# people

**PEDAGOGIC EVOLUTION WITH ONLINE PERSONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

Lifelong Learning Programme

**PEOPLE Grundtvig Partnership**

- Personal Learning Environments
- Web 2.0
- Lifelong learning
- Informal learning in formal and non-formal contexts
- Digital and Media literacy

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

## PEOPLE Workshop held in Leiria, Portugal

The first transnational meeting of the PEOPLE partnership took place in Portugal, at the School of Education and Social Sciences - Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (Portuguese partner of the project). The Vice-president of the School, Professor Rui Matos, opened the first session and welcomed the participants. After that Johanna Jokinen, the project coordinator, initiated the works, explaining the meeting objectives and planned programme.

All the institutions began by making a small presentation of their own institution. Then, every partner described their "target audience" for this project - namely the course, learning objectives and students.

The partners then began a discussion on what Social Media is and how it can be used in each partner organization.

A seminar about Personal Learning Environments - PLE vs Lifelong Learning was conducted. This led to some discussion on organizing information with tags (new ways to interact with information) and the studies that show how PLEs are being used to bring informal learning into formal learning practices, using "self-regulated" learning as a pedagogy. Then the partners discussed how their countries approach informal learning and its recognition in Portugal, Spain and Turkey. Partners pointed that the use of tags is at the core of Picasa, videos and blogs and could be an interesting approach in courses as History, ICT and Languages.

Also, a Workshop on WordPress—how to create websites and use them in a PLE appraoch— was conducted.

After the Wordpress Workshop started the discussion on the work plan and its implementation, and on the next steps to be given

## What is a PLE, anyway?

"PLEs are websites or services where learners are able to produce learning content or reflections, and to store documentation about their learning processes; at the same time, they can aggregate data from their learning communities, through RSS feeds or interesting Web logs. Currently, most of the PLEs are the combination of social software applications and web services in a platform or portal for the purpose of learning." (Dodero & Yng, 2011)
http://dx.doi.org/10.1109/ICALT.2011.48

PLEs should be perceived as both a technology and a pedagogical approach that is student-designed around each student's goals or a learning approach chosen by a student acoording to a personal learning style and pace.
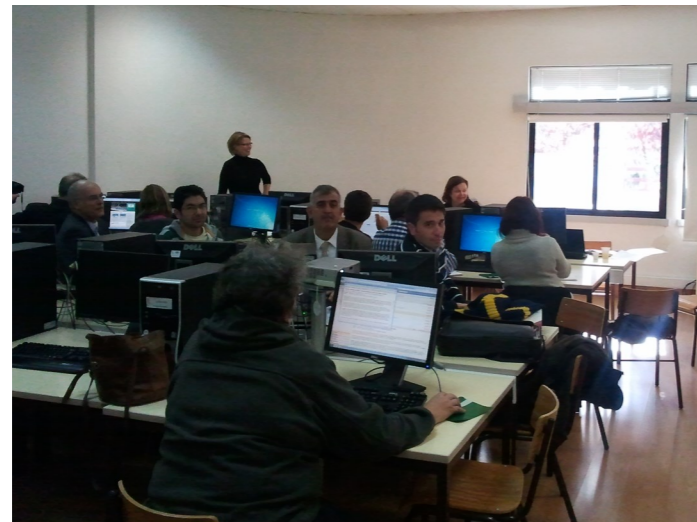
The learner surrounded by "satellite" technologies: Web 2.0 as a promoter of informal and formal education.

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## Next steps:

It was agreed that each partner organization will send IPL:

- a photo, for each partner institution participant;
- an institutional photo and logo;
- a small text;
- PLEs web addresses, postal addresses and
- GPS coordinates.

Also, it was also agreed that each partner will put some information about the project in their websites.
IPL will create and send the project logo to all partners.
Each partner will create its own PLE and, in the next meeting, will mention what was learned. The themes/topics for the PLE and the language are free.
Filipe will make some videos on how to make blogs with Wordpress and share it with all partners.

### A description of the hosting organisation

The Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (IPL) is a 30 year old tertiary education institution in Portugal. It has *campi* in the cities of Leiria, Caldas da Rainha and Peniche, and a mission of promoting knowledge, creating, transmiting and disseminating culture, science, technology and arts, guided research and experimental development. IPL is a national organization and a committed partner in the dynamics of the development of the city of Leiria and West region in which it is located. According to data from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, its courses present a high rate of employability (95,7% for the set of all academic degrees).

