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Sustainable Accessible Future Environments

T 3.3

**Develop an Online Community
for Learning and Training**



SAFE

SUSTAINABLE, ACCESSIBLE FUTURE ENVIRONMENTS

The course is a collaboration between five European Universities

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WYŻSZA SZKOŁA GOSPODARKI Z SIEDZIBĄ W BYDGOSZCZ UCZELNIA NIEPAŃSTWOWA (WSG)

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T3.3 Develop an Online Community for Learning and Training

Contents

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Background of online community	4
3 Process for creating an online community	5
4 Structure and content	6
5 Implementation	6
6 Conclusion	7

1 Introduction

The specific objective of WP3 is to create learning opportunities for accessible communities. This strongly supports the need for the main aim of the project. The learning community provides a platform for creating a collective pedagogical approach that will be implemented. The joint study module will contain diverse disciplines that together formulate a comprehensive collection of perspectives on accessibility and how to improve it. Testing the online community and training material will give information concerning the needs of the students, businesses, and other stakeholders and how they can improve their skills and competencies of inclusivity and diversity. (Safe project application, 2022.)

Related to the objective of WP3, online community enables stakeholders to communicate and learn from each other. It enhances the possibilities to people with different background to benefit others' experiences, for example how the families with children could utilize the experiences of immigrant women of the accessibility of the services and environment of an area.

WP3 responds to the skills gap in European education and training with an interdisciplinary approach to urban areas as locations for living, working, and traveling, especially with the priority of accessibility, inclusion and diversity in all fields of education, training. The focus is on common EU values, the principles of unity and diversity, as well as cultural identity and awareness when providing learning in the fields of sociology, hospitality management, tourism, collaboration with public authorities (cities), safety and security, socioeconomics, futures thinking, and urban development, architecture and the use of urban open spaces. (Safe project application, 2022.)

Online community provides a platform to students, professionals, and university staff to share their expertise for accessibility. It gives the actors (company representatives, target group representatives, other stakeholders, such as people from cities, organisations, associations) opportunity to learn diverse and combined topics related to accessibility. It helps them to understand that accessibility and safety are not defined in a narrow manner, instead they are complex topics, which benefit diverse viewpoints from various disciplines.

The main result of this work package will be an operating learning community with an interdisciplinary, international online and blended learning study module. To be able to create a feasible learning community focusing on improving accessibility in spaces and services, there is a need to systematically analyze the versatile learning models of the participants. The analysis will lead to a shared understanding of the pedagogical approach. The joint study module will serve as mediator of the knowledge and skills between diverse actors. The study module with its courses will be further developed based on testing and evaluation by the users. The digital toolkit will provide an instrument to improve the competencies and skills of students, businesses, municipalities, and other stakeholders concerning inclusivity and diversity. The module will employ stimulating innovative learning and teaching practices, by implementing transdisciplinary approaches and innovative pedagogies such as collaborative online international learning and research-based learning or Learning by Developing. It will also be promoting inter-connected higher education systems by developing and testing various types of cooperation models, including virtual and blended cooperation and the use of different digital tools and online platforms in the delivery of the module. The module includes contents as well as cases and solutions developed during the project lifecycle. (Safe project application, 2022.)

The following subsection will discuss detailed the joint pedagogical approach which is created in the SAFE project consortium in the 2023.

2 Background of online community

Online community is created based on the joint pedagogical approach and shared understanding of learning in the project SAFE. In addition to teaching and learning material, it should include interactive elements. The pursuit of interactivity is essential in creating an online community. Thus, it is possible to learn from others and increase the awareness and know-how related to accessibility on a broader scale.

The online learning environment offers learning opportunities for partner universities and their students. In addition to this, it is vital to reach a wider audience. For example, special groups can be interested in the project's outputs and learning opportunities. Online material and interactivity should support their learning. In planning and implementing the online community, it is crucial to consider different learners, regardless of their age, gender, physical or other disabilities, cultural background, life situation, or other reasons that may affect their learning opportunities.

