

Digiteach: an European Grundtvig project
VISIT TO THE REGIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTER “WAAS AND DURME”
(BELGIUM)

1. Introduction

From January 25th to the 29th, 2006 a Grundtvig contact Seminar was held in Barcelona. The main aim of these meetings is to bring together European adult educators to foster projects in Adult Education.

Each Grundtvig Seminar has a main focus. This Seminar was about the collaborative construction of knowledge via internet: “From TIC – information and communication technologies- to TAC –collaborative learning theories”.

Some teachers from the Catalan Adult Education Resource Centre looked for other educators who were interested in fostering ICT use in teaching and, in the end, we were able to create a group around this subject: the Digiteach project. There are six countries involved: Poland, Estonia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark and Spain.

2. The Digiteach Project

The goal of the project is to examine common issues in encouraging teachers to create and use digital content in their courses. On the one hand, we want to develop a joint platform which allows us to communicate our experiences and, on the other hand, to share good practices with colleagues in partner countries.

Communication between the partners is based on regular net and in-person meetings. The first in-person meeting was the visit to the Regional Adult Education Centre “Waas and Durme” in Belgium from November 15-17, 2006.

3. Before the visit to Belgium

Before our visit to Belgium the group used the following tools to communicate, to set the project main goal and to plan the work and the visit¹:

3.1 Quicktopic (Document review)

<http://www.quicktopic.com/> to work on the first draft document written in the Grundtvig contact Seminar in Barcelona.

3.2 Google: Docs and Spreadsheet

<http://docs.google.com/>. On-line text processor (previously know as Writely) to work collaboratively.

3.3 eSnips

<http://www.esnips.com/> to share documents on the Internet.

3.4 Videoconference

Flashmeeting <http://flashmeeting.open.ac.uk/> to organize the group net meetings.

4. The Regional Adult Education Centre “Waas and Durme” in Belgium

4.1 Location and courses

PCVO Waas en Durme <http://www.pcvowd.be/> is a adult education centre with five locations in the region of East-Flanders : Lokeren, Beveren, Hamme, Koevliet and Zele.

¹ Espiral Conference Paper (2006): [L'ús d'eines col·laboratives en la participació en un projecte europeu](#). Pepa Valdevira, Digiteach project Coordinator in Spain.

The centre is aiming at a broad target group: people older than 15 years old who want to renew their education, to have additional education or to learn for pleasure. The centre has the broadest offer of courses in Flandes. It is offering 195 different courses to 8000 adult learners per year.



Campus Lokeren



Campus Zele

4.2 Organization

There are 154 people working in four functional teams: board of directors, tutors, administration personnel and support personnel. The word “functional” means that each group has some autonomy to put its goals and to plan and assess its work.

Tom Van Acker is the Centre Manager and Cederic Van Herreweghe is the Centre ICT Coordinator and also the Digiteach project Coordinator.



Tom Van Acker
Directeur



Cederic Van Herreweghe
ICT Coördinator

The Centre aims are: to be flexible in its organization and to offer quality up-to-date courses. It is open to new initiatives, so some tailor made courses are organized based on requirements. As it is to be a little more than an Education Centre, some students'

events and traditional parties such as Visit of Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny are celebrated.

I would like to emphasize that this is an **integral** adult education centre that offers a wide variety of courses (professional, cultural and leisure courses). In our country teachers and students are looking forward to having something similar. Moreover, its flexible organization is probably one of the reasons for its success.

4.3 Premises

The Lokeren Campus premises are very spacious because they were an old factory.

The ICT installations are excellent. There are more than 700 computers.



One of the classrooms

The hotel management school premises in Campus Zele are also impressive. We had lunch there and apart from enjoying a fantastic meal, we had the opportunity to see the kitchen and the dining room and the way teachers taught the students to serve the table.



Campus Zele: Hotel management school

5. **ICT at the Centre**

The PCVO Waas en Durme Centre has a lot of expertise in using learning platforms and digital content.

