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of the  
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on e-Learning**

Brighton Business School, University  
of Brighton  
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Edited by  
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## Contents

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Preface		xii
Biographies of Conference Chairs, Programme Chair, Keynote Speaker and Mini-track Chairs		xiii
Biographies of Contributing authors		xv
Revisiting the Personal Transferable Skills Debate - an eLearning Pedagogical Perspective	<i>Samuel Adu Gyamfi, Lene Tolstrup Sorenson and Thomas Ryberg</i>	1
Survey of Teachers' use of Computer/Internet in Secondary Schools in South West Nigeria	<i>Babatunde Alabi Alege and Stephen Olufemi Afolabi</i>	8
Issues and Challenges in Implementing eLearning Projects in Higher Education: The Case of Jordan	<i>Hussein Al-Yaseen, Saheer Al-Jaghoub and Nidal Al-Salhi</i>	16
The use of Open Educational Resources in Intra-Organisational eLearning and Continuing Education	<i>Antonios Andreatos</i>	23
Constructing a Survey Instrument for Assessing Characteristics of Effective Online Teachers	<i>Jonathan Barkand</i>	34
When Agents Make Suggestions About Readings	<i>Orlando Belo</i>	41
Some Reflections on the Evaluation of Virtual Learning Environments	<i>Nabil Ben Abdallah and Françoise Poyet</i>	48
Designing A New Curriculum: Finding The Right Blend	<i>Andrea Benn</i>	56
Critical Success Factors for the Adoption of eLearning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Educational Institutions	<i>Latefa Bin Fryan and Lampros Stergioulas</i>	63
Challenges in Developing e-Submission Policy and Practice	<i>Alice Bird</i>	73
Enhancement of e-Testing Possibilities With the Elements of Interactivity Reflecting the Students' Attitude to Electronic Testing	<i>Martin Cápay, Martin Magdin and Miroslava Mesárošová</i>	82
e-Assessment Using Digital Pens – a Pilot Study to Improve Feedback and Assessment Processes	<i>Tim Cappelli</i>	91
Digital Educational Resources Repositories in Lower and Middle Education in Portugal: Quality Criteria in the International Context	<i>Cornélia Castro, Sérgio André Ferreira and António Andrade</i>	100
eLearning: Roles in Distance Tertiary Education	<i>Ivana Cechova, Dana Zerzanova and Jana Berankova</i>	109
Independent Learning in Need or in Crisis? Independent Learning Under the new Four-Year Undergraduate Curriculum in Hong Kong	<i>Yin Ha Vivian Chan, Delian Dawn Gaskell, Mei Ah Tan and Lip Yan Felix Chao</i>	117
The Development and Application of a web Based Metacognitive Mapping Tool	<i>Serdar Çiftci and Mehmet Akif Ocak</i>	124
An Exploratory Comparative Study of Distance-Learning Programmes	<i>Marija Cubric, Karen Clark and Mariana Lilley</i>	134
The Optimal Teaching Style Based on Variability of Study Materials	<i>Blanka Czeczotková, Kateřina Kostolányová and Jana Šarmanová</i>	145

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Changing Academics, Changing Curriculum: How Technology Enhanced Curriculum Design can Deliver Strategic Change	<i>Christine Davies</i>	152
Web Conferencing for us, by us and About us – the Leeds Met Elluminate User Group	<i>Mark de Groot, Gill Harrison and Rob Shaw</i>	156
Tools for Evaluating Students' Work in an Interactive (Open) Virtual Space: Case Study of an eLearning Course in an International Network of Universities	<i>Jana Dlouhá, Martin Zahradník, Jiří Dlouhý and Andrew Barton</i>	166
Putting Things in Context - Designing Social Media for Education	<i>Jon Dron, Terry Anderson and George Siemens</i>	177
Experimental Assessment of Virtual Students	<i>Michaela Drozdová, Ondřej Takács and Jana Šarmanová</i>	186
Priming for Modules: A Case Study Evaluation of 'Pre-Workshop' Online Resources for an Executive MBA Course	<i>Glenn Duckworth</i>	195
Computer-Mediated Reading and its Impact on Learners' Reading Comprehension Skills	<i>Francisco Perlas Dumanig, Maya Khemlani David and Rodney Jubilado</i>	203
Do you see What I see? - Understanding the Challenges of Colour-Blindness in Online Learning	<i>Colin Egan, Amanda Jefferies, Edmund Dipple and David Smith</i>	210
Researching in the Open: How a Networked Learning Instance can Challenge Ethical Decision-Making	<i>Antonella Esposito</i>	218
Making Constraints and Decisions Explicit to Support Project-Based Collaborative Learning	<i>Gert Faustmann</i>	225
A Strategy for the Inductive Generation of Learning Objects in Low-Tech Contexts	<i>Ana M<sup>a</sup> Fernández-Pampillón, Elena Domínguez, José M<sup>a</sup> Lahoz, Dolores Romero, Isabel de Armas, Susana Palmaz and Jorge Arús</i>	235
Cognitive Communication 2.0 in the Classroom – Resonance of an Experience in Higher Education	<i>Sérgio André Ferreira, Cornélia Castro and António Andrade</i>	246
To What Extent Does a Digital Audio Feedback Strategy Support Large Cohorts?	<i>Rachel Fitzgerald</i>	256
Messages of Support: Using Mobile Technologies to Support the Transition of Students on Articulation Routes From Higher National Level to Degree	<i>Julia Fotheringham and Emily Alder</i>	266
Blended Learning at the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt	<i>Gabriele Frankl and Sofie Bitter</i>	274
Evaluating the use of Social Networking Sites as a Tool for Knowledge Sharing for Developing Higher Education in Developing Countries: An Exploratory Study of Egypt and Iraq	<i>Elaine Garcia, Ibrahim Elbeltagi, Sawasn Al-Husseini and Ahmed Abdelkader</i>	284
The Relationship Between Mindful Learning Processes and Course Outcomes in Web-Based Learning	<i>Danny Glick and Roni Aviram</i>	295
Researching and Sharing – Business School Students Creating a Wiki Glossary	<i>Andrea Gorra and Ollie Jones</i>	303

