happenings, but the importance of games is no doubt to highlight that we are living history as part of a diverse community.

Daniele Di Mitri, from OBESSU, pointed out that some education experts claim that learning takes place out of the comfort zone of the learner. The dilemma then is if learning is a stressful activity how can games which promote amusement and joyfulness be part of learning?

Steven took up this last question and countered it saying **that games can be stressful and learning can be pleasant**. As an example: the Fair Play game.
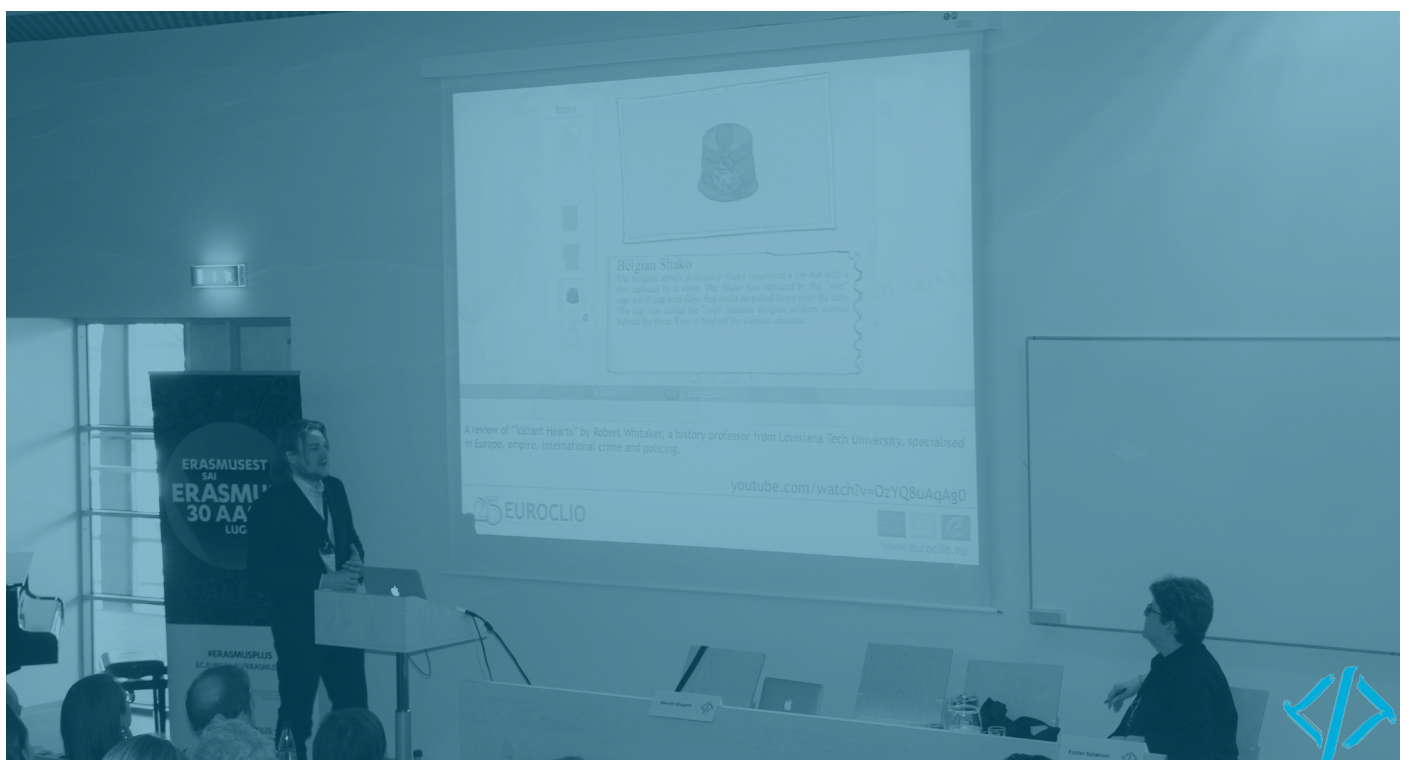
BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

1. Preparing citizens for digital democracy - *with Leo Pekkala*

2. Open and blended learning: facts and challenges - *with Mart Laanpere*

3. Pedagogical innovation through digitalisation - *with Ewa Milczarek*

4. Who's in, who's out? Eight profiles of digital inequalities - *with Ilse Mariën*

BREAK-OUT SESSION #1

Preparing citizens for digital democracy
with Leo Pekkala

Or, in other terms, a theoretical discussion on how to cope with digital technology conquering our lives.

