OER Town

Roll Out Handbook

Towns as Open Educational Resource for migrants using mobile applications- OER Town is a KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices project, which provides sustainable, low cost, community based and community generated informal learning opportunities to promote the inclusion of migrants and refugees using mobile technology.

The objectives of the project are:

- Create a game for mobile devices that provides fun, informal leaning opportunities for migrants and refugees located and grounded in the communities they live in.
- Develop a roll-out pack for other towns wanting to use or adapt the game for their own locality
- Create a data bank of learning challenges that are related to the physical, social and cultural environment they live in and accessed through QR
- Work with community groups, societies and businesses to create the challenges or tasks and work with migrants and refugees to create content to augment the physical environment for benefit of residents and visitors

This handbook aims to explore the potential of transferability in other towns in different countries but also on different target groups such school students, town visitors and local inhabitants.

How was OER Town project designed?

The project responds to the aims of Strategic Partnerships under Erasmus + insofar as it focuses through use of ICT and open educational resources to support social inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees to the hosting communities by providing high quality learning opportunities tailored to their needs. In the sense that these are needs identified by the Commission and hence included in the call, there is a consonance between

the needs identified by the consortium and by the Commission.

There were four critical criteria we felt necessary for all partners, which have been met:

   a) Coming from countries with significant numbers of migrants and refugees
   b) Experience and confidence in using technology for teaching and learning
   c) Understanding of the complexities involved in the integration of migrants in the hostingcommunities.
   d) Involvement in networks with multiplier partners

Finally, we wanted to include the different kinds of organizations working with migrants andrefugees, including a university, NGOs and Education providers with broad linguistic and geographical coverage.

Implementation phase

This part of the report informs about the project's implementation phase and what have been thestrengths and weaknesses of the process. In the sections below, you will be informed by our teamwhat problems arose (covid) and what solutions we have found and also what have been the positive aspects in relation to the project design. Also, you will be able to find out how our international team worked together across sectors and how we enabled the voice of target and beneficiary groups to influence and enhance the project.

Key ingredients to partnership working

Co-operation

- Ensuring shared decision- making and mutual co- operation is something partnerships have been working towards since the beginning of the OER Town project. Collaboration can be enhanced when core partners feel there is genuine co-operation across a partnership built on relationships of trust

Communication

- Communication among partners is vital in ensuring there is a clear understanding about roles and tasks between partners.
- The frequency and format of conversations will differ, especially if held remotely

Flexibility

- A flexible approach to partnership working recognises the value of collaboration and incorporates different ways of working among partnerships.

Comments from partners

The most strenuous part was creating the app content itself, as the teachers/creators had to get familiarized with many IT aspects including different h5p activities and QR code creations. The German Data Protection Law has also proven to be challenging and finding visual materials became a time-consuming task.

The project has had to deal with a worldwide pandemic during the development of the IO. This has clearly had an influence, causing difficulties that were not foreseen when the project was designed. Even so, thanks to the communication and teamwork carried out by all the partners, we have been able to achieve the objectives set.

The overall outcome of the IOs is satisfactory. The objectives were presented clearly and we are very satisfied with the communication and collaboration during the work on all intellectual outputs. We believe to have released a high quality and very sustainable open education tool

COVID-19 crisis has been a renewed energy, purpose and commitment to partnership working across local community. Communications teams were regularly sharing information, including internal staff briefings, with a coordinated communications approach. During the Covid-19 pandemic, OER Town partnership have adapted how they work in response to social distancing measures and remote working guidelines.

Multiplier Events:

To promote the project results, especially the mobile app and its benefits in Germany two rounds of digital multiplier events were organized. The invitees were mainly students of Iberika language school with migrant background but also external participants who showed special interest in German politics, culture and history as well as other stakeholders interested in using the app e.g. other schools and advising facilities for migrants.

The multiplier event was very well received. It was organized in collaboration with an association that works in a specific neighbourhood of Bilbao. This association works by and for this neighbourhood, with the aim of improving coexistence and inclusion in it. In collaboration with them, a tour was designed to learn about the history, customs and practical information of the neighbourhood. Users found the App easy to use and intuitive, and, above all, it was clear that people were engaged in the game. The association with which we collaborated has put us in contact with other associations to spread the App even more. This association, accustomed to working on sociability and inclusion in the neighbourhoods, considers that the App has many possibilities to be used in their area. Also, a teacher of basic education who approached the ME, commented on its possible use in formal education.

In Italy, young people also with migratory background participated in the OER Town event testing the app through a treasure hunt game!

Have a look about the event!

https://cutt.ly/SHXxib8

Feedback from participants/trainers

Feedback received from participants was very positive. The app is user friendly and almost bug free,as most of them were removed after the testing phase. The overall user experience is therefore optimal.

Also, the topic spectrum and variety of the interactive content was rated as very good. The Germanapp was designed as an educational tool for migrants planning to pass the naturalization test and fulfils its role well.

Here **some videos** by trainers on why they use the app as Learning opportunities!

https://cutt.ly/vHXxwq4

How did it work? Comments and evaluation from the partners

All project partners have been requested to evaluate the process of development of each intellectual output and activity and reflect on strengths and challenges regarding project work.

Strenghts

The content for the app is very easy to develop.

In terms of content the app can be whatever you want it to be. You can adapt it to different age groups, learning goals and subjects.

You can develop a final product that the target group will use and benefit from in the end.

The app makes learning more interactive and fun as content is not presented in a traditional way through books or written exercises. It also allows learners to filter the content according to their interests or learning needs.

