Creating European standards for open education and open learning resources – EU-StORe
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	P2 University Paderborn – UPB (Germany)
	P3 Ingenious Knowledge – IK (Germany)
	P4 European Learning Network – ELN (United Kingdom)
	P5 Meath Partnership – MCRSDP (Ireland)
	P6 Libera Università Maria Ss. Assunta (Italy)
	P7 Universita ta Malta (Malta)

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Ensuring Quality of Open Education

Open education and open learning resources are key thematic areas in the educational agenda of the EU. Open Educational Resources (OERs) are teaching, learning and research materials, in any medium, digital or otherwise that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license. This permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. OERs vary from short audio clips, such as a drum roll that can be used by a teacher during a quiz in class, or short videos used to promote reflection about a particular topic, to massive open on-line courses (MOOCs). Other examples include freely downloadable course material (information sheets, worksheets and tests), Apps, images and templates for various learning activities.

As freely available on-line resources become more popular with learners and educators, innovative learner-driven educational practices emerge. Open Educational Practices (OEPs) are learning activities which support the production, use and reuse of high quality OERs through institutional policies, which promote innovative pedagogical models and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning path.

UNESCO's Paris OER declaration (2012) promotes awareness about and use of OERs, reinforces the development of strategies and policies on OERs, including open licensing frameworks and strategic alliances for OERs. It also encourages the development and adaptation of OER in a variety of languages and cultural contexts, together with research on OERs and OEPs. Albeit this common drive from these international institutions, educators and learners have no clear understanding on the availability of OERs for their context, the benefits offered and how they can possibly engage with such resources and practices. Other shortcomings include the lack of central access points across Europe, the need of guiding policies both at national and institutional level, and the deficiency in community building across Europe. Also, the creation of a huge online store to provide learning resources and open learning all over Europe for free offers a great opportunity to make education available for a broad European group of interested learners, teachers and trainers. Yet this creates the need for quality assurance of the courses, learning resources and open measures made available through this approach. Learning materials and education will be risky, if there are no standards to make sure that the content is correct and pedagogically well-prepared. The problem is that traditional QA mechanisms found in formal educational contexts cannot be applied in such on-line open learning contexts. Decentralised and distributed QA approaches need to be developed. In former educational concepts experts were responsible to design the curriculum, courses and the learning materials. Nowadays, with unstructured and widely varying creation of content, standards and guidelines need to be created to foster quality.

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The Erasmus Plus EUStORe (European Standards for Open Education and Open Learning Resources) project takes up the challenge of developing an open QA mechanism for OERs and OEPs. The project consortium includes the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, (Romania) as the Leading partner, University of Paderborn (Germany), Universita Degli Studi Roma Tre (Italy), University of Malta (Faculty of Education), Ingenious Knowledge (Germany), European Learning Network Ltd (UK) and Meath Partnership (Ireland).

The project builds on Pawlowski's (2013) vision paper recommending the creation of an inventory of OERs and OEPs, together with the integration of existing communities of users and curricula. The paper also proposes the setting up of regional networks, the creation of global outreach programs and the support of open education policy building. Based on these recommendations the EUStORE project identifies OERSs relevant to partner's educational needs. Experts analyse these materials and resources to create standards for open learning activities. Using these standards, guidelines are developed to rate existing open learning resources or activities and for creating open learning scenarios in the future. An online platform will be developed for the inventory to integrate this information in the European learning community. The inventory, standards and guidelines will be used to foster curricular design and the development of regional networks of academics and educators working with OERs. The guidelines and standards have to be combined with policy papers which engage ministries, the European Commission and multipliers in the field of education in different European countries in the process of implementing the standards.

The third project meeting was hosted at the University of Malta, Valletta Campus between the 8th – 10th September 2015. During the meeting the list of criteria and standards for evaluating OERs was finalised. Participants also evaluated the on-line database developed by Ingenious Knowledge. The next meeting will be held in Rome in January 2016. During this period partners will evaluate the identified OERs using the built-in criteria fields within the on-line database. The UoM will develop a survey to evaluate the ease of use of the on-line tool. More information about this Erasmus+ project can be obtained from the website at:

http://eustore.eduproject.eu/

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