Dr Leo Pekkala works as the Deputy Director of the National Audio-visual Institute of Finland (KAVI) and is the Head of its Department for Media Education and Audio-visual Media (MEKU), a governmental authority under the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The session began with a strong statement: **when students leave school they are on their own when it comes to learning, society thinks it has done their part and learners are alone in the learning environment.** But there is no need to panic: **other organisations such as NGOs are there to fill the gap**. We should enhance media literacy for the part of the population that is out of formal education.

How do we construct reality? With social media, a reality bubble is created based on your beliefs, views and opinions and it is difficult to break the bubble or overcome it. Today, we all live in our own bubble and through modern digital technology and social media this is aggregated to a higher extent. We always need real life in order to have a social activity, we need physical contact with other humans. But the digital revolution made it so that this is no longer necessary and it is a fundamental change in our perception of the social space.

Dr Pekkala turned the question around: **what part of our life is mediated?**

Everyday communication, work and jobs, shopping, travelling information, news, and fact checking. Society depicts competences and skills as very practical and pragmatic - either you have them or you don't. That's not true, and it is why Dr Pekakla does not agree with the DigComp put forward by the European Commission, because in that way people are perceived as robots or machines that either have the traits or they do not and they need to develop them. The pedagogical dimension is lost.

There is a huge proportion of the population (even in the EU) that is nevertheless lacking those necessary digital skills. And it is mainly an **accessibility issue**. With the EC's approach, it is easy to leave people behind. They might be elderly people, people with multiple disadvantages facing difficulties in reading and writing.

Gina Ebner intervened and said that, according to her, there is a societal aspect behind media education. It is not a mere transfer of knowledge, for example elderly people cannot grasp how touch screens work and these are more and more used in everyday life, for example for buying train tickets. This isolates

<16>

people and there is a lack of consciousness among policy and decision makers about the effect that this isolation has to a significant part of the population.
Media education could be deeper, not only using superficially the tool and use its outcomes but try to understand it, this learning process is very important.

Critical media literacy is what is needed today more than ever, digital competence is not enough. If one can use the computer to open a few news websites, this does not make them media literate. In most of the countries, fake news and stories are actually believed by a large part of the population who are considered to be able to use digital technology. When you are in that bubble you actually believe the xenophobic populistic

paranoia is true! So here comes the dilemma: how can the non-formal and informal education sector do something about it?

The radicalisation awareness network is a European network working on critical thinking and digital literacy. In many national frameworks it is part of basic and civic competences. There is a platform called snops.com: here they started collecting and myth-busting urban legends. And they found out whether they were true or not. This requires a lot of work. Even more so if you try to implement it at a global level. When you teach people to read they start to think on their own. So modern societies want to educate the children to become proper citizens, but the definition of a good citizenship can change depending on the

regime, the country, the system, the culture, etc. Many of the populists and far-right followers are very competent in terms of use of digital means and way more active than average, but that does not mean they are digital literate. Same thing applies for the people who believe and propagate fake news.

According the Dr Pekkala, the European Commission vision and position stop at the development of digital skills. For them, that's the goal, but there is way more than that. Skills are to be used for democracy, good life, stable work, economy, and ultimately peace. The session ends with a school leader quote: "**the main goal is to develop a culture in school that is based on human values: we do not want to raise evil geniuses**".

BREAK-OUT SESSION #2

Open and blended learning: facts and challenges
with Mart Laanpere

What are the new forms of learning foreseeing open or blended access? A journey through definitions and possibilities.

The first focus of this session was on licensing and openness for digital learning. When it comes to the digital, in fact, the accessibility of education resources is sometimes an issue. **In the digital world we are getting used to have everything for free and instantly**, whereas this was not the case for standard educational methods, where one had to actually purchase textbook, for instance.

Blended learning is therefore defined as the education programme (formal or non-formal) that combines online digital media with traditional classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some element of student control over time, place, path, or pace. Indeed, the share of OERs increased, and borders between commercial and open/free resources are becoming thinner: we are witnessing a phenomenon of convergence. Open learning platforms like Moodle are often actually closed, behind the lock - you need a password and username to enter.

Also companies are learning from this, and we see today a specialisation in the learning schemes. For instance, learning specialists are oftentimes hired by big companies to ensure better knowledge on how to avoid incidents at work; or, put differently, to ensure that the companies are actually learning from the mistakes they make, no matter the field (market, human resources, management, investments, etc.). The e-learning is now everywhere. It is used in banking services, energetics, and all other market fields.

