



EUteka Corner and Online Learning

Vladimir Radovanović¹, Bojana Marinčić^{2*}, Biljana Davidovski²

¹ University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Technical Sciences Čačak, Serbia

² Public library Užice, Užice, Serbia

* bokyue@gmail.com

Abstract: *The development of information and communication technology has brought a specific model of organizational activity of economic and cultural societies - entities where knowledge and evaluation of information sources have become a key resource for success in business. These needs are caused by the development of modern society that have brought changes in the business and working environment. Since 2014, Serbian libraries have become a part of the EUteka network, jointly initiated by the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, and the National Library of Serbia. Specifically, Užice Public Library is a part of the EUteka network of 48 public libraries in the Republic of Serbia that offer information about the European Union to its users. By this networking, in addition to print publications and communication systems, the libraries are equipped with computers, through EUteka Corner. Here the folders and resources related to the European Union are grouped in special thematic folders, starting with general information, through numerous official documents and digital archives to portals for acquiring new knowledge. The portal offer a variety of EU-sponsored online career opportunities: e Twinning (part of the Erasmus + Education, Training, Youth and Sport program) and studyportals that help millions of young people around the world explore study programs and choose the appropriate one from over one hundred thousand courses offered at many educational institutions in 110 countries.*

Keywords: *Uzice Public Library, Euteka, e-Twinning, studyportals, training, education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Uzice Public Library is a part of the EUteka network, developed in Serbia in recent years. 48 public libraries have set up EUteka corners containing shelves filled with printed publications through which users can obtain relevant information about the European Union and the European integration process of Serbia. For the users who prefer quick and easy access to information, thematic folders are placed on the desktop of EUteka PCs, in which EU-related sources and material are grouped. Depending on the interest of the citizens, general information, official documents, digital archives, e-libraries of the institutions, numerous programs for different categories of population, learning portals and other useful information on current and future Member States are available. Through these resources EUteka Corner expands the range of services in public libraries, raises the level of media and information literacy in the local environment, and contributes to fulfilling the role of the library in the modern age by providing relevant information of general importance and promoting lifelong learning.

Learning and knowing is an integral part of human life, beginning with the first words and steps, recognizing colors, shapes and signs. Learning

never ends, but it has been upgraded and expanded over the years. Prior to the advent of the Internet, access to information was limited and its flow was slower. When researching a particular topic area, it was necessary to travel elsewhere to search the library's catalogs, archives and find reliable sources of information. The Internet has annulled spatial distance and saved time by providing access to electronic resources and materials and facilitating online learning and improvement. "With the emergence of a network of all networks, opportunities have been opened for formal and non-formal education that cannot be compared to any previous form of education. Because of its characteristics, distance learning is becoming a leading way of education in the world" [1]. Its benefits are numerous. It is possible to independently organize the time and dynamics of attending online courses. It is also available to people with current or permanent disabilities because it does not require physical presence. Attendees can accomplish their day-to-day obligations and take courses at the same time. Learning costs are reduced and the learning material can be viewed multiple times. The main disadvantage of distance learning is the language barrier, as most courses are in English or another foreign language. For the last few years, experts in

specific fields, recognizing the importance, have translated voluntarily the lectures from leading online learning platforms. Many courses are free of charge, but there are some courses that require a larger amount of money. The use of learning platforms implies media and information literacy of citizens.

However, Internet, online courses, information and communication technologies that follow today's development of society have not been the initiators of the very beginning of distance learning. The main "culprit" for this type of learning was Sir Isaac Pitman, an English teacher who mailed shortened lectures in 1840. He wrote assignments on postcards and sent them to students, who then returned them to him for review. In 1858, the University of London became the first college to offer distance learning diplomas. Queen Victoria had a large part in this [2].

"In order for a university graduate to remain competitive in the marketplace throughout the working life, which lasts an average of forty years, the changes and achievements happening in the area of interest must be followed, which means acquiring new knowledge and skills." EUTEKA Libraries function as eTwinning portals – a virtual community of European schools and pre-schools that supports the exchange of ideas and knowledge and Studypoints – a global platform for the selection of studies and massive online courses.