The possibilities offered by the H5p design greatly enrich the players' experience, and the designers' possibilities to create instructive and playful challenges

Weaknesses

As above you have to determine who your target group is, what their learning goals are and which type of technical devices they use. If this is not done proplerly you run the risk of developing a final product that will not be used in the end.

More than weakness, these are factors to keep in mind in order to create successful paths. You must have a clear design of the path in your head before undertaking the creation of the challenges that will conform it. Otherwise, you may make the mistake of creating a path without a clear guiding thread. On the other hand, it is also important to know the target group, in order to adapt the challenges to their specific needs.

Opportunities

Having talked about the importance of analyzing or knowing your target group, this app can be a chance to involve the learners more actively into the learning process by asking them for example which topics or content they would find useful. This can have a positive effect on learner motivation. It is also a good way to ensure that the app is tailored to their learning needs.

The application has proven its success in informal education environments, but it can also be a great tool for formal education, as some of the participants in the ME suggested. In that case, the age ranges and curriculum of each of the countries should be taken into account; but thanks to the design of the App, there is a lot of freedom to create and, therefore, adapt the paths to the school needs.

Tips & Tricks also for a good practice in sustainable development

- The team members should have different educational backgrounds, for example IT experts who are familiar with H5P and app development but also trainers who contribute knowledgeof the target group and subject and can provide content for the app.

- Find out about the participant's IT skills. Many people have a smartphone but a lot of themmay not be familiar with scanning QR Codes and navigating the app. Therefore, dedicate sufficient time to introduce the app to the learners and for them to familiarize with it. Consider providing step-by-step instructions for installing the app and using it (preferably with screenshots or pictures). The app is more likely to be used by the target group if they know how to use it properly.

- In order for the app to continue to be used it may be a good idea to incorporate it into the course curriculum or have the QR codes and/or locations published in a course material, forexample a booklet.

- It is useful to know in advance which H5p you are going to use before thinking about how you are going to give the information you want to work on in the challenge. Many times, youhave to search for more information or more images depending on the type of game you choose.

- If you have trouble placing the QR codes in the predefined places, a good solution is to createa booklet. But in this case, it is very important to make sure that in order to be able to answer the challenges the participants have to go to the place where the QR code would be. For example, by asking about an aspect of the monument, forcing them to go there in order to look at it and answer the question.

Tools and method

The challenge for the project was to develop an innovative approach easy to be used by migrants and at the same time a backend environment easy to be used by trainers and organizations workingwith migrants to create and edit challenges.

It has been decided to use wordpress as a back-end platform to edit, create and update challenges, touse H5P as interactive content for challenges and to develop a custom multilingual mobile app for end users.

The architecture of the system is presented in the following diagram:

OER Town mobile app

Architecture
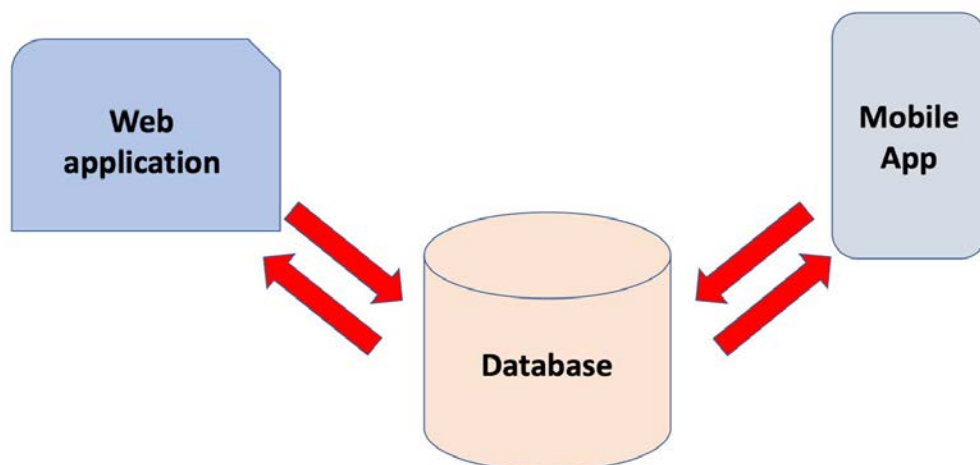
The main features of the whole system are:

Mobile App

- Read from server the challenges data
- Filter challenges by subject/s
- Render the data on the device screen
- Supports maps with QR locations
- Get user input for each part of the challenge
- Logs user activity
- Responds to user activities on challenges
- Provide feedback to users
- Push back on server all the data
- Supports multiple languages

Web app (managing/editing environment)

- Create/Edit/Update/Delete (CRUD) challenges on server
- Create/Edit/Update/Delete (CRUD)QR locations on maps
- Manage users and permissions
- Manage and analyse usage data
- Supports multiple languages
- Create QR codes

Web application is being based on wordpress with custom developed plugins. The database of challenges is part ofthe wordpress database by using custom type posts on wordpress.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that OER Town has been a success. The App was defined as very useful by users to know more about the local community in terms of geography, culture and history; but also it endorses the interactions between the participants and the local community. Besides, trainers and teachers who have been involved have underlined the App as a very interactive and efficient learning tool. Thanks to the App design, the transferability of the tool is high. So, although the project's main target was the inclusion of migrants and interactions with locals, it has also proved to be very useful in the field of formal and informal education for all types of educational stages. The great versatility offered by the tool and the designed challenges will allow the App to work smoothly in the future.

Also, if COVID-19 crisis created an initial situation of discouragement and uncertainty, allowed partners to communicate more frequently through skype and virtually. Despite the social distance, the events provided the opportunity for several users to test the app and receive positive and motivating feedback for the entire partnership