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
A Qualitative Evaluation of Academic Staff's Perceptions of Second Life as a Teaching Tool	<i>Rose Heaney and Megan Anne Arroll</i>	311
Introducing and Using Electronic Voting Systems in a Large Scale Project With Undergraduate Students: Reflecting on the Challenges and Successes	<i>Amanda Jefferies</i>	319
A Methodology for Incorporating Usability and Accessibility Evaluations in Higher Education	<i>Anne Jelfs and Chetz Colwell</i>	326
The Virtual Learning Environment - Directions for Development in Secondary Education	<i>John Jessel</i>	332
Multimodal Teaching Through ICT Education: An e-Twinning Program as a Case Study of Intercultural Exchange	<i>Paraskevi Kanari and Georgios Potamias</i>	340
Effectiveness and Learners' Evaluation of Combining Audio and Written Online Formative Feedback for Language Learning	<i>Rosario Kane-Iturrioz</i>	345
Model of eLearning Project Evaluation	<i>Jana Kapounova, Jana Sarmanova and Marketa Dvorackova</i>	355
Bridging the Gap – From Teacher to eTeacher	<i>Andrea Kelz</i>	363
Open Courses: The Next big Thing in eLearning?	<i>Kaido Kikkas, Mart Laanpere and Hans Põldoja</i>	370
Using a Social Networking Environment to Facilitate Transition Into Higher Education	<i>John Knight and Rebecca Rochon</i>	377
Evaluation of the Quality of Learning Scenarios and Their Suitability to Particular Learners' Profiles	<i>Eugenijus Kurilovas, Inga Zilinskiene and Natalija Ignatova</i>	380
Models of eLearning: The Development of a Learner-Directed Adaptive eLearning System	<i>Stella Lee, Trevor Barker, and Vive Kumar</i>	390
Can eLearning Enhance Practice-Based Design Courses?	<i>Jake Leith, Joanna Zara and Malcolm McInnes</i>	399
Sophisticated Usability Evaluation of Digital Libraries	<i>Stephanie Linek</i> □ □	408
Social Networks, eLearning and Internet Safety: Analysing the Stories of Students	<i>Birgy Lorenz, Kaido Kikkas and Mart Laanpere</i>	415
Learning Management Versus Classroom Management in Technology-Supported Blended Learning	<i>Arno Louw</i>	423
How to Represent a Frog That can be Dissected in a Virtual World	<i>Robert Lucas</i>	434
Learning by Wandering: Towards a Framework for Transformative eLearning	<i>Marie Martin and Michaela Noakes</i>	442
Online Student Engagement: Unfulfilled Promises or Promises Unfulfilled?	<i>Linda Martin, Gary Spolander, Imran Ali and Beulah Maas</i>	449
Personalized e-Feedback and ICT	<i>Maria-Jesus Martinez-Argüelles, Josep-Maria Batalla-Busquets, Patricia Noguera-Guerra and Ernest Pons-Fanals</i>	456

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Evaluation of Multimedia Tools and e-Feedback in Virtual Learning Environments	<i>Maria-Jesús Martínez-Argüelles, Marc Badia-Miro, Carolina Hintzmann and Dolors Plana-Erta</i>	465
Cyberbullying: A Workplace Virus	<i>David Mathew</i>	473
Learning in Smart Environments – From Here to There	<i>Peter Mikulecky</i>	479
Using Courseware for More Than Courses: You May Already Hold the Lease on a Versatile Virtual Meeting Space	<i>Karen Hughes Miller and Linda Leake</i>	485
An Analysis of Collaborative Learning as a Prevalent Instructional Strategy of South Africa Government eLearning Practices	<i>Peter Mkhize, Magda Huisman and Sam Lubbe</i>	492
Ideas for Using Critical Incidents in Oral Debriefing From a Business Strategy Simulation Game	<i>Jonathan Moizer and Jonathan Lean</i>	502

<b>Volume Two</b>		
eNOSHA and Moodle – the Integration of two eLearning Systems	<i>Peter Mozelius, Isuru Balasooriya and Enosha Hettiarachchi</i>	509
CASE Learning to Structure and Analyze a Legal Decision	<i>Antoinette Muntjewerff</i>	517
A Framework for Decision Support for Learning Management Systems	<i>Phelim Murnion and Markus Helfert</i>	526
Learning for Life - Building Blocks to Holistic Education	<i>Shekhar Murthy and Devi Murthy</i>	535
Student's Characteristics for Note Taking Activity in a Fully Online Course	<i>Minoru Nakayama, Kouichi Mitsuura and Hiroh Yamamoto</i>	550
Freeing Education Within and Beyond Academic Development	<i>Chrissi Nerantzi</i>	558
Why Recording Lectures Requires a new Approach	<i>Paul Newbury, Phil Watten, Patrick Holroyd and Clare Hardman</i>	567
eSubmission – UK Policies, Practice and Support	<i>Barbara Newland, Lindsay Martin and Andy Ramsden</i>	578
Harnessing the Internet for Authentic Learning: Towards a new Higher Education Paradigm for the 21st Century	<i>Abel Nyamapfene</i>	586
Motivational Predictors of Academics' Electronic Publishing in Nigerian Colleges of Education	<i>Maruff Akinwale Oladejo and Adelua Olajide Olawole</i>	593
Psycho-Social Predictors of Students With Disabilities' eLearning: Usage at the Federal College of Education (Special), Nigeria	<i>Adelua Olajide Olawole and Maruff Akinwale Oladejo</i>	601
An Integrated Environment for Providing Learning Style Information in a Unified Manner	<i>Fatemeh Orooji, Fattaneh Taghiyareh and Zahra Rahimi</i>	609
Using Lifeworld-led Multimedia to Enhance Learning	<i>Andy Pulman, Kathleen Galvin, Maggie Hutchings, Les Todres, Anne Quinney, Caroline Ellis-Hill and Peter Atkins</i>	620

The Project Mobile Game Based Learning	<i>Thomas Putz</i>	628
Using the Common Cartridge Profile to Enhance Learning Content Interoperability	<i>Ricardo Queirós and José Paulo Leal</i>	637
The Design and Development of an eLearning System Based on Social Networking	<i>Andrik Rampun and Trevor Barker</i>	646
Kansei Design Model for eLearning: A Preliminary Finding	<i>Fauziah Redzuan, Anitawati Mohd Lokman, Zulaiha Ali Othman and Salha Abdullah</i>	658
Changing Teacher Beliefs Through ICT: Comparing a Blended and Online Teacher Training Program	<i>Bart Rienties, Simon Lygo-Baker, Natasa Brouwer and Danielle Townsend</i>	670
Moodle and Affective Computing: Knowing who's on the Other Side	<i>Manuel Rodrigues, Florentino Fdez-Riverola and Paulo Novais</i>	678
Using Google Applications to Facilitate an Effective Students' Collaboration in the Teaching of Informatics to Students of Secondary Education	<i>Eleni Rossiou and Erasmia Papadopoulou</i>	686
Training Methods and Tools: Could eLearning be a Viable Solution to Solve SMEs Training Problems?	<i>Andrée Roy</i>	697
Using Blended Learning to Develop Critical Reading Skills	<i>Zuzana Šaffková</i>	705
A Mobile aid Tool for Crafting Active Learning Experiences	<i>Ahmed Salem</i>	716
King-Sized eLearning - how Effective can an Online Approach be for Large Module Groups?	<i>Marie Sams, Mary Crossan and Kate Mottram</i>	724
Designing Effective Online Group Discussions	<i>Rowena Santiago, Amy Leh, and Minoru Nakayama</i>	731
The Game and the Alternating Roles of Learner/Teacher as Facilitators of the Learning Process in Organizations	<i>Vitor Santos and Luis Amaral</i>	739
Implementing and Evaluating Problem-Based Virtual Learning Scenarios	<i>Maggi Savin-Baden, Cathy Tombs and Katherine Wimpenny</i>	746
The Evolution of eLearning Platform TESYS User Preferences During the Training Processes	<i>Adriana Schiopoiu Burlea, Amelia Badica and Carmen Radu</i>	754
Teachers' Skills set for Personal Learning Environments	<i>Zaffar Ahmed Shaikh and Shakeel Ahmed Khoja</i>	762
Bridging the Feedback Divide Utilising Inclusive Technologies	<i>Angela Shapiro and Aidan Johnston</i>	770
Post-Academic Masters Course in Management of Transfusion Medicine: Why the Difference in Access to the eLearning Between Countries?	<i>Cees Th. Smit Sibingal</i>	776
Engagement With Students in 'Middle Ground': A Flexible Learning Environment Allowing Simultaneous Access to Social Networking Sites and Formal Academic Space	<i>Anne Smith and Sonya Campbell</i>	780
The Learning Management System as a Social Mediator: A Story With a Happy Ending	<i>Dina Soeiro, António Dias de Figueiredo and Joaquim Armando Gomes Ferreira</i>	788
Can the Medium Extend the Message? Using Technology to Support and Enhance Feedback Practices	<i>Mekala Soosay</i>	794

