



### OPEN EDUCATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING

#### A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE EU 2030 SCOPE

#### FROM THE ANDALUSIAN LIFELONG LEARNING SERVICE EXPERIENCE

*Francisco Castillo García, Juan Diego Pérez Jiménez and Luis Miguel Iglesias Albarrán*

*The widespread use of OER should be/become one of the clue factors in the search of an EU model of Open Education, in our current context of a dynamic, ICT dominated society, subject to constant global change.*

### Abstract

The irruption of ICT in society and particularly in education as an open model of access to data and knowledge has brought the need to reconsider what is *closed* in education and should be *opened*, to update with our present time society. We believe that many of the ideas exposed in this document are fully applicable to other areas of the educational system, such as school and higher education.

### Context

According to UNESCO, “in the knowledge-based global economy, future prosperity and security as well as peace, social harmony and environmental sustainability will depend on people’s capacity to make informed choices, to adapt to rapid change and to find sustainable solutions to pressing challenges. Today, more than ever, we must strive to offer learning opportunities for all, throughout life, to improve the quality of life, to promote a more just society, and to equip people to anticipate and tackle the challenges they face. Lifelong learning is the essential organising principle for reaching this goal”.

Times change,  
people change,  
situations change,  
relationships change.  
The only thing  
constant is change.

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We all live in a social context featured by facts such as the instant availability of the necessary data and information at any time, the exponential increase of connectivity and social networks, the constant growth of transnational mobility of students, teachers and workers that demand adjustments of all kinds. And all of these is happening within a framework of global change in so many aspects of our lives and areas of common interest.

However, in general, our education system, broadly speaking, is still eminently regulated, based upon classical and fairly closed structures and criteria, in key aspects such as:

- The curricula
- The classroom and the relationship among teachers and students / trainers and trainees
- The methodology of teaching and learning



- Assessment criteria
- The didactic resources format
- Prior knowledge recognition and certification
- Schools organization and inter-relationship

With this background, from the Lifelong Learning Department at the Andalusian Regional Ministry of Education we have been working for some years following a route map that tends to apply, from our management area, the concept of *open* to all possible elements previously mentioned. Though our area of competence relates to formal and non-formal adult learning, however we believe that many of the proposals exposed in this document are fully applicable to other areas and levels of the education system.

So, from our point of view, in a future desired horizon for the EU 2030 education system we consider as basic to push forward in the following fields:

### **1. Opening classrooms / teacher networks**

Move from a transmissive unidirectional teaching model, limited to the same time and space for all participants and based on essentially fairly theoretical concepts to write them down on a test once a term to a model that focuses on the following aspects:

- Project based work, with a methodology based on practical, integrated, meaningful and contextualised information and data, that promotes learning by doing.
- Change in the role of the actors participating in teaching and learning, promoting:
  - The role of teachers as counselors and facilitator, as well as students peer-learning and collaborative relationship.
  - Teacher networks for communication and cooperation among professionals.
- Encourage the use of ICT for learning, as a valuable tool, not as a goal in itself, to encourage learning beyond school and classroom, promoting 24x7x365 availability of guided or informal learning, anytime, anywhere.
- Continue with the promotion of transnational mobility of trainers and trainees to broaden the knowledge of other cultures and the cooperation and interchange of best practices to reinforce the idea of belonging to the same European group / society.

To reach that, we need to go forward in:

- Orientate initial teacher training to the items previously exposed, together with a teacher training plan to cover methodology and ICT use for learning within and out of the classroom.
- Design and put into practice need a soft hosting plan to introduce students used to classical learning methodologies, to get them to work and learn in a different way and how to use the different tools needed for that.

### **2. Opening curricula**

Go beyond the limits of present curricula, their structure and organisation, excessively long and organised in closed pieces of knowledge towards more open generic frameworks of items and areas to cover, including proposals of integrated contextualised interdisciplinary contents,

aimed at the acquisition of key, professional and active citizenship competences, especially considering learning autonomy and entrepreneurship values.

All this means giving schools more flexibility and autonomy to move towards a collaborative and interdisciplinary model, that's to say, a more *open* inwards and outwards (families, institutions, other schools...) school model, which means new changes in their organisation, so as to be able to responsibly decide what to teach as well as the methodology and necessary tools for that goal in a world of global constant change.