The academic community of IPL integrates 11,500 students, 885 teachers and 314 technical and administrative staff, , distributed throughout five higher education schools (School of Education and Social Sciences, School of Technology and Management, School of Fine Arts and Design, School of Tourism and Maritime Technology, School of Health Sciences), an Institute for Research, Development and Advanced Studies, a Distance Learning Unit, a Learning Unit for Technological Specialisation Courses and a Training Centre for Actives.

In total, 62 undergraduate degree courses are offered (day classes, night classes and distance learning), 40 master's degree courses and 18 post-graduate courses, being their training offer characterized by a vast multidisciplinarity, with courses in various areas of knowledge: Arts and Design; Entrepreneurial and Legal Sciences; Education and Communication; Engineering and Technology; Health; and Tourism. IPL was the first higher education institution in the country (non-specialized) authorized to teach degrees through distance learning, offering four undergraduate courses in this regime.

## PEOPLE Grundtvig Partnership:

Valkeakoski-opisto (Valkeakoski Lifelong Learning Centre) (Finland)
*The coordinator*

Instituto Politécnico de Leiria (Portugal)

Instytut Rozwoju Zasobów Ludzkich (Poland)

Confartigianato Formazione C.N.I.P.A. Umbria (Italy)

Porsgrunn Voksenopplaeringssenter (Norway)

Afyonkarahisar Halk Eğitim Merkezi ve Akşam Sanat Okulu (Turkey)

Centro de Educación Permanente Miguel Hernández (Spain)

More info on our website:

http://people.ipleiria.pt

# Photos



# Glossary

**INFORMAL LEARNING:**
Forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate but are not institutionized. It is consequently less organized and structured that either formal and non-formal education. It may include learning activities that occur in the family, workplace, local community and daily life, on a self-derected, family-directed or socially-directed basis.

**LIFELONG LEARNING:**
All learning activity undertaken through life, wich results in improving knowledge, know-how, skills, competences and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professioanl reasons.

**LEARNING STYLES:**
A set of behaviours and attitudes that influence how students learn and interact with teachers and peers. Learning styles are cognitive, affective, and psysiological behaviours that serve as indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning enviornment.

**KEY COMPETENCES/ SKILLS:**
Within the European Union area key competences are defined as the sum of skills (basic and new basic skills) needed to live in a contemporary knowledge society. In their recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (2006), the European Parliament and the Council set out eight key competences: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; competences in mathematics, science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, and civic competence; entrepreneurship; and cultural expression.

**NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:**
Education that is institutionalized, and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/or complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all. it is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. Non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are notrecognized as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all. Nonformal education can cover programmes contributing to adult and youth literacy and education for out-of-school children, as well as programmes on life skills, work skills, and social or cultural development.

## Opinion corner: Johanna Jokinen (Valkeakoski-opisto, Finland)

As a teacher, I am constantly looking for new approaches and methods to teaching. Having experimented for some years with various social media applications I find that they provide motivating tools that boost freedom and creativity for both teachers and learners. The idea of Personal Learning Environments was first presented to me by our Portuguese project partners. The concept of PLEs seems to fit in really well with my teaching ideology, which is to let learners "take the driver's seat", and assume the responsibility for their own learning.
At this seminar I learned more about the possibilities of PLEs, how they should be constructed, what aspects to integrate, and what tools to use. Together with my colleague Reeta Tenhola we are going to plan a course that integrates language learning and learning to use PLEs. We are really excited about this project, and we are sure to learn a lot from all the partners.



*"The concept of PLEs seems to fit in really well with my teaching ideology, which is to let learners "take the driver's seat."*

## Opinion corner: Filipe Santos (IPL, Portugal)

Using PLEs in formal and non-formal educational scenarios is a relatively new field of exploration. It assumes interesting premises, such as educational (the importance of informal and lifelong learning), technological (a ubiquitous read-and-write web and an interconnected world) and socio-cultural (students as digital natives). These premises offer great challenges to every educational institution of the partnership and an opportunity to change. Still, partners see many similarities between themselves but also many differences. Can we learn something from one another? Can we teach something to one another?
The educational premises of informal and lifelong learning are common to every partner and so are the technological ones. Therefore I believe that the most precious aspect of this project, and to take an advantage of our heterogenity are the socio-cultural aspects that are unique to every country.
I hope that we can use this project to test technologies and pedagogies without fear and that we may all learn from each partner's successes and failures!



*"I believe that the most precious aspect of this project, are the socio-cultural aspects that are unique to every country."*