Implementation and Analysis of an Online, Student Centred Learning Environment to Support Personalised Study	<i>Iain Stewart, William McKee and Kevin Porteous</i>	802
The Danger of the Downward Spiral: Teachers and Digital Literacy	<i>Caroline Stockman and Fred Truyen</i>	811
PeerWise - The Marmite of Veterinary Student Learning	<i>Amanda Sykes, Paul Denny and Lesley Nicolson</i>	820
iSELF: An Internet-Tool for Self-Evaluation and Learner Feedback	<i>Nicolet Theunissen and Hester Stubbé</i>	831
Using a Learning Management System for Executing Role Play Simulations	<i>Tone Vold</i>	841
The Effects of Self-Directed Learning Readiness on Learning Motivation in Web 2.0 Environments	<i>Chien-hwa Wang and Cheng-ping Chen</i>	846
Usage Cases: A Useful way to Improve Effectiveness of eLearning web Based Platforms	<i>Cristina Wanzeller and Orlando Belo</i>	854
The Virtual Path to Academic Transition: Enabling International Students to Begin Their Transition to University Study Before They Arrive	<i>Julie Watson</i>	862
Identifying and Locating Frames of Reference to Inform the Design of Virtual Worlds in Higher Education	<i>Katherine Wimpenny, Maggi Savin-Baden, Matt Mawer, Nicole Steils and Gemma Tombs</i>	870
Reaction Lecture: Text Messaging to Increase Student Engagement in Large-Scale Lectures	<i>Koos Winnips, Joost Heutink, and Hans Beldhuis</i>	878
A Holistic Approach to Instructional Design for Blended Learning Environments	<i>Li Zhong Zhang</i>	886
<b>PhD Papers</b>		895
Evaluating the Impact of an Arabic Version of an Adaptive Learning System Based on the Felder-Silverman's Learning Style Instrument	<i>Nahla Aljojo, Carl Adams, Huda Saifuddin and Zainab Alsehaimi</i>	897
Negotiating Doctoral Practices and Academic Identities Through the Adoption and Use of Social and Participative Media	<i>Andy Coverdale</i>	909
Enabling Disruptive Technologies for Higher Education Learning and Teaching	<i>Michael Flavin</i>	917
Exploring the Potential of a Mobile Computer lab in a Developmental Context: The Teacher's Perspective	<i>Fortunate Gunzo and Lorenzo Dalvit</i>	925
Collaborative eLearning in a Developing Country: A University Case Study in Uganda	<i>Evelyn Kigozi Kahiigi, Henrik Hansson, Mats Danielson, F.F Tsubira and Mikko Vesisenaho</i>	932
Applying the Multimedia Learning Theory in the Primary School: An Experimental Study About Learning Settings Using Digital Science Contents	<i>Fabio Serenelli, Enrico Ruggeri, Andrea Mangiatordi and Paolo Ferri</i>	943
Designing a U-Learning Course Platform for the Identified Teacher Training Needs	<i>Nazime Tuncay and Hüseyin Uzunboylu,</i>	953
<b>Work In Progress Papers</b>		971
Someone to Talk to – Using Automated Characters to Support Simulated Learning Activities	<i>Liz Falconer and Manuel Frutos-Perez</i>	973

Extreme Scaffolding in the Teaching and Learning of Programming Languages	<i>Dan-Adrian German</i>	978
Benefits and Barriers: Applying eLearning in the Context of Organisational Change to Improve the Learning Experience for Mature, Part-Time Students	<i>Simon McGinnes</i>	982
<b>Posters with Papers</b>		
Investigating Student Engagement With an Electronically Delivered Simulation of Professional Practice	<i>Olivia Billingham</i>	989
Instrumental Distance Learning in Higher Music Education	<i>Karin Levinsen, Rikke Orngreen, Mie Buhl, Marianne Løkke Jakobsen and Jesper Andersen<sup>1</sup></i>	993
Reflections on Academic Blogging as a Vehicle for Professional Development	<i>Peps Mccrea</i>	997
A Framework for Understanding Online Learning Communities	<i>Sónia Sousa, David Ribeiro Lamas, José Braga de Vasconcelos and Ilya Shmorgun<sup>1</sup></i>	1000
Trust in Distributed Personal Learning Environments: The Case Study of LePress PLE	<i>Sónia Sousa, David Ribeiro Lamas and Vladimir Tomberg</i>	1006
Breaking Down Barriers: Development of a Wiki Based Module to Enhance the International Learning Experience	<i>Karen Strickland, Liz Adamson, Carolyn Blight and Wendy McInally</i>	1012
eLearning in German Higher Education: Technology Implementation as a Challenge for Organizational Change	<i>Novita Yulianti, Michael Lund and Georg Müller-Christ</i>	1015

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## Preface

These Proceedings represent the work of contributors to the 10th European Conference on e-Learning, ECEL 2011, hosted this year by Brighton Business School, University of Brighton, UK. The Conference Chair is Sue Greener, and the Programme Chair is Asher Rospigliosi, both from Brighton Business School, UK.

The conference will open with a keynote address by Don Clark, former CEO of EPIC software and winner of the 'Outstanding Achievement in e-learning Award'. Expect to be enlivened by his challenge: "Don't lecture me!, ..and why technology is only scalable solution". Also on the first day we have Anne Boddington from the University of Brighton speaking on the topic of "Designing Education and Reshaping Learning". The second day will be opened by Professor Gráinne Conole, Director of the Beyond Distance Research Alliance at the University of Leicester in the UK with a talk entitled "Trajectories of learning - new approaches and directions".

With an initial submission of 239 abstracts, after the double blind, peer review process there are 108 academic papers, 7 Phd Papers, 3 Work in Progress papers and 3 non academic papers in these Conference Proceedings. These papers reflect the truly global nature of research in the area with contributions from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nigeria, North Cyprus, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States.

A selection of papers – those agreed by a panel of reviewers and the editor will be published in a special conference edition of the EJEL (Electronic Journal of e-Learning [www.ejel.org](http://www.ejel.org)).