When it comes to blended learning, money and funding are not necessarily the biggest issue: it is a lot about will. What's sure is that **blended learning is now fostering a new system of education**, an open-access system. Often, resources come from independent streams, and although it sometimes raises concerns, thare are advantages in that.

How widely is this used? **Companies are not (yet) using blended learning courses, universities are the only place where you can get them, so there is an increasing presence of companies at universities**. Because of the new system, we sometimes encounter the necessity to "learn how to learn".

> **In the digital world, we are getting used to have everything for free and instantly**
>
> **Mart Laanpere**
> *Tallinn University*

BREAK-OUT SESSION #3

Pedagogical innovation through digitalisation
with Ewa Milczarek

How is education itself changing by means of technological innovation? A positive and concrete example from higher education.

Ms Milczarek, assistant to Prof. Policastro at the Catholic University of Lublin, began by stating that 30 years ago studying was aimed at preparing the professions – i.e. memorising things and reproducing. Today, the education system has to prepare students for jobs that will no longer exist when they will be on the labour market; or, inverting it, it should prepare students for jobs that do not yet exist.

Digital learning has made learning shift in time and space. Now it is important to learn more, efficiently, fully.

And it's the best way because learning happens anytime, anywhere: information flows continuously.

She, as a professor assistant in university, wants students to get the most important information out of the law acts that she talks about in classes. She wants students to choose the most important elements, so that their analytic skills will be enhanced in the process.
In this process, the learners

1. Choose the act
2. Choose the purpose
3. Identify elements to present
4. Identify the most important resolutions

Daniele Di Mitri shared a thought: if digital technologies allow us to learn anytime and anywhere, grant us rapid access to information, can this allow thinking about new methods? Can it give students new ideas on how to learn? The answer is of course positive.

Georg Jürgens from ECSWE raised a concern: if we choose to learn anytime, anywhere, we also choose to miss out on the things around us. Other participants joined the conversation, claiming that the learner must be aware of what he wants to learn, and to be able to make decisions. Also, students have a choice but educators also have a choice and have to reflect on this.

Ms Milczarek then gave examples of new pedagogies

<19>

that are interesting but difficult to apply in practice: working groups.

By working in groups people have to interact with each other. The social aspect becomes very important in the learning process. It brings an added value. Also, having to explain to others what you are doing, makes the learner become a trainer and it reinforces the learning process.

Today, we need to challenge the notion of information: the focus should be on learning processes and how they are designed. Not all learning processes can be transferred into digital, for instance, or cannot be replaced by digital. Young children are a good example: they need social interaction, to get to know real things, to touch things, etc.

> **"**
> *The shift in the teaching paradigm would be to teach students how to learn by themselves, how to use tools by themselves. Empower them and make them the first and most active actors of their own learning*
>
> *Ewa Milczarek*
> *Catholic University of Lublin*

Some of the participants pointed out that learning happens through a complex communication process and the collective dimension is what makes learning interesting. Hence the fundamental question: should digital learning foster more dialogue? And if so, how?

The answer from the leader is yes, but we should bear in mind that communication can happen through learning tools too, or through communication devices.

Steven Stegers highlighted that **the real challenge for educators is finding the right tool for the right learning outcome**. It is the teacher who makes the selection.

Georg Jürgens pointed out the time when pupils are introduced to digital technology and asked when it is important to develop the different skills: is there a special window for IT technologies?

Attention was then directed to the digital competences of teachers and educators. Here participants agreed that **there is indeed a gap in terms of competences of teachers and educators**, and that it is difficult for teachers and educators to keep up with the latest development to a level at which they are comfortable transmitting them to their students.

There is also a teacher aspect: in this context of keeping up, the teacher

individual faces difficulty. Teaching in teams can help, as it means teachers learn from each other's experience.

Estonia can provide a successful story for this method: technology educators work in the schools to help teachers to have new apps, cope with the new technology, and find new ways how to teach. This could help the ones who are not comfortable with using ICT tools, and of course creates new jobs.

Another aspect was worthy of attention: online bullying. The greatest part that educators can play in this issue, is to come up with ways to build self-confidence online.

Ms Milczarek wrapped up the session. **The simplest change management about integration of digital is to give support for those who don't go fast.** A useful and impactful approach is to provide some coaches and people from the school to be the person people can go and speak to.