There is an ICT Department which encourages teachers to use digital content and gives them technical support.

They use the NetOp School program to control the computers <http://www.tecquest.com/netop.htm>.



Computers with the NetOp School program

They work with Windows and commercial programs because they consider that they are the most common in students' homes.

5.1 **Multidisciplinary experience**

Eric De Vos and Elke Van Gehuchten described the multidisciplinary experience between their Language and Computer Departments.



Elke Van Gehuchten,
Language Department
(Spanish)



Eric De Vos,
Computer Department

Language Department Teachers work together creating contents and resources that they store in the Centre intranet. When teachers want to use this materials they can search and select what they need and they use the Centre platform (Dokeos) to present it to the students. <http://elo.pcvowd.be/>

The screenshot shows the login page of the Elektronische Leer Omgeving (ELO). At the top right, the title 'Elektronische Leer Omgeving - ELO' is displayed. On the left, the logo of the Provinciaal Centrum voor Volwassenenonderwijs (PCVO) Waas en Durme is visible, along with the text 'PROVINCIAAL CENTRUM VOOR VOLWASSENENONDERWIJS'. Below the logo, a welcome message reads: 'Welkom op de elektronische leeromgeving van het PCVO Waas en Durme.' A list of categories is provided, including Autotechniek, Bedrijfsbeheer, CAD-tekenaar Bouw, Bouw, CAD, Chemie, Kunstvaardigheden, Centrale Verwarming, Elektriciteit, Fotografie, and Grafische Technieken DTP en Multimedia-operator. To the right of the categories, a section titled 'Veelzijdiger leren d.m.v. een elektronische leeromgeving' explains that users are expected to learn and work independently, and that the platform is designed to stimulate self-learning and social interaction. A login form on the right side includes a language dropdown set to 'Nederlands', fields for 'Gebruikersnaam (login)' and 'Wachtwoord', and an 'OK' button. Below the login form, there are links for 'Registratie', 'Wachtwoord vergeten', and 'Algemeen', with the website address 'PCVOWD.BE' and a yellow welcome message: 'Welkom Welkom op onze Elektronische Leeromgeving.'

Students receive some benefits from using this platform: they just have to learn one interface for all the courses they enrol, they can download their activities and do them at home and they can have electronic communication with teachers.

They also highlighted that students' materials have to be organized and they proposed the portfolio system.

Moreover, they suggested that teachers should be taught on-hand daily tools such as Skype and on-line shopping.

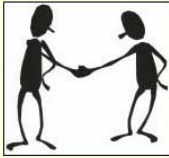
Some of the Language exercises stored in the Centre intranet come from on-line materials developed by the Belgium Education Department (Bisonline) and they are in a European Framework of Reference for Modern Languages.

BIS Nice to Meet You!

Next door

The Van de Velde family arrive at their new house. They meet the Jones family, who live next door. Reconstruct their conversations.

De familie Van de Velde komt aan in hun nieuwe huis. Ze ontmoeten de familie Jones, die naast hen woont. Reconstrueer hun gesprekken



Hello, Debbie. I'm Paul. / I'm from Belgium. / My name's Ellen. / Nice to meet you, Brian.

1)
- Hello, I'm Brian.
- Hi, I'm Florence.
- Nice to meet you, Florence.
- _____

2)
- Hi, my name's Debbie. I live next door.
- _____
- Nice to meet you, Paul.
- Nice to meet you, Debbie.

3)
- Hello.
- Hello.
- What's your name?
- _____ What's your name?
- My name's Simon. Where are you from?
- _____

1 / 4

http://www.bisonline.be/courses/en01_003_0v02/a001index.html?aicc_url=http://www.bisonline.be/data/ilcml.cfm&aicc_sid=en01_003_0v02::3082::13::9675::2&CFID=402&CFTOKEN=42207281

ICT Department teachers tutor Language Department teachers in using the intranet, the platform and the materials with the students. They also organize tailor made courses according to the rest of teachers' needs.