We know you will enjoy and be stimulated by this conference. We hope you will also revel in the uniqueness of Brighton.

Sue Greener and Asher Rospigliosi

November 2011

# Biographies of Conference Chairs, Programme Chairs and Keynote Speakers

## Conference Chairs



**Dr Sue Greener** is a University teacher: HRM, Business Context, Research Methods and Learning & Development and has received a Teaching Excellence award from the University of Brighton and is Programme Leader for the Foundation Degree in Business. Sue is also the Course Director: online final year undergraduate course with students in diverse world regions, her researcher interests are focused on e-learning strategy, teacher development and reflective learning. Sue is the co-founder of the Business e-Learning Research Group and a member of the CROME research group on employment issues at Brighton Business School. Her Doctoral research focused

on exploring students' readiness for online learning. Sue holds a BA, MBA, EdD, FHEA and is a Chartered Fellow of CIPD.

## Programme Chair

**Asher Rospigliosi** lectures on e-commerce, management information systems, IS strategy, public sector IS and digital marketing at the University of Brighton. His research interests extend to e-learning and innovation in SMEs. Asher is a co-founder of the Business e-Learning Research Group and a member of the CROME research group on employment issues at Brighton Business School.



## Keynote Speakers



**Gráinne Conole** is Professor of e-Learning at the Open University, with research interests in the use, integration and evaluation of Information and Communication Technologies and e-learning and impact on organisational change. She was previously chair of educational innovation at Southampton University and before that Director of the Institute for Learning and Research Technology at the University of Bristol. She has extensive research, development and project management experience across the educational and technical domains. She serves on and chairs a number of national and international advisory boards, steering groups, committees and international conference programmes.

**Donald Clarke** was CEO and one of the original founders of Epic Group plc, which established itself as the leading company in the UK e-learning market, floated on the Stock Market in 1996 and sold in 2005. Describing himself as 'free from the tyranny of employment', he is now a board member of Ufi LearnDirect (Government agency delivered e-learning to 2.8 million learners), Caspian Learning (learning games tool provider), LearningPool (content provider), Brighton Arts Festival, and a school governor. Donald has won many awards for the design and implementation of e-learning, notably the 'Outstanding Achievement in e-learning Award'.



**Anne Boddington** is Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Brighton. Educated and qualified as an Architect and subsequently as a Cultural Geographer, she currently leads a Faculty of 3,900 students and a portfolio that includes the Visual and Performing Arts, Architecture, Design, Media Studies, Literature, Languages and Humanities. She is also Co-director of the ADM HEA Subject Centre, which we are proud to host at the University. Anne is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and an affiliate member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and is an elected member of the executive for the Council for Higher Education in Art & Design (CHEAD). Her initial research interests were rooted in the design and development of

the urban and cultural landscape and identity but have expanded to include the strategic design and development of learning and research space and its relationships to pedagogic practice and to educational strategies and governance.

## Mini Track Chairs

**Dr Antonios Andreatos** is a Professor at the Computer Engineering Division of the Hellenic Air Force Academy. He received the Diploma in Electrical Engineering from the Univ. of Patras, the M. S. in Computer Engineering from the Univ. of Massachusetts, the M.Ed in Adult Learning from the Hellenic Open Univ. and the Ph.D. in Computer Engineering from the National Technical Univ. of Athens. Research interests include e-Assessment, Active Learning methods, ICT & Web 2.0 & Open Resources in Education, Didactics of Computer Engineering, etc. He has published over 60 papers in journals and conference proceedings and a book. He is also involved in the scientific committees of many conferences in his fields of interest.



**Orlando Belo** is an associate professor in the Department of Informatics at Minho University, Portugal. His main research topics are related with data warehouse design, implementation and tuning, ETL services, database preferences, and distributed multidimensional structures processing. During the last few years he was involved with several projects in the decision support systems area designing and implementing computational platforms for specific applications like fraud detection and control in telecommunication systems, data quality evaluation, and ETL systems for industrial data warehousing systems. More recently, he was developing some research work

establishing OLAP usage profiles and optimizing OLAP selection methods, applying some of the techniques studied on these areas over typical e-learning scenarios.

**Dr Colin Egan** is a senior lecturer in the School of Computer Science, at the University of Hertfordshire. Colin has had an interest in accessibility and accessibility issues for a number of years and has presented his work to a range of International Conferences.



**Dr Amanda Jefferies** is a Reader in Technology Enhanced Learning at the University of Hertfordshire. She is passionate about promoting a positive learning experience for students in HE through careful choice of technologies, to enhance their engagement with studies. She is well-known for innovative research into understanding the student experience through using student constructed reflective video and audio diaries, a technique she refined through her JISC-supported 'Learner Journeys' STROLL project during 2007-2009. She has presented her research to international audiences across the UK, Europe and in North America.

**Dr Eugenijus Kurilovas** is a Research Scientist in Vilnius University Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, an Associate Professor in Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, and a Head of International Networks Department in the Centre of Information Technologies in Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania. He has published over 50 scientific papers, 2 books chapters and 2 monographs, participated in many large scale international scientific projects. He is a member of 12 scientific committees of the international journals and conferences. His papers presented on ECEL-2008, 2009 and 2010 have been selected for publication in Electronic Journal of e-Learning.



**Dr Barbara Newland** is a National Teaching Fellow with over 17 years experience of leading educational developments in Higher Education. She is a Principal Lecturer in the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of Brighton. Previously, Barbara was Blended Learning Co-ordinator at Glasgow Caledonian University, Manager of the Educational Development Services at Bournemouth University and the Learning Technology Team at Durham University.

**Dr Keith Smyth** is a Senior Teaching Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Higher Education at Edinburgh Napier University, where he leads the MSc Blended and Online Education ([www.napier.ac.uk/ed/boe](http://www.napier.ac.uk/ed/boe)). Keith is interested in how simple uses of technology can enhance learning, and where blended and online approaches can underpin community and work-based learning, broader skills development, and more inclusive educational practices.



## Biographies of contributing authors (in alphabetical order)

**Samuel Adu Gyamfi** is currently a PhD Fellow at the centre for Communication, Media and Information technologies (CMI) at Aalborg University, Copenhagen. He is currently researching on developing the Personal Transferable Skills (PTS) of the university graduate through E-learning.

**Imran Ali** is a Senior Learning technologist at Coventry University. He is passionate about the potential of technology in education. His background is in multimedia production and education. He currently supports staff across the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences in making effective use of technology for teaching, learning, assessment and research purposes.

**Nahla Aljojo** worked as an IT manager in the economics and administration department at King Abdul Aziz University in Saudi Arabia. She has a master's degree in computer systems and Information Technology from the Washington International University (USA) and is also a Ph.D. doctoral student at the School of Computing at the University of Portsmouth (UK).

**Hussein Al-Yaseen** holds a PhD degree in Information Technology from the University of Brunel, UK. His areas of interest are in information systems evaluation, project management and the implementation of information systems in developing countries. Hussein is currently an associate professor at the Management Information Systems Department at Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan.