2. ETWINNING INTERNET PORTAL

eTwinning is one of the European Commission's programs, launched in 2005 as a major activity within the eLearning Program. Since 2014, it has been part of the Erasmus + program for education, training, youth and sport. Its Central Support Service (CSS) is managed by the European Network of Schools and is being implemented through an international partnership of 34 European Ministries of Education. Their common goal is to develop teaching for the needs of schools, teachers and students across Europe. eTwinning is supported by 38 national support teams [3]. This virtual network supports the exchange of ideas and knowledge by modernizing teaching using information and communication technologies. Moreover, the news from partner countries involved in the platform, examples of good practice, a display of successful projects and information on various achievements can be found in the eTwinning "world". The eTwinning portal is an integral part of the Tempus Foundation, which was established in 2002 to facilitate the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Tempus program. "Since then, the Tempus Foundation has gradually become responsible for other EU programs, such as Erasmus Mundus and the Lifelong Learning Program. The Tempus Foundation is now responsible for implementing the

education component of the major Erasmus + program for education, youth and sport, as well as for implementing the youth component of this program" [4]. Erasmus + aims to promote and support formal, non-formal and informal learning, strengthening the link between education and the world of work, creating added value for the European area of education and connecting Member States in defining education policy.

"In addition to the fact that participating in eTwinning projects is a good opportunity to enhance different competences such as linguistic and digital competences, eTwinning, as part of the Erasmus+ program, opens opportunities for learning about project leadership and participation, networking and networking with colleagues from other European countries, and therefore opportunities for easier international cooperation" [5].

2.1. Accessing the eTwinning Portal

The eTwinning portal consists of three parts. The first is a public part that can be used by everyone and does not require registration. Registration and validation are required to use the eTwinning Live part, while Twinspace can only be used by registered members who started the eTwinning project. It should also be stated at registration that Twinspace will be used as one of the tools. Joining an eTwinning portal consists of two steps: pre-registration and completion of registration. Pre-registration is done on the home page of the portal [6] by clicking on the "Login / Registration" field. The box is located in the upper right corner of the screen. The registration completion link is sent to the e-mail address provided in the pre-registration and then it is necessary to click on the link or copy it in the browser to complete the process. The next step is offering newly registered members to find the institution where they are employed. If the institution is not registered, it is necessary to fill in information about the school/pre-school institution, as well as detailed information about the teacher/educator. Finally, you need to double-check the accuracy of the completed information and click on the submit button. Validation is very important because without this, members will only be able to use certain segments of the portal and, among other things, will be denied the opportunity to start projects and improve their professional development. In order for the validation to be complete, the newly registered members should submit a certificate of employment to the national support team. The confirmation format can be found on the Erasmus+ website [7].

eTwinning Live gives each member the opportunity to create their own space, starting with the user profile, through the choice of colleagues to collaborate with and share ideas and experiences, to review the basic information and activities of the

eTwinning portal member. Cards: People, Events, Projects, Groups, Partner Forums, Vocational Training, provide many opportunities for eTwinning portal users. With them, you can connect with other users, view notifications of past, present and future events and projects. An overview of the projects implemented can serve as a model for future activities or, through good practice, influence the development of ideas. Projects are launched via the eponymous card and include shortcuts: "Partner Forums" and "eTwinning Project Preparation Packages". They offer various opportunities for creating independent and partnership activities, as well as connecting with colleagues from different countries.

2.2. Twinspace

Twinspace is a part that becomes available to users only when the planned project is approved and if it is stated on registration process that it will be used as a tool in the project realization. Twinspace contains a bulletin board that is visible to teachers involved in the project, a project diary – visible on the public part of the portal, the possibility to access Twinspace of other projects, the possibility to refresh the profile and engage students who are given specific tasks and assignments.

2.3 Professional development through eTwinning

The eTwinning Portal Vocational Training tab provides users with information on the latest training, seminars and other learning opportunities available to eTwinning members. The trainings are conducted by a national support team and are dedicated to a variety of topics. These are short free courses that require you to register in advance. Seminars are streamed live. They are led by numerous experts in various fields. The national team organizes two types of seminars, which are accredited by the Institute for the Advancement of Education of Teachers, Educators and Professional Associates, and carry 8 professional development points. Seminars across Europe are also being organized to promote collaboration, networking and exchange of good practice. They also serve to support teachers and educators in their professional development.

The eTwinning web portal is presented in detail through the eTwinning manual, which is intended for teachers, educators, librarians, pedagogues, psychologists and all those involved in educational work with children in schools and pre-schools institutions in Serbia. It is published in Serbian language. In addition to the information provided, it also describes in detail examples of successful projects, as well as experiences gained through working and collaborating within the eTwinning web portal [8].

