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e-ASEM WHITE PAPER Vol.II

e-Learning for Lifelong Learning

Latvia | Philippines | UK

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e-ASEM White Paper:
e-Learning for Lifelong Learning Vol.II

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Foreword

In recent years, distance higher education institutions around the globe have been putting their efforts in enhancing learner-centered educational services with the help of rapidly advancing media technology. As a result, they have been able to make changes to their educational programs and methodologies in view of the digital age: learners are able to get access to learning resources at their fingertips anytime and anywhere with their electronic learning devices and they now can communicate with learners in other regions and interact with their instructors and other learners at their convenience.

In order to ensure that the technological developments contribute to raising the educational quality and standards, I believe, educational policies and plans should be implemented to turn potentials which technology offers into meaningful educational values. The e-ASEM research network with its leading researchers in the field of e-learning has put together an e-learning white paper for lifelong learning with an aim to share the e-learning experiences and trends existing in Europe and Asia with a wider audience.

I sincerely hope that this second volume of the e-ASEM white paper will serve as a useful and constructive foundation to understand the e-learning initiatives and policies across Asia and Europe, and encourage policy makers in other ASEM countries to apply the contents to meet their local and national or regional needs.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the contributing authors, Mr. Claus Holm, the chairman of the ASEM LLL hub and Dr. Taerim Lee, e-ASEM network coordinator without whom this publication would not have been possible.

Dr. Nam Chul Cho, President
Korea National Open University

Preface

You are holding a classical medium - the book - which requires a set of basic, classical skills from the Gutenberg Era. Ironically, the topic of the book is how various countries formulate and implement policies for a new skills era. It is a topic of interest because the key skills and knowledge of tomorrow will not simply be a question of being able to read, write and do arithmetic. The basic skills of the Gutenberg Era are being supplemented by, and maybe even transformed into, the digital society's skills.

Here, it is a question of being able to communicate, to improve one's level of competences via ICT literacy, and to solve problems through numeracy and understanding of models. All of these elements require the ability to perform digital searches. Currently, digital search competency can be summarised in a demand for information literacy and/or digital literacy to be able to navigate the endless range of information offered on the internet.

Information literacy has even been called the 21st century's new key competency. In order to be literate you must be able to search for, collect, structure and compare information - at defferent levels - with a view to converting information into knowledge.

However, something seems to indicate that - across generations and countries - we have not entered the 21st century's digital society with a sufficiently developed level of information literacy. Although most people are able to search for information using a search engine such as Google, we are either not good enough at searching or it

is simply not enough to be able to search. In other words, developing this fourth key competency, the digital search competency, to a satisfactory level constitutes a huge task for educational institutions - from primary schools through upper secondary schools and higher education to further and adult education.

The book - the second volume of the e-ASEM White Paper on e-learning - you are reading now deals with and compares how countries in Asia and Europe formulate national policy and implement practices in e-learning in a lifelong learning perspective. Actually you could say that this book looks into the transition from the Gutenberg Era to the Digital Era, and how we formulate and implement a demand for information literacy and / or digital literacy in a qualified manner in various countries.

We face an extensive need for these types of qualifying status overviews and recommendations that can serve as input for developing the roadmap to improve e-learning for lifelong learning in the respective countries. As one of my colleagues mentioned some time ago, one of the reasons for this need is the impression that many countries have used many resources to implement ICT in schools - so a reasonable amount of hardware is available today. Another impression is that it is taking a surprisingly long time to implement, and there seems to be a need for a clear rationale and focus on its use and effects in education, including its role in fostering e-learning.

Why is that? One explanation is that educational systems have - naively - believed that the mere presence and use of ICT would improve the quality of its use. We know that is not the case. Reading this book you can learn about relevant and interesting considerations and recommendations on various pedagogical-didactic approaches to the use of ICT. I give this book my warmest recommendations.

Yours faithfully,
Claus Holm, Chairman of the ASEM LLL Hub

Acknowledgement

This publication is the second volume of the e-ASEM e-learning white paper for lifelong learning, which aims to provide useful insights into the practices of e-Learning for lifelong learning in Asia and Europe. In this volume, the country reports of three e-ASEM countries: Latvia, the Philippines and the UK have been compiled with comprehensive cross-analyses of the reports.

The first volume of the e-ASEM e-learning white paper has been well received among e-learning professionals across the globe and their enthusiasm has helped continue the publication of the e-ASEM white paper in a series. The idea of publishing this white paper was proposed at the 2009 network meeting held in Bangkok, and in 2010, the first volume of the white paper was published with six participating member countries: Denmark, Japan, Malaysia, Slovakia, South Korea and Thailand. This second volume, though with fewer participating countries, provides a comprehensive overview of e-learning practices in Asia and Europe through two comparative analyses of the country reports: one is of the three countries that are in this volume, written by Professor Jan Pawlowski of the University of Jyväskylä while the other is of the country reports that are in the first volume as well as the second, written by Professor Mansor Fadzil of Open University Malaysia. The basic structure of this book includes: concepts of e-Learning, policies, regulations and funding of e-Learning in lifelong learning, and the status and characteristics of e-Learning for lifelong learning.

I hope that the second volume of the e-ASEM white paper will serve as a guide

to understanding the e-learning in Asia and Europe, and furthermore, formulating e-learning policies and plans in all e-ASEM member countries.

I have too many to thank for this publication. My utmost gratitude goes to all the authors who have shown their commitment to sharing their e-learning expertise and knowledge throughout the publication process. The encouragements and financial supports from the ASEM Education and Research Hub for lifelong learning and Korea National Open University were indispensable in achieving this meaningful research cooperation.

Dr. Taerim Lee, Coordinator of e-ASEM Research Network
ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning

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