**António Andrade** PhD in Technologies and Information Systems MSc in Information and Management Director of the MSc in Information and Documentation.

**Roni Aviram** is Chair of the Center for Futurism in Education, Department of Education, Ben-Gurion University. Aviram is interested in the impact of ICT on education and society, and in structuring theoretical and practical change processes in education. He has led R&D projects dedicated to designing virtual lifelong learning environments for enhancing human development and flourishing.

**Jonathan Barkand** has a B.S. in Technology Education and an M.S. in Multimedia Technology from California University of Pennsylvania. He is currently completing his dissertation work at Duquesne University for a doctorate in Instructional Technology. His area of focus is online education and its effects on teachers and students.

**Trevor Barker** is Principal Lecturer and University Fellow in Teaching and Learning in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Hertfordshire. He obtained a PhD for research into developing and evaluating adaptive multimedia computer systems in education. His recent research relates to the design and evaluation of adaptive educational systems and the affordances of virtual worlds such as Second Life for study and work.

**Josep Batalla** has a Degree and a Phd in Economics from the University of Barcelona. He is a Professor of Economics and Business Studies at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), where he teaches courses in the field of applied economics. Resident scholar at the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute

**Olivia Billingham** is a research fellow in the e-learning development unit at the University of the West of England. Her research interests include student perceptions and experiences of technology enhanced learning.

**Latefa Bin Fryan** (BSc, MSc) is a Researcher in the School of Information Systems, Computing and Mathematics at Brunel University, UK, where she is pursuing her PhD in the area of e-Learning systems. She received M.Sc. (2009-2010) in Information Systems Management from Brunel University, UK. She has published papers in several international conferences.

**Sonya Campbell** As senior service manager within Library and Information Services, Sonya supports the delivery of flexible learning environments and the development of services designed to maximise learner productivity and success. Current research includes the opportunities social media may bring to enable student engagement, learning and collaboration. Teaching themes are corporate strategy, effective management and customer service.

**Cornélia Castro** is a PhD student in Educational Sciences: Educational Computing Master in Quality Control: Environment. Graduation in Pharmaceutical Sciences High School Chemistry and Physics teacher. Research interests: ICT integration in the classroom, Web 2.0 tools in Education, Open Educational Resources, Learning Objects, Repositories and Social Media in Education

**Martin Cápay** works as a professor assistant at the Department of Informatics. He deals with the theory of teaching informatics subjects, mainly programming. He participates in the projects aimed at the usage of new competencies in teaching and also in the projects dealing with learning in virtual environment using e-learning courses.

**Tim Cappelli** is an experienced Project Manager who has successfully managed and contributed to a range of Technology Enhanced Learning and change management projects. Tim has developed a rich understanding of the application of informal and collaborative learning through the use of social networking tools that reinforce the links between individual and organisational development.

**Ivana Cechova** graduated from the Faculty of Arts at Masaryk University, Brno, with specialisations in pedagogy, English and Russian language and literature. She has worked as Head of Research and Deputy Head of the Language Department at the Faculty of Economics and Management. Currently she is a senior lecturer at the Language Training Centre of the University of Defence.

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**Serdar Ciftci** is a doctoral candidate studying in Department of Educational Technology, Institute of Educational Studies of Gazi University. He is also an expert working in Directorate of Computer Center of Gazi University. His research interests are focused on e-learning, metacognition, web-based Learning strategies.

**Chetz Colwell** is a Project Officer in the Learning and Teaching Development team of the Institute of Educational Technology at the Open University. Her role is to support the university in making online teaching materials accessible to disabled students by conducting technical accessibility testing, and conducting student evaluations.

**David Comiskey** lectures in Architectural Technology at the University of Ulster. He is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and his research interests include the use of video and screencasting technology to improve the student learning and feedback experience. He was recently funded by the Higher Education Academy to continue researching this area.

**Mary Crossan** has worked at Coventry University for six years and has industry experience of over 16 years. Her experience has been mainly in the financial area but with a high emphasis on managing people and resources for project delivery. Research interests are in the areas of improving student experience and work-based learning approaches.

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**Beulah Maas** is a lecturer in social and health care leadership and management in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at Coventry University. She is an occupational psychologist and her key areas of teaching and research are developing and managing people and social entrepreneurship.

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# Digital Educational Resources Repositories in Lower and Middle Education in Portugal: Quality Criteria in the International Context

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**Abstract:** The thematic of Digital Educational Resources (DER) and digital educational repositories at primary and secondary education levels is of growing centrality in the educational themes in the international debate. In order to make it easier for teachers and students to find the best and relevant learning resources and to encourage teachers' uptake of innovative materials and learning styles, authorities and/or companies in European countries have launched web based educational repositories. Following this trend, about two years ago, three major institutions in Portugal have launched their repositories: *Portal das Escolas* (ME), *Casa das Ciências* (FCG) and *BOA* (INESC-ID). After examining the state of the art of educational repositories in Europe, it was found that those three Portuguese repositories are not mentioned in recent European reports and so the study here presented seemed to be very relevant. This work aims to develop a descriptive and comparative study, in order to characterize the reality of the Portuguese repositories and compare it with European examples of good practices. To guide this investigation, the following question was theorized: "How are the Portuguese institutional repositories, for primary and secondary education levels, positioned in what concerns international quality criteria?" Our methodology design is a qualitative one and of type i) descriptive, as it is intended to characterize the main Portuguese institutional DER repositories for primary and secondary school education, aiming to assess the key dimensions that affect their quality and ii) comparative since it has in view comparing those repositories with reference European ones. In this sense, *Lektion* in Sweden and *Scoilnet, Portal for Irish Education* in Ireland are considered. The study was undertaken from the view of the DER producers and users. As a tool for data collection it was used a framework of analysis built on the *Guía para la Evaluación de Repositorios Institucionales e Investigación* (GERII), a joint publication of the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation and other organizations in the fields of Education, Science and Technology (Villar et al, 2010). The GERII guide includes a set of guidelines for the creation and evaluation of a repository, bringing together a battery of 31 evaluation criteria, distributed over seven dimensions that any repository must accomplish to meet quality and therefore was considered an excellent basis for our analysis. Comparing the three Portuguese repositories, target of this study, with two reference European repositories in order to contextualize the national reality in the international arena will stand for the Portuguese institutions that hold the repositories as an opportunity for improvement. Thus, Portuguese teachers will have an increased chance to access an eclectic collection of quality resources, in order to diversify their teaching strategies.

**Keywords:** comparative study; digital educational resources; evaluation; quality; repositories

## 1. Introduction

The 2010 edition of the Horizon Report (Johnson et al., 2010) refers to the *Open Content* as an emerging trend. In fact, we are witnessing a growing volume of digital content from different sources (OECD, 2007) in the education field. It is shared in the cloud DER which: i) contain inherently educational purposes; ii) are framed on the needs of education systems, iii) have identity and autonomy in relation to other objects and iv) meet the defined quality standards (Ramos et al., 2010).