<20>

BREAK-OUT SESSION #4

Who's in and who's out? Eight profiles of digital inequalities
with Ilse Mariën

All in all, what are the types of learning actors that are being left behind? Who's benefitting on the other end from the digital revolution?

To help us identify eight profiles of digital inequalities, Ilse Marien brought us into different indicators. What's staggering is that those indicators are at the same time social and digital, in that some refer to the societal dimension of the profiles, whereas others take into account the technical dimensions of the digital skills. So, who are these profiles? In her presentation, Ms Marien explains that indicators help us assess eight profiles of digital inequalities. Here they are:

- Digital outcasts
- Hopefully undigital
- Digital fighters
- Smoothly digitals
- Digital all-stars
- Unexpected digital masters
- Unexpected digital drop-outs
- Digitally self-excluded

If the first five categories are on a scale of digital (and also social) inclusion, the three last profiles present different and controversial characteristics.

The most important thing is that **it is (very) rare to see a digitally-excluded person who is not also experiencing some sort of social issues**. Those are rebels, people who are voluntarily struggling to be left out of digitalisation. Otherwise, **social inclusion and digital mastery always go hand in hand**.

<21>

DIGITAL FISHBOWL

The digital fishbowl is the last step of the LLLP Annual Conference. In a circle, participants are called to answer the ultimate question of the two-day event: «is the digitalisation of education contributing to reducing inequalities?»

Daniele Di Mitri, member of the LLLP Steering Committee from OBESSU, introduced this debate session. Experts who led the break-out sessions were asked to position at the centre of the hall, whereas all participants sat in concentric circles. The discussion was only possible in the central four chairs, so whenever somebody would want to speak, somebody else from the first four chairs would leave their spot to the newcomer.

> *We need strong social commitment in order to consider technology as a service of citizens that will foster more inclusive societies.*

The discussion is launched and moderated by Daniele Di Mitri. The use of non-formal education methods and also the use of common digital tools not only require but also foster the development of skills and competences that are useful and helpful for individuals for their personal fulfilment and development.

Research has shown that teachers (formal) and parents (informal) have a significant impact on digital behaviour. Digital tools are still «just tools» what matters is how individuals use them and what purpose they have.

As education is never neutral, cooperation of different actors is extremely important. In fact, **many groups are excluded from the process of learning such as people with disabilities or groups excluded by certain communities. Technology could play a role in fostering inclusiveness and increase these groups' capacity to participate in the learning process.**

Formal education institutions can learn a lot from non-formal learning environments, especially about using technologies in a formative learning. **Digital technology pushes formal education systems to change.**

A provocative question was asked: do we really need formal education systems in the future? Thanks to digital technology and results from recent research boundaries between educational environments are becoming more fluid. Building co-curricula, project-based activities by which students actively participate in the learning process and that promote inclusiveness is a reality and a necessity nowadays.

There is still need for the State to finance the learning process and the need to have trained educators that children, low-skilled adults, and parents can trust.

It is a contradictory fact to talk about non-formal and informal while attaching them to formal definitions. In that way we still leave behind the learning processes.

What about the use of Google services in school? This issue was already addressed in the first day

<22>

at the Teachers' House. Opening up education to big corporations might foster the risk of digital speculation. How big of a risk is it and what can we do to prevent it?

All big companies have educational services but what happens with the data? It might be controversial but big data is really useful and interesting in assessing and studying online behaviour, for example.

Digital education is about the tools and not the business, and both teachers and students should be able to choose the most effective and efficient tools thantwork for each classroom.

Media education and critical media literacy is key to the use of such tools of big corporations.

We should promote ethical tools in education. The majority of people will in any case push the "agree to the terms and conditions" button without really caring about sharing their personal data. We cannot close education from the practical popular tools that exist but we should raise awareness and develop legislative and policy mechanisms to protect personal information. Equally important to legislation is the learning environment, the empowerment of parents for example.

According to Dr Pekkala, some Finnish schools have decided to replace handwriting skills with typing skills. This statement opened up another angle to the debate. Data show that only 10% of university students can type blindly. What the Finnish want to generalise is already there. If schools are to be more creative to attract the interest of students then they should abandon the hours dedicated to obsolete subjects such as calligraphy skills for example.