We think that this experience is pointing to the right direction: if technical problems are solved by computer technicians, if teachers can work in teams and they can receive the information they need when they need it, many of the barriers that stand in the way of adult education teachers to use digital content would disappear.

Finally, we visited Griet Vanderheyden Spanish class. Her students were working on Spanish newspapers and they were using Internet to find information.

LA PRENSA ESPAÑOLA EN LA RED

Ahora vamos a comparar diversos periódicos en la red.

- 1) pincha en el icono de *internet explorer*
- 2) tecllea la dirección www.google.es
- 3) al lado de '*Google.es aangeboden in :*' pincha en 'español'
- 4) pincha en *búsqueda avanzada*
- 5) tecllea '*periódicos españoles*' en el espacio previsto al lado de '*con la frase exacta*
- 6) elige el idioma 'español' (al lado de *producir páginas escritas en*)
- 7) rellena en el espacio de *dominios* '.es'
- 8) pincha en *búsqueda en Google*
- 9) pincha en el sitio web de *periódicos españoles*

One of the activities of a Spanish class: Searching information about Spanish newspapers.

a) ¿ Cuántos periódicos aparecen ?

b) Apunta las direcciones de :

- ABC : _____
- El Mundo : _____
- El País : _____
- La Vanguardia : _____

c) Existe también el periódico *Estrella Digital*. Tecllea la dirección www.estrelladigital.es. ¿ Por qué *Estrella Digital* es un periódico 'especial' ?

4

5.2 The Lesson generator

The Lesson generator consist of some e-learning content made and stored on-line in order to be used by students and teachers for e-learning and blended-learning purposes.

It has some advantages: offers not only everything commercial programs can handle, like: multiple choice, crosswords, matching and so on but also offers the possibility of making exercises to practice selection control, right clicking, typing control letter by letter...



Dirk Bernaert, the
lesson generator
author

Teachers can import lessons from all other courses and they can adapt the content to their own needs. There is an on line manual with movies available. Teachers can also have a short beginning support course if needed (app. 3 hours).

5.3 Educational software

Stijn Van Lokeren and Dirk Bernaert explained to us the educational software that is used in the Centre to store and to create electronic contents.

To create electronic contents there are three different types of resources:

- a) Materials used to give information and that students “look” e.g. Reading an article on-line with movies concerning “making folders in Microsoft Explorer” or reading an article in a different language or watching a movie.
- b) Materials that allow testing students’ knowledge: e.g. a multiple choice exercise concerning folders or writing a translation.
- c) Materials that allow testing students’ ability e.g. making folders in the Explorer using a simulation or speaking words with voice recognition tools.

To introduce information they use:

- Writing tools: Microsoft Word, Dreamweaver, Frontpage, Power Point.
- Capturing tools: Window Print Screen, Snag it and Quick Screen Capture.
- Movie tools: Viewlet, Camtasia, Wink.

To test students' knowledge they use exercise tools such as Hot Potatoes, Dokeos and crosswords tools (Eclipse Crosswords).

To test students' ability apart from the lesson Generator, they use the simulation tool program Adobe Captivate <http://www.adobe.com/products/captivate/> .

Stijn Van Lokeren showed us how it works and gave us the opportunity to see some of its potentialities: <http://www.muggsy.be/traffic>.

6. Setting Project objectives and partner Countries Reports

Apart from the visit to the PCVOWD Centre, some of the other goals of the meeting were:

- a) To set more precise project objectives and to plan how to reach to these objectives.
- b) To share other resources and materials that the rest of partner countries use in their Centres.
- c) To establish the guidelines for the next term work until the next meeting in Estonia on April 18-21.

6.1 Setting Project Objectives

Tom Van Acker, the PCVOWD Centre Manager was the person who guided the session. He introduced us to the main aspects we have to be aware of when we set the project objectives and plan how to reach them. For example, he highlighted as fundamental the group mutual knowledge and the acceptance of the different roles of the group members.

Next, he put forward (suggested) this activity: we should find one thing in common with everyone in the group and share prospects about the Digiteach Project.