This environment of sharing and reuse makes the access, by teachers, to a wide range of resources easier, increasing the exploitation of more diversified contents (OECD, 2007), which is considered as an important condition for the improvement of quality in education.

In this study we aimed to develop a descriptive and comparative study in order to characterize the reality of three Portuguese repositories and compare it with European examples of good practices in order to evaluate how Portuguese institutional repositories stand in the international arena. To achieve that we established the following research question: "How are the Portuguese institutional repositories, for primary and secondary education levels, positioned in what concerns international quality criteria?"

After examining the state of the art of educational repositories in Europe (EdReNe 2009, Poulsen, 2008; Dumitru et al, 2009), we verified that the variety in DER repositories in Europe is huge and the approaches taken by the various countries (22, altogether) differ. However, all countries and developers share the objective of making resources available and visible to the users and face the same challenges of reaching many users, managing rights and adapting standards (EdReNe, 2009: 4). The same state of the art showed us that three major Portuguese repositories: *Portal das Escolas* (Schools Portal – ME), *Casa das Ciências* (House of Sciences – FCG) and *BOA* (Learning Objects Exchange – INESC-ID), were not mentioned in recent European reports although the 2<sup>nd</sup> Strategic Seminar of EdReNe took place in Lisbon on June 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 [exception for *Portal das Escolas* once, under the Portuguese Technological Plan for Education (PTE) and its three axes, “(...) the content area will be supported by a Schools Portal to be used by teachers and students in schools all over the country (...)” (EdReNe 2009: 68)]. We considered these to be the main Portuguese repositories for the following reasons: 1<sup>st</sup> – a varied typology of resources; 2<sup>nd</sup> - curriculum areas covered; 3<sup>rd</sup> - number of publications; 4<sup>th</sup> - number of downloads made; 5<sup>th</sup> - number of visits.

*Lektion*, a web community for teachers, created in 2002, was chosen because it is Sweden’s largest teachers’ site, a so called “(...) *meeting place for teachers and all who work in Swedish schools* (...)” (Lektion.se, 2011). *Scoilnet* is the department of Education and Skills official portal for Irish education (Scoilnet.ie, 2011) and was selected because it is an institutional repository whose resources are constantly being reviewed by a team of over 30 curriculum experts. Besides, it allows the users to meet the repository at their local school web portal. Both *Lektion* and *Scoilnet* were still selected because i) their *url* was available; ii) their diversity of resources and iii) they were launched well before the Portuguese ones.

The relevance of this study is also justified by the fact that the results could prove to be inputs to the three institutions holding the Portuguese repositories analyzed, with the goal to continue acting towards the improvement of their quality.

## **2. Repositories drivers and barriers**

The repositories are online systems intended to archive, preserve, make available and disseminate the intellectual output of a community, available in a digital space where data and information are stored and updated (Ramos, 2010; Poulsen et al., 2008 ) or "digital store boxes that host collections of digital resources in a learning object format: i. e. resources that are designed to be integrated, aggregated and sequential in an efficient way to produce “units of learning” that are meaningful to learners” (Margaryan, 2007: 3).

### **2.1 Drivers**

As there are several potentialities in a repository, we have decided to stress some of those established by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, 2007):

- To facilitate the change of teaching practices;
- To stimulate more interactive and constructivist teaching practices;
- To promote the use of DER as a complement or substitute of teaching in the classroom;
- To make collaborative approaches in teaching easier and faster (OECD, 2007; GEPE, 2009);
- To induce and streamline the production and usage of tools, content, resources and information on digital support;
- To minimize the digital divide, allowing remote access at low cost to content, modules and courses;
- To enhance the inclusion in teaching and learning of people with special needs;
- To develop and strengthen a culture of lifelong learning

### **2.2 Barriers**

Studies identify several barriers that limit the access and use of repositories (Collis, 1995; Davis et al., 2010; OECD, 2007, Pawlowski and Zimmermann, 2007), such as:

- Technical: lack of broadband availability;

- Economic: lack of resources to invest in hardware and software required to develop and share DER;
- Social: lack of skills to use technical inventions; communication style;
- Cultural: resistance to share or use the resources produced by other teachers or other institutions, cultural perceptions of the teacher and student's roles;
- Political;
- Legal: intellectual property and copyrights.

### **3. Digital Educational Resources repositories**

The objects of this study are the three most visible institutional repositories of DER in Portugal, in primary and secondary education: *Portal das Escolas*, *Casa das Ciências* and *BOA*, which are compared with the Swedish *Lektion* and the Irish *Scoilnet*. The three countries – Ireland, Portugal and Sweden – are members of EdReNe thematic network (edrene.org, 2011) which was established in 2007 with support from the European Union's eContemplus programme (ec.europa.eu, 2011). The overall goal of EdReNe "is to improve the provision of and access to learning resources" (Poulsen and Lund, 2009: 86).

#### **3.1 Portugal**

##### *3.1.1 Portal das Escolas*

The *Portal das Escolas*, launched on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 and addressed to the educational community (teachers, students, parents and non-teaching), intends to establish itself as the institutional platform *par excellence* in the educational community, through which the Portuguese teachers can produce and access, anytime and anywhere, a wide range of online services that add value to the teaching and learning process. This repository provides "material and reliable information", adopting the ME mechanisms for validation of educational resources (ME, 2010).

##### *3.1.2 Casa das Ciências*

The *Casa das Ciências* project was created by the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (FCG), a Portuguese private institution of public utility whose statutory aims are Art, Charity, Science and Education.

It stands as "an integrator and amplifier vehicle of current efforts in using Information Technology in teaching and learning, made by many different agents and whose results are scattered" (FCG, 2010), establishing itself as a subject repository. This repository "aims to give visibility and usefulness to the efforts of many teachers, recognizing the merit they actually have and becoming a website of reference for all Portuguese Science teachers" (FCG, 2010). All the materials submitted are assessed by referees from a scientific and educational point of view, in an approach to peer-review. This quality control of the submitted materials complies with a set of rules stated in a regulation, which considers the awarding of prizes to the DER considered of higher quality, as a way to encourage the submission.

##### *3.1.3 BOA*

The *BOA/VemAprender* (INESC-ID, 2010) project is a research initiative sponsored by the Information Systems Group of INESC-ID at Lisbon with the aim of designing, developing and evaluating the implementation of collaborative platforms within teaching and learning contexts. Its main purpose is the creation of a web platform to which the educational community of various levels of education can access. This way it aims to enable everybody to participate collaboratively in building a repository of learning objects, with a significant set of associated information. This initiative intends to foster the creation of a community of practice that is a facilitator and an enhancer of quality in the teaching profession. In this repository, when submitting a DER, the author gives a certain value – credits – to its object. The value initially given is regularly updated according to the number of downloads made, this being the mechanism that allows the evaluation of the object submitted.