The Finnish educational revolution is not happening the way you usually read about it. Do not trust whatever the media say, this is the principle of critical thinking and media education and should inform

<23>

all of our thoughts.
Learning to use specific tools is not the way to go as tools are always there in large quantity and diversity and will go obsolete very soon. **The point is to foster a proactive attitude towards learning because through that attitude one could actually learn how to use any digital tool**.

A new strong statement was launched: if schools cannot afford laptops for all, students should bring their own devices.

The problem is with the group of students whose families afford it. It can be discriminating even in more subtle ways, depending on the model and type of the device. It is ok if students can bring their devices too, but in principle schools have to make sure that these discriminations do not become everyday life in the school environment.

The concerns are also towards the learners' well-being. One position was that in **any educational environment only free educational sources should be used**.
The «bring your own device» policy is practically already the policy of higher education in every country.

No matter how free the educational systems are the higher educatoin will have class segregation.

Digital technologies must be introduced during the very early stages of children's lives. And this is because it is happening in any case as digital technology has become an integral part of the families' life.

At the end of this very fruitful discussion, David López closed the conference by thanking all participants for the vibrant debates of the last two days.

<24>

DIGITAL
FAIR

The Annual Conference has been a place for sharing, where members and partners of the Platform got together to share experiences, projects, initiatives and ideas. A dIgital Fair was set up for them to showcase their best practices. Members, partners and participants were thus able to present their best ideas, to actively look for interesting partners and to get an overall idea of eachother's work and priorities.

DIGITAL STANDS

- **ALL DIGITAL**
BRIGHTS Project

- **EAPRIL (REPRESENTED BY FUAS)**
Digitalization in universities of applied sciences in Finland

- **ECSWE**
Media Competency and Walford Education

- **EFIL**
Open Badges

- **EFVET**
Modern and Jopapp projects

- **EUCA**
eLene4work

- **EUROCLIO**
Europeana

- **FICEMEA**
Actions against the merchandising of education in the digital field

- **UNESCO**
UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning - Publications
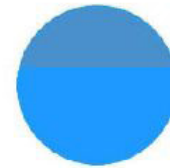
- **VOLONTEUROPE**
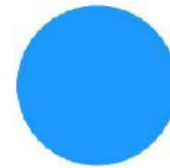Volunteering for the Europe

<25>

<26>

PARTNERS

rue de l'Industrie, 10 - 1000 Bruxelles
tel: +32 (0)2 893 25 15
e-mail: info@lllplatform.eu

<27>

ABOUT THE LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

The Lifelong Learning Platform was born in 2005 as a response from civil society organisations to the definition and implementation of a European policy in the field of education and training in the so-called «Open Method of Coordination».

In 2001 already, several educational networks had come together to share their experience and expertise and to react to the Europe-wide consultation on the EU «Lifelong Learning Memorandum». This cooperation became systematic when the Platform was established as a permanent organisation in 2005. For 12 years now, the LLLP has played a key role in structuring and increasing the input of civil society on the «Education and Training 2020» and «Europe 2020» strategies and their ancestors.

Today funded by the Erasmus+ Programme, the LLLP was acknowledged by the European Commission in 2009 as a "unique representation" of lifelong learning of the various education and training actors organised at EU level, and in 2011 as "in a unique position to support European networks in education and training to work collectively at European, national and local levels and to contribute to a structured policy dialogue within the open method of coordination in education and training".

Gathering 41 member organisations, the Lifelong Learning Platform is today the most legitimate interlocutor of the European institutions in the field of lifelong learning. The LLLP continuously defends the need to implement a dialogue across educational sectors and between stakeholders and public institutions at all levels, regional, national and European.

Values

The Platform fosters a vision of lifelong learning that promotes equity, social cohesion and active citizenship. It believes that the objectives of education and training should not only be described in terms of employability or economic growth but also as a framework for personal development. It is essential to raise awareness on the fact that lifelong learning should include a large range of learning settings and create more complementarity and continuity between formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Vision

The Platform is a tool to promote a holistic vision of lifelong learning, from cradle to grave, that is not limited to formal education but integrates non-formal and informal learning. By bringing together actors from all sectors and levels of education and training, The LLLP contributes to an increased flexibility between systems. By encouraging an exchange of knowledge, it aims to build a citizen's voice on education and training issues but also to propose concrete solutions to make lifelong learning a reality for all.

Objectives

▸ Pursuing an active dialogue with European institutions
▸ Enabling exchanges of best practice, experiences and expertise
▸ Disseminating information on key issues in the lifelong learning sector
▸ Organising events and developing activities

<28>