



ELSE



Eco/logical Learning & Simulation Environments
i n H i g h e r E d u c a t i o n

Eco/logical Learning and Simulation Environments in Higher Education (ELSE)

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www.elseproject.eu

The Erasmus+ research project *Eco/logical Learning and Simulation Environments in Higher Education*, in short, *ELSE*, was registered as part of the key action, Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices (Strategic Partnerships). The priority of the project is Higher Education and the development of skills - supporting the use of digital technologies to improve pedagogies and assessment methods. Its horizontal priority consists of (a) open education and innovative practices in a digital era and (b) the extension and development of educators' competences.

The project started in September 2018, under the coordination of prof. dr. Alba Graziano, Università degli Studi della Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy, who created a partnership formed of 10 higher education institutions across Europe and an IT company specialised in digital tools located in Rome, Italy. The partnership includes, besides the university represented by the general coordinator, recorded as P1, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK (P2), Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, Romania (P3), International Balkan University, Skopje, Macedonia (P4), Università Politecnica di Milano, Italy (P5), University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus (P6), Universidad de Cadiz, Spain (P7), Instituto Politecnico do Porto, Portugal (P8), Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan, Poland (P9), Entropy Knowledge Network, Rome, Italy (P10), Universitatea

de Medicina, Farmacie, Știință și Tehnologie din Târgu-Mureș, Romania (P11). ELSE focuses on 6 intellectual outputs: IO1, *Innovating pedagogies at tertiary level: a hypertext of good practices*, <http://www.elseproject.eu/io1/>; IO2, *Flipping the academic classroom: the eco-system*, <https://evoli.altervista.org>; IO3, *Learning through simulation: technology enhanced environments for university*, <https://else.entropylearningplatform.it/>; IO4, *Personalizing competence e-assessment: a digital tool*; IO5, *Making change happen: the ELSE university teacher's manual for teaching the Humanities in the digital age*; IO6, *Making self-reflection feasible: the ELSE university student's guidelines to self-assessment*.

The first three IOs have already been implemented and concrete results have been obtained by most partners as far as these are concerned, while the last three IOs are still under work. One can consult IO1 on the website specified above which shows the way the Bologna Agreement was implemented by the project countries. Also, case studies can be read which offer insights into the research conducted by the partner institutions during various scholarly endeavours.

IO2 or EVOLI (as the platform created by the colleagues at Politecnica di Milano is called) can be used by accessing the above mentioned address and is meant to help teach a flipped class. As an instructor, one can create a free account and include a recorded video, in a table, for the support of a class. This video is automatically given a code which the teacher must pass on to the students so that they may be able to watch the video. Then students will be able to assess and offer instant feedback to it. This can be a recording of a class taught by the instructor himself or herself who then adds it to the table so that the students may be able to easily watch it at home or a recorded video already present on YouTube (for instance, an interview given by a personality explaining the theoretical strands of a particular field of study) which can be used for blended learning purposes.

The internet address above can be accessed by students who, while watching the video, can stop it multiple times, click on the happy face for understanding the idea, on sad face for not understanding it or on the question mark for recording their feedback or question(s) either anonymously or by using their institutional accounts. The EVOLI platform contributes to the development of the perspective one has on a class and it can thus determine its improvement according to the topic studied.

IO3 or ECORE (a platform created by the colleagues from Entropy Knowledge Network, Rome) can be accessed through the website indicated above. The platform contains a set of storyboards or serious games created by ELSE partners that follow the logic of a story at the end of which a certain didactic goal must be attained. These digital tools mirror simulation environments and are exercises that offer students insights into revision and assessment by giving them a chance to remember the practical side of theory. The tools consist of series of a maximum of 10 stages in which an avatar appears on each slide (which represents a stage) and utters an input to which a student must select an answer from the options offered by the game creator. The options are awarded points – one of them being right, another partly right and another one wrong. The last slide gives the instant result to the digital exercise under the form of a percentage showing where the wrong answer or partly wrong answer was given. Students are encouraged to do the exercise again so that they may thoroughly understand and remember the issue assessed.

IO4 or EDASH (a tool created by the team at the University of Cyprus, Nicosia) is being implemented by several partners and it refers to student self-assessment based on the tests they

have taken online. Just like EVOLI and ECORE, this can be installed on the institutional Moodle platform as a plugin for use on the university e-learning platform. This way students can self-assess their work and teachers can also use it during their classes for the development of a modern and efficient perspective on teaching.

IO5 and IO6 represent the manuals written as part of the project and consist of the exercises solved by students in class and the results obtained following their implementation in the partners' home institutions. Being under work, the partners are in the phase of assessing the results and drawing reports based on the use of these platforms during their classes.

For more information about the project or ways of accessing any of the tools, please visit the ELSE website <http://www.elseproject.eu> or the ELSE Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Education-Website/ELSE-Erasmus-Project-298304407625525/> or write an email message to: aba.parlog@e-uvt.ro You can also consult the project pages on LinkedIn, Instagram or Twitter.