## 3.2 Sweden

### 3.2.1 Lektion

*Lektion*, the largest Swedish teacher site, created in 2002, is a repository owned and developed by a web company named *Lektion Sweden AB*. This company, located at Helsingborg, took the initiative of starting the *Lektion.se* site to connect Swedish teachers in an internet community. *Lektion.se* is an idea with suggestions for lessons by teachers, for teachers and the lesson database is referred to be gigantic, containing thousands of tips and ideas for teaching. This concept of community is favoured by the fact that the teachers can share ideas about the DER through a forum. There is a *Vendor Archive* where teachers can find everything to do relating school and even find a job in the *Jobs Archive*.

## 3.3 Ireland

### 3.3.1 Scoilnet

*Scoilnet* is the official education portal of the department of Institutional Education and Science in Ireland. This repository is responsible for the promotion and use of the internet in education under the Government Information and Communication Technologies in Schools Programme. Launched in 1998, the website is managed by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE, located at Dublin City University). Its current interface was launched in 2003 with design tweaks in September 2009 (*scoilnet.ie*). *Scoilnet* contains a database of over 11 800 digital resources (theme pages, reviewed websites, quizzes, lesson plans, crosswords and other multimedia). The content of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online* and of *Word Book Online* was specifically authorized for educational use within the site *Scoilnet*. Curriculum focused, it acts as a support to teachers, students and parents. *Scoilnet* promotes actively the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning.

## 4. Methodology

The type of study followed in this research fits the descriptive and comparative ones. The main institutional repositories of DER for primary and secondary levels of education in Portugal are characterized, the key dimensions that affect the quality are assessed and they are compared with other European repositories. To do this study it was required to previously identify the dimensions to be evaluated (Vilelas, 2009).

With that purpose, the *Guia para la Evaluación de Repositorios Institucionales de Investigación* (GERII), published jointly by the Ministry of Science and Innovation of Spain and other organizations in the field of Education, Science and Technology, was adapted (Villar et al., 2010). The GERII includes a series of guidelines for the creation and evaluation of a repository. For that function it gathers together a set of 31 evaluation criteria, distributed over seven dimensions that any quality repository must meet and therefore it was considered an excellent base for our analysis.

In the present study, we chose to make some adjustments to the evaluation model followed in GERII. Thus, we considered five of its seven dimensions and it was decided not to include the dimensions: *Interoperability and Security, Authenticity and Integrity of Data* because: i) since they are essentially technical dimensions, they do not fit in the methodology of data collection defined and ii) it is intended to perform an evaluation of the repositories only in the perspective of producer and user.

In table 1, and according to the guide GERII, we present the criteria to be considered in any evaluation of the five dimensions considered in this study:

**Table 1:** Dimensions to be evaluated

Dimension	Evaluation Criteria
Visibility	Visibility in the major search engines; existence of a standard name and a proper <i>url</i> ; presence of incentives for participation and information on the mode of submission.

Dimension	Evaluation Criteria
Policies	Disclosure of the mission, goals and function; information on who can submit, what can be submitted and in what formats; information on documents archive policies and preservation of content; forms of contact and support.
Legal aspects	Information on the intellectual property of DER present in the repository.
Metadata	Information on formats used; use of classifiers or definition of a policy of indexing content.
Statistics	Mechanisms to record access logs to the server and access, use and download of DER.

The methodology of data collection was based on the analysis of the repositories websites. Thus, each repository was classified for each criterion of the five dimensions and the evaluation was made from the point of view of the producer and user of DER.

## 5. Results

The study results allowed a global assessment of the quality of the five repositories of DER for primary and secondary levels of education, from the perspective of the author and the user of DER and are presented in a comparative summary for each of the dimensions assessed.

The following table 2 summarizes the *Visibility* dimension results.

**Table 2:** Dimension: *Visibility*

Advantages	Limitations
Excelent visibility in the search engines.	The website homepage of the Portuguese institutions makes no reference to the repository.
Standardized name of repositories (except BOA, facilitating its identification).	
Apropriated <i>url</i> .	Lack of public disclosure in the case of BOA (limitations not applicable to <i>Lektion</i> ).
Incentives for participation in the repository.	
Clear information on how to submit RED.	
In this dimension, there aren't significant differences between the Portuguese repositories and the foreign ones.	

In a search for repositories, by "denomination", in the three most used search engines (*Google*, *Bing*, *Yahoo*) (SEO, 2011), they all appear as the first result. The exception is *Lektion* that in *Yahoo* appeared in third place.

The fact that the ME, FCG and INESC-ID homepages do not make reference, in their internal search engines, to their repositories, may lead the target audience to consider the repositories as not worthy. This may be evidence that the repositories are not central in the policies of the institutions that hold them.

In all the analyzed repositories, information on how to submit resources is published and messages encouraging the participation and collaboration in them are promoted. It is noteworthy the dynamics of the repositories *Lektion* and *Scoilnet* which present a video explaining how to find a resource and/or how to make a submission. The *Scoilnet* repository also presents additional information on *10 ways to use Scoilnet*.

The main results of the dimension *Policies* are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Dimension: *Policies*

Advantages	Limitations
The mission, goals and functions of the repository are present.	There isn't established a policy of preserving content.
It is established how users can <i>upload</i> the content, what kind of content is accepted and in what formats.	
There is a requirement to register in order to download a resource ( <i>Portal das Escolas</i> and <i>Scoilnet</i> are exceptions <sup>1</sup> ).	
Several ways of contact and support are available.	
Unlike the Portuguese, the Swedish and Irish repositories have a video demo of their features.	
<sup>1</sup> Navigation is not subject to registration but some features are only accessible to teachers who are registered users.	

It appears that institutions do not declare their commitment to make content available on an ongoing basis and to take measures for their preservation (as in the case of migration, for example) to ensure access to them and create and maintain file formats. This condition can contribute to the reduction in the confidence of authors, inhibiting their collaboration. This less favorable aspect occurred in the Portuguese repositories as well as in *Lektion* and *Scoilnet*.

The *Legal Aspects* were compared and with regard to compliance with the fundamental requirements of authors' rights guarantee, we present a summary in table 4.

**Table 4:** Dimension: *Legal Aspects*

Advantages	Limitations
Confirmation by the author during submission, that the material does not violate any intellectual property right ( <i>BOA</i> is an exception and it was not possible to confirm in <i>Scoilnet</i> ).	Not identified.
Request for an authorization from the author that allows the distribution of content (not possible to confirm in <i>Scoilnet</i> ).	
Existence of information on copyright like <i>Creative Commons</i> or any other.	
Like <i>Lektion</i> , the Portuguese repositories adopt the <i>Creative Commons</i> philosophy in response to the protection of copyright. <i>Scoilnet</i> refers to Irish and European legislation, not materializing the type of license.	

The safeguard policy of intellectual property and copyright encourages the dissemination of ethically correct behaviour in the production and use of DER.

The enormous amount of DER available in the repositories makes it important that they are described by metadata (table 5). These allow the recognition of the repositories both by humans and computers, so that they can be located by using different criteria. This is a capital issue since the resources will be of little use if they cannot be easily found.