3. STUDYPORTALS

The Open Mass Online Course (MOOC) was created in 2008 at the University of Manitoba. The course was available not only to full-time university students, but also to others through online classes for free. The complete study material was available online, and consultations and exchange of views between students attending online classes were conducted through online forums, blogs and organized online meetings. An important year in popularizing Open Mass Online Courses is 2011 when Stanford University began its three online courses, each with approximately 100,000 enrolled participants. This was followed by the expansion of mass online platforms, among which are the most popular Coursera, edX and others. The large offer of courses made it difficult for students to choose the appropriate program [9].

Studyportals present a global study selection platform through thousands of online courses worldwide. It was established to help young people explore study programs and choose the right one from over 190,000 courses offered at more than 3,200 educational institutions in 110 countries [9]. Before choosing an online program, students can take a 3-5 minutes test to help them choose the program according to their personal affinities [10].

The Studyportals platform uses the international experiences, both individually and socially. It is supported and cooperated by the European Commission and many national institutes. The Operations Center is located in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. Most international student associations are official partners of the Studyportals platform.

The initial interface contains a selection of disciplines by area:

- Agriculture & Forestry,
- Applied Sciences & Professions,
- Arts, Design & Architecture,
- Business & Management,
- Computer Science & IT,
- Education & Training,
- Environmental Studies & Earth Science,
- Hospitality, Leisure & Sports,
- Humanities,
- Journalism & Media,
- Law,
- Medicine and Health,
- Natural Sciences & Mathematics,
- Social Sciences.

Choosing a specific field leads to the most popular online courses at various levels (M.A., short course, Postgraduate Certificate, Bachelor) [11]. By choosing a particular course you will be given information on the amount of time to apply, the

duration of the learning periods and the cost of the course. A brief description of the content that will be covered during the lecture is available, as well as the possibilities of its application. Information regarding the accreditation is given at the end of the page [12].

When you type in search engine free courses in place where What do you want to study is written, you are offered a course with a minimum price. It is necessary to select Lowest tuition fee in the upper right corner. The selection will show a selection of courses that are free of charge and duration of study. By choosing the right course, more detailed information is obtained: periodicity of maintenance, in whose organization the course is implemented and short content that will be presented during the attendance, etc. There are numerous free short and long term courses in various fields. Each course has its own rating, as well as the offer of similar learning programs mostly available in English.

4. CONCLUSION

The Internet is much more than a collection of information. "It is a "business" tool, whether business is commercial, industrial, financial or governmental. It is a scientific tool and a source of software. It is an educational tool." Contemporary libraries are primarily represented on the Internet through electronic catalogs and digital collections that are formed to preserve cultural heritage and, more importantly, have contributed to the advancement of knowledge dissemination through free access to information. Among other things, their active role is reflected in learning support and in virtual communities. For the improvement of work in schools and preschool institutions, it is extremely useful to exchange ideas and examples of good practice outside the borders of Serbia. Online learning empowers young people to acquire education that goes beyond space and time barriers. With the development of information and communication technologies, library services are being upgraded and improved. They offer users electronic resources and materials that they can access exclusively from the library, they represent the hubs of the information society we live in. By referring users to education and training portals within the EUTEKA corner, libraries contribute to the development of a knowledge-based society.

REFERENCES

- [1] Vikeri, B., & Vikeri A. (2011). *Informaciona nauka u teoriji i praksi*. Beograd: Narodna biblioteka Srbije.
- [2] Vuksan, V., & Kostić, M., & Sofronijević, A. (2016). Savremeni kanali informacione pismenosti i celoživotnog učenja. U: Crnogorac, V. (ured.). *Medijska i informaciona pismenost u društvu znanja i biblioteke* (str. 37-47). Beograd: Bibliotekarsko društvo Srbije.
- [3] *Zbornik radova "Filozofija I mediji"*. Jagodina: Fakultet pedagoških nauka. Available on <https://pefja.kg.ac.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Zbornik-radova-FILOZOFIJA-MEDIJA-MEDIJI-I-ALTERNATIVA.pdf> (taken on 20.08.2019)
- [4] <https://www.fnu.edu/evolution-distance-learning/> (taken on 21.08.2019)
- [5] <https://www.etwinning.net/sr/pub/about.htm> (taken on 22.08.2019)
- [6] www.etwinning.net (taken on 22.08.2019)
- [7] www.erasmusplus.rs (taken on 22.08.2019)
- [8] <https://erasmusplus.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Vodic-za-eTwinning.pdf> (taken on 22.08.2019)
- [9] <https://www.studyportals.com/> (taken on 23.08.2019)
- [10] <https://personalitytest.studyportals.com> (taken on 23.08.2019)
- [12] <https://www.distancelearningportal.com/search/#q=mh-blended,online&order=tuition> (taken on 23.08.2019)