Getting to know each other

Then, he encouraged us to ask ourselves questions such as: why do we exist as a group, what makes us unique, who would be the stakeholders, which criteria we will use to assess the project success, which attitude we have to our own limitations and the group limitations. All these reflections were brought about using group dynamic techniques.

Apart from the contribution to the project, this session was important for getting to know each other and creating a friendly atmosphere.

6.2 Partner Countries Reports

6.2.1. Estonia

Tiiu Madal (Digiteah project Coordinator) and Malve Zimmermann.

Tõrva Municipality, the Estonian organization, is represented by teachers of the local school called Tõrva Gymnasium <http://www.torva.edu.ee/>. Tõrva is 220 km. from the capital Tallinn <http://www.torva.ee/enql/index.php>.

They are using platforms of Estonian origin <http://www.miksike.ee> and they are involved in several ICT projects.

They set out the Tiger Leap Foundation project. This project aims to improve teachers' in-service training through dissemination of new ICT developments, creation of e-learning software and development of e-learning platforms:

http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=The_Tiger_Leap_Foundation_in_Estonia

6.2.2. Dinamarca

Ellen Marcussen, from Landsforeningen Ligevaerd (Digiteah project Coordinator), Pia Vesterager from Havredal Gl. Skole and Gitte Skov from Via.

The objective of Landsforeningen Ligevaerd <http://www.ligevaerd.dk> is to further and ensure equality in all aspects of life for citizens with special needs and to improve upon the conditions of these people. It is a NGO and has 90 schools as members of the organisation. Two of its schools participate in Digiteach: Havredal Old School, a centre for young people with learning disabilities <http://www.hgs.dkj> and Project VIA www.askos.dk/projektviaque that prepares young people in the age of 16-25 years to get a workplace.

They showed us the PDA project: how a PDA can minimize the marginalization that their students can suffer in relation to the labour market.

<http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=Ligev%C3%A6rd>

<http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=PDA>

To offer the courses they use several platforms: <http://www.iktportalen.dk>, (moodle platform), <http://www.radiohavredal.dk/news.php> (intranet) and <http://itvaerkstedet.dk/news.php>.



Pia Vesterager i Gitte Skov from Denmark

6.2.3. Czech Republic

Barbora Parrakova, (Digiteah project Coordinator), Jana Onderkova, Project manager for Intel Teach to the Future and Jitka Orsáková, Participating Teacher.

Czech Efficient Learning Node (CELN) works in the promotion and development of e-learning <http://www.celn.cz>. They are hosting Internet Academies and they are exclusive administrators for CNAP - Cisco Networking Academy and Intel – “Effective Use of Information Technologies in Teaching”.

They set out the project: “Intel Teach to the Future”

[http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=Intel - Teach to the Future](http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=Intel_-_Teach_to_the_Future)



Barbora Parrakova from Czech Republic and Cederic Van Herreweghe from Belgium
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6.2.4. Poland

Katarzyna Stec, (Digiteah project Coordinator) and Izabela Madrzak.

The Centre of Continuing Education in Sopot (CCE Sopot) <http://www.cku.sopot.pl> serves formal and non-formal education. It offers general and vocational adult education services; practical vocational education, teachers Training courses and University of the 3rd Age. They are involved in several European projects and showed us some of them.



CCE Sopot in
Poland

6.2.5. Spain

Pepa Valdelvira, (Digiteah project Coordinator)), Imma Barriendos and Eva Royo (participants teachers).