**Table 5:** Dimension: *Metadata*

Advantages	Limitations
There are standard procedures for indexing DER (indication of the author, description, topic, subject, school grade, keywords, target audience, resource type or time).	Not identified.
The metadata allow search by standard criteria.	
Metadata facilitate research of DER into the archives of the repository.	
In this dimension, there were no significant differences between the Swedish and Portuguese repositories (couldn't be confirmed in <i>Scoilnet</i> ).	

Upon uploading the authors are asked to categorize the resources through a series of standard criteria such as author, description, topic, subject, school grade, keyword or time, for example. Similarly, the repositories enable a search of DER by the same criteria.

Finally, the dimension *Statistics* (table 6) is also important, both from the perspective of the user or from the author.

When you use a repository, the statistics for a given DER, allow you to realize, for example, which resources were the most voted, information that can help you on the decision to download a particular resource, helping to give it visibility. From the author's point of view, this knowledge will give him

feedback on the interest that his own DER created in the community of peers and will encourage him to produce and share more resources. Knowing the number of visitors to a repository helps the teacher/user to understand its importance and so he starts seeing it as a tool that he might consider using to facilitate his work and diversify his practices. The existence of various statistics relating to the access to the repository is also valuable to the institution that holds the repository, as it provides information on the dynamics of the repository which is very important to its management.

**Table 6:** Dimension: *Statistics*

Advantages	Limitations
They report on the number of available and/or published objects.	Not identified.
They refer to the number of downloads and/or visits made.	
They indicate the number of visitors ( <i>Casa das Ciências</i> and <i>Portal das Escolas</i> have several historical data).	
They present the latest, top rated, most popular and/or most visited DER.	
The authors that share more learning objects are highlighted ( <i>BOA</i> ).	
In this dimension, there were no significant differences between repositories, although it was noted that <i>Scoilnet</i> does not indicate some of the items evaluated in this dimension; in addition, by not admitting the login, it did not allow the identification of possible limitations.	

## 6. Conclusions

Repositories contribute to the opening of the classroom to the world. The DER online availability allows them to be accessed from anywhere, anytime and by anyone who has appropriate training and an Internet connection.

The data presented in table 7, concerning the implementation of each one of the repositories evaluated in this study, as well as the discussion of the results, allowed us to answer to our initial research question: “*How are the Portuguese institutional repositories, for primary and secondary education levels, positioned in what concerns international quality criteria?*”.

**Table 7:** Data on the implementation of the evaluated repositories

	PORTUGAL			SWEDEN	IRELAND
	<i>Portal das Escolas</i>	<i>Casa das Ciências</i>	<i>BOA</i>	<i>Lektion</i>	<i>Scoilnet</i>
Inhabitants	10 647 763 <sup>1</sup>			9 354 462 <sup>2</sup>	4 470 700 <sup>3</sup>
Teachers	115 680 <sup>4</sup>			78 400 <sup>5</sup>	55 052 <sup>6</sup>
Registered Users	83 000 <sup>7</sup>	8 226 <sup>7</sup>	326 <sup>7</sup>	229 123 <sup>7</sup>	4 000 <sup>7</sup>
Published DER	2 620 <sup>7</sup>	1 407 <sup>7</sup>	168 <sup>7</sup>	Not available	11 800 <sup>7</sup>
Teachers/registered teachers	1,4:1	Not applicable for being a subject repository	355:1	No possible evaluation	14:1
Registered teachers/published DER	32:1	6:1	2:1	No answer from request to <i>Lektion</i>	1:3
<sup>1</sup> Estimate, National Statistical Institute, February, 2011; <sup>2</sup> 2009, most recent census; <sup>3</sup> estimate 2010, CSO; <sup>4</sup> GEPE, ME, 2009; <sup>5</sup> 2003; <sup>6</sup> 2007; <sup>7</sup> Data repositories, May, 2011.					

The data shows that Portugal is, as far as population size and number of teachers is concerned, closer to Sweden than to Ireland. Although Ireland is the smallest country in terms of population and number of teachers, it has the highest number of published DER. The reasons for that might be: i) the fact that the repository is quite user-friendly, allowing the teacher to file his preferences in the tab *My stuff*, ii) it is possible to submit any resource without peer-review (the teacher is the sole responsible for the material he submits and he can leave it in the repository for as long as he wants or take it off when he wants) and iii) the age of the repository.

The number of registered users in the Portuguese repositories is substantially smaller than in the two foreigner ones. This probably happens because of the youth of our repositories. However it is

noticeable that there has been an effort to keep increasing levels of quality since their creation. The ME *Portal das Escolas* requires the registration of teachers so that they can be certified in terms of ICT skills, which possibly explains the ratio 1,4:1.

Taking into consideration the few limitations detected for the Portuguese repositories in the dimensions evaluated on the basis of GERII, it appears that the solution of some of them (unavailability of broadband and the lack of resources to invest in hardware and software, for example) does not depend directly from the institutions that control them and others (the institutions homepages that make no reference to their repositories or the lack of definition of a public policy of preserving data) can be easily minimized.

The *Portal das Escolas* has recently launched (March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011) an area of educational blogs and on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the *Casa das Ciências* launched a bank of images and the first scientific encyclopedia written in Portuguese: the *WikiCiências* with a collaborative basis and constantly quotable on the Internet. We should highlight the uniqueness of this repository which, being related to a subject, is totally different from any of the two European repositories analyzed. For the sustainability of DER repositories in Portugal it will be important to foster communities of practice of which the *Casa das Ciências* seems to be the most paradigmatic one.

As a result of this comparative study, it was found that the foreign repositories meet certain requirements not found in the Portuguese ones. Thus, we present the following proposals for inclusion in the Portuguese repositories:

- Video demonstration on the process of submitting a resource and/or all the repository functions;
- Different tabs with information for parents and students;
- Forum for sharing ideas among users;
- Diversify the user generated content like blogs, wikis, twitter and podcasts in a logic of Web 2.0 technology;
- Engage in the provision of a web hosting service to all schools (in *Portal das Escolas*). This would enable schools to easily develop and host their website on a school's broad band network and to assume as a repository that actively promotes the integration of ICT in teaching and learning, under the Portuguese PTE.

Navigation in the five analyzed repositories could only be made in the language of the country of origin. It would be important to consider the development of interfaces, at least bilingual, in the language of the country of origin and in English. The same applies to metadata. We consider this to be a relevant step since in the European Union there are several projects of mobility of both teachers and students and exchange programmes between schools. This would also enable all teachers to access and adapt DER from other countries other than their own, thus creating a European network of repositories.

The comparative study held, whose goal was to verify how the Portuguese institutional repositories, in lower and middle education, are positioned in what concerns international quality criteria, allowed us to conclude that the Portuguese repositories are facilitators of authors collaboration and general users' access. They also contribute to promoting the pursuit of new practices in the classroom by teachers in primary and secondary schools in Portugal, as they make accessible DER with scientific and teaching quality.

In short, it seems that the Portuguese experience, in spite of being a recent one, when compared with other European experiences, is on the right track to achieve educational innovation. Repositories focused on people, on the community of education stakeholders and on teaching practices will help to overcome individual and organizational inertia and other barriers, towards the success among its users.

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