### **3. Opening educational resources (OER)**

Move on from a model based on closed static content (digital or paper textbooks), not adapted to the *changing* processes we live in to a model of *open* resources, dynamic (we can interact with them), multimedia (include audio visual elements) and multiformat (they adapt to different situations, realities and devices. this is especially important in lifelong learning), which tends to happen anytime, anywhere and promote learning autonomy.

To carry that out, we propose the design and definition of a European standard of open educational resources that enables the creation of a European repository of digital content,

- Whose access allows us an easy and friendly search of resources.
- Able to answer questions or search different format elements using semantic techniques.
- Able to use and adapt source files.
- Automatic translation of content to the target language.
- Create social and professional networks around this repository, to allow users intercommunication and cooperation.
- Constantly updated and disseminated.

### **4. Opening learning certification system, including non formal and informal**

Move from a system of formal learning certification to a European standard that includes non formal and informal learning recognition, validation and certification. For that state members should tend deepen into the integration of their national education and training systems so as to facilitate knowledge transfer and citizens mobility. Common standards may be created for other key and professional competences, following the example of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

## **Conclusion**

In our opinion, any education system cannot move on ignoring what's happening around and out of school. That's the main idea we tried to develop in this document. A more open, interconnected, globalised society demands a change in the education system in the same way, *opening* to society what is still relatively *closed*.

Our approach is practical as it comes from our daily work experience. Broadly speaking, it uses open educational resources (OER) as the backbone to reach the desired *opening* we promote in other fields or areas. we consider OER with a more ambitious shade of meaning of that given by UNESCO. In our view, to be *real open* they need to be open source, practical, multimedia, multi format and including semantic information within.

OER are created by teachers, parting from their own professional experience, connected them with real world and other fields of knowledge, promoting peer working and learning. Once created and stored, their own dissemination must facilitate the desired opening and change proposed.

Administrations and the public sector must involve themselves in this scheme to financially support, promote and facilitate the whole process, with the necessary quality technical support as well as the education policies in the directions described in this document.

This open education model aims at:

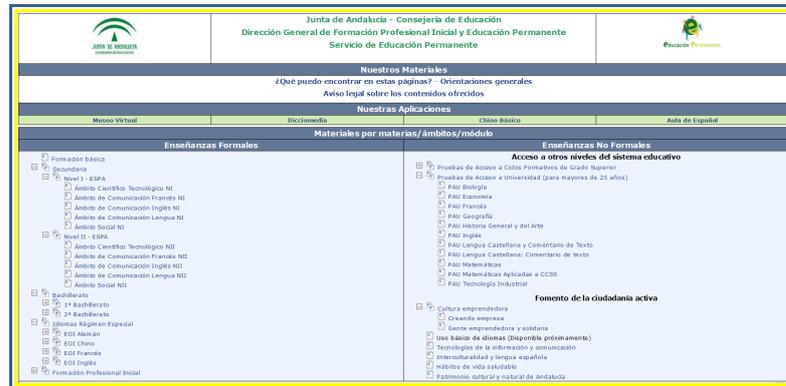
- Getting users to learn autonomously (learn to learn), using the available resources and the cooperation of others, to manage the information and the knowledge acquired to solve different situations along their life and face their future successfully.
- Give the necessary tools to allow users choose the pathway that best suits their interests and the necessary guidance to access to the European labor market, being ready to learn, update and adapt to new different circumstances and dynamics.
- Promote social abilities, teamwork, peer-learning, creativity, innovation, putting into practice and disseminate ideas and projects, risks assumption and entrepreneurial skills, as positive values to success in modern European society. That is to say, educate citizens to be able to cope with challenges the Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will generate.

There is still a lot to do and 2030 is just behind the corner, so the sooner we start, the better.

## Links

- Open educational resources repository:

[www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/permanente/materiales](http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/permanente/materiales)



- Andalusian Lifelong Learning Department website:

[www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/permanente](http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/permanente)



- Teacher Networks - European SchoolNet.

[http://service.eun.org/teachers-newsletter/TellNet\\_Teacher\\_Networks\\_web.pdf](http://service.eun.org/teachers-newsletter/TellNet_Teacher_Networks_web.pdf)

- UNESCO - Open Educational Resources.

<http://www.unesco.org/new/es/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/open-educational-resources/>

- UNESCO guidelines for the recognition, validation and accreditation of the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002163/216360e.pdf>

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