We explained some of the Adult Education Resource Centre activities training teachers: the ICT curriculum levels, the ICT Basic competences and the creation of new teaching materials, the Educational software that we use and the teacher training courses we do. The article is in:

http://www.digiteach.eu/index.php?title=Adult_Education_Resource_Centre



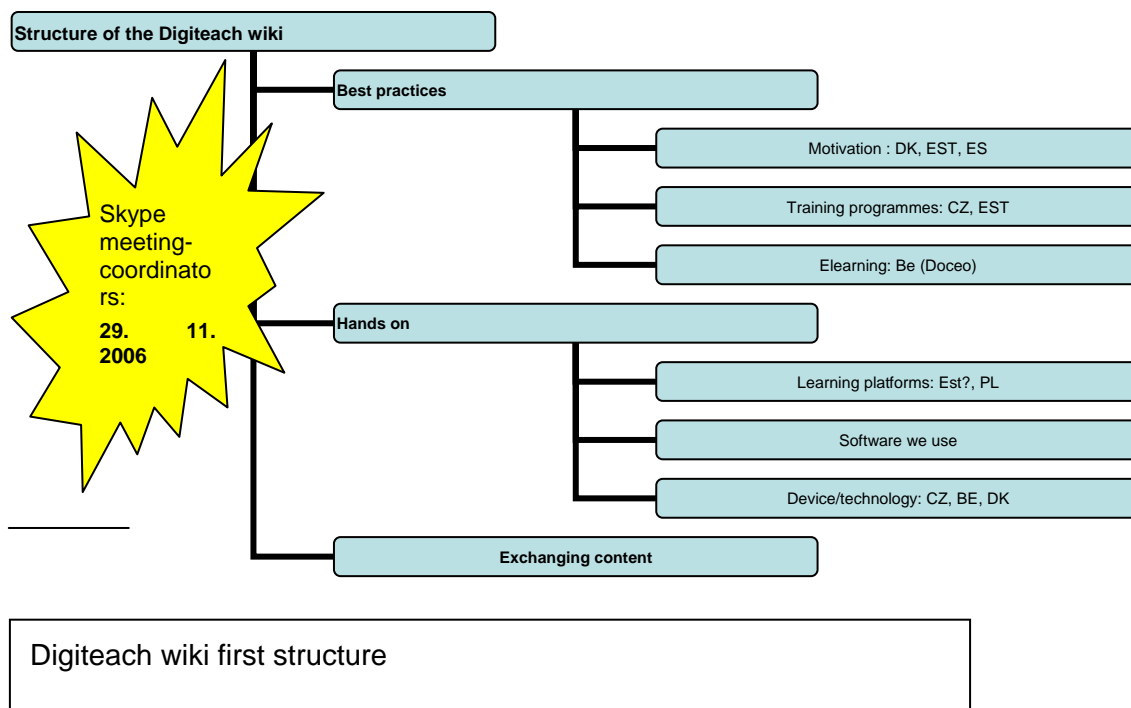
Spanish group report

Finally, Cederic Van Herreweghe, the Belgium Digiteah project Coordinator and also the general Digiteah project Coordinator summarized the main activities of the Belgium Centre (described above).

Next, we are going to expose the meeting conclusions.

7. The Digiteach project

We decided to use a Wiki platform. We split the platform structure in three parts: best practices, hands on and exchanging content and established which will be the contributions of each member country. We also set the date of the next net and in-person meetings.



The partner countries articles are in the project platform: <http://www.digiteach.eu/>. At this moment are:

1. Training programs: Teacher training in ICT (Spain); Intel, teach to the future(Czech Republic); The Tiger Leap foundation <http://www.tiigrihype.ee> (Estonia); Permanent Seminars in TIC for Adult Education (SETICPA) (Spain).

2. Hands-on: electronic learning systems, Educational software used in PCVOWD Centre (www.onderwijsophet.ne password 'pcvowd') (Belgium); OLE (On-line learning) (<http://www.olearning.cz/>) (Czech Republic).
3. Devices: the PDA project at project VIA (Denmark); Multimice (www.multimice.cz) (Czech Republic).

All partner countries engaged themselves in disseminate the Digiteach project in their countries.



Lokeren newspaper article about Digiteach project.

Next meeting will be in Estonia. We will go on disseminating this project that allows us to examine common issues and to explore methods of motivating, training and developing the ICT skills of teachers from the member countries.

Pepa Valdelvira, Spain Digiteah Project Coordinator

February 2007