LangOER Conference: Minutes of the Parallel sessions 3: New networking opportunities for EdReNe

27/09/2016 – 10.00

Open discussion on networking and peer exchanges between EdReNe members, including synergies with the European Schoolnet Learning Resource Exchange (LRE) Subcommittee

Moderator: Elina Megalou (Greek Ministry of Education)

This session aimed at discussing the future of the EdReNe network and new strengths to address.

Presentation of the European Schoolnet Learning Resource Exchange (LRE)

Elina Megalou started with the presentation of LRE for schools developed by EUN to provide EdRene with access to a network of learning content repositories. The elements presented were the following:

- 240,000 OERS from 69+ contents providers
- MoEs in the Subcommittee are Founding Members (annual membership fee of 7,000 euros)
- Regions and industries can become LRE associate members
- The members meet twice a year
- There are 7 Funding members

She mentioned LRE Strengths (large network, expertise in Educational Repositories, annual events/ conference/ sharing of best practices…) and weaknesses (only 7 members, infrastructure not fully exploited, the OER landscape has changed)

Proposal

Elina Megalou also presented the proposals for the next years of the project to the audience, not including a change to LRE governance model or formal merging of the LRE and EdRene but a possibility for EUN LRE secretariat to help organize joint events and activities. The following activities were suggested:

- Two face-to-face meetings per year
- Two online meetings/ webinars
- Topics to be decided by LRE/EdReNe members

The participants of the session accepted the propositions. The necessity to organize face-to-face meetings was highlighted. For some of the participants, a more open topic meeting would be appreciated and a second meeting could follow up on the projects presented.

Jim Ayre, senior adviser at European Schoolnet was particularly interested in getting the views of all the speakers, challenges standards of all the members. He proposed to collect this information in a four pages and organize a meeting to discuss the issues raised, specifically regarding the following questions:

What are the key issues (technical, pedagogical) that educational repository owners now face?

According to the audience, the following key issues are:

- Possibility of getting data analysis is a key issue for some of the participants,

- There shouldn't be one repository per country but it would be better to combine the resources.
- The teachers need to get the results from the resource used (and make sure this results are accurate)

Other standards to discuss?

The audience specifically highlighted the necessity to emphasize the value behind using these tools and how to engage the teachers to use them. In line with these objectives, the necessary training of teachers was pointed out. Key elements of the situation in each country were mentioned as possible topics for further discussion by the network:

- **In Greece**, Elina Megalou highlighted that 5 repositories of OER exist. Textbook and online resources are linked and teachers find it very useful to use. She mentioned that the repository linked directly to the curriculum help the teachers to use it although they use the online textbooks more than the repository.
- **In Ireland,** the engagement of teachers was underlined in order to read the materials and now develop open education practices on the use of these resources. The importance to collect a documentation about practices was particularly highlighted during the discussions.
- The certification and links to the university were suggested in order to engage more the teachers (recognition by an institution).
- **In Germany**, a training program will start on OER that could be implemented as part of the regular teachers training. The participants introduced the new concept for the students about how they can learn from OER, change it and produce on certain topics. The training programme is going to be an 18 months' experimentation. An information platform will be set up in parallel. The participants highlighted the sharing of materials, which is still a problem in Germany.
- **In Ireland**, the needs to have a global look on the standards, and revisit previous meetings and documents was mentioned by the participants.
- **In Austria**, there is a strong initiative on digital competencies directed to all group ages. The big issue in Austria about mapping the competencies was highlighted and the current work on checks related to competencies.
- **In Norway:** participants suggested to automatically connect their resources with the repositories online and not manually, which is very time consuming. The introductory about OER and LRE could also propose a directory of each repository and a description of it.

An Erasmus + strategic partnership proposal could be draft in order to address the organization of OER.

Conclusions

➔ Face to face meetings and two meetings per year were decided (Two days meeting with flying the day before). There could also be a short discussion paper and get an online meeting to have the discussions and opportunity to ask questions (once between the face to face meetings. In total there could be a meeting every 3 months (online or face to face)
➔ Other locations than Brussels for the meetings will be considered
➔ The designing of a twelve month's' program was suggested to expand the network for more content providers by giving them a clearer vision of the activities planned. European Schoolnet dissemination channels could help in expanding the network.
➔ EUN will set up the agenda and taking care of marketing materials and methodology.