As concluded in the joint pedagogical approach:

One of the main tasks of the project SAFE is to create an online learning environment. It will be utilized and tested during the project. Furthermore, it should provide permanent learning possibilities. The learning environment should be self-explanatory, meaning that learners can use it independently. The flow and structure of the materials and tasks need to be accessible and easy to follow. The learning environment should be inspirational and encourage participants to be involved and study the material thoroughly. (Report joint pedagogical approach, 2023.)

In the project SAFE, it is crucial to consider the needs of diverse target groups. For example, when planning the structure and content of a learning environment, it is good to understand the specific and significant role that associated partners have for the project. These associated partners represent different groups of people sharing diverse physical or non-physical disabilities. A separate document will discuss the specific needs of these diverse target groups related to the environment, material, and other decisions related to learning. (Report joint pedagogical approach, 2023.)

In the pedagogical approach we concluded that:

- Pedagogical collaboration can enhance universities to develop their partnership with associated partners. Created solutions can formulate a basis for future study cases for students of HEIs and other interested learners. Active, real-life co-creation enables university staff to keep updated on working-life situations. Thus, this indirectly supports students to improve skills that are currently and, in the future, needed in the working life. (Report joint pedagogical approach, 2023.)

→ The online environment, with its inclusive nature, enables working with representatives of special groups, making each participant feel valued and integral to the learning process. The digital platform provides opportunities for interaction between different groups. Cooperation is possible regardless of the background of the actors. Such background factors include professional expertise, academic interests, cultural background, etc. With its tools and platforms, the online environment supports cross-cultural communication and enables joint learning despite geographical distances. In addition, it enables the transfer effect of learning because it includes interactive activities. The transfer effect here means that taking into account the perspective of a particular special group can help to understand the needs of other groups as well. Interactive activities can improve the transfer effect of learning. Interactivity binds the participants and facilitates their understanding and application of information and skills.

- Associated partners can benefit from collaboration and may get new perspectives and insights from student teams. Improved insights help them to solve unique challenges that they are

experiencing due to their physical or mental characteristics. Collaboration may support their experiences of urban areas also in the future. (Report joint pedagogical approach, 2023.)

→ Associated partners gain more insight, experience, and ideas through cooperation. Cooperation enables the increase of knowledge and the possibility of innovative activities and thinking. This is supported by the sharing of different perspectives, experiences, and expertise. Representatives of special groups can present their points of view and indicate their needs. At the same time, they learn to understand the needs of other special groups. A common platform can increase partners' involvement.

It is good to consider the use of mobile devices when planning an online community. The needs of special groups as mobile device users must also be considered.

3 Process for creating an online community

- comparison to existing online communities (benchmarking)
 - 2023
- sketching the structure and content (workshops...)
 - 2023-2024
- mockups
 - 2024
- testing mockups...
 - 2024

4 Structure and content

ONLINE COMMUNITY (front page)				
Introduction (main page)				
Interdisciplinary Studies in Developing Cities for People	Digital Toolkit	Reading materials	Social media	
Introduction to the course	Behavioral Mapping Tool	Local scenario books	Media news	
Preliminary learning period	Travel Safety	Local guidelines for stakeholders	Instagram	
Day 1: Accessibility and Safety	Evacuation plan	Policy recommendations for urban areas	Facebook	
Day 2: Mapping	Accessible businesses	Inclusive Safe travel and Living case studies	LinkedIn	
Day 3: Society	Urban Design applications	Handbook	Other informations	
Day 4: Scenario	Communication tools	To be added...	To be added...	
Day 5: Presentation	To be added...			
Day Z: Post-Intensive week				

5 Implementation

UL's responsibility has been to implement the online community practically. After joint planning and evaluation of outputs and their usability, UL has implemented an online community.

Online community is built on WordPress, which is an open source blogging tool, publishing platform and content management system. It is the world's most popular content management system. WordPress is a reliable and secure platform, and user centered.

The online community will be updated during the project and afterward as needed. It has been initially tested with users. In the future, their feedback will be used to modify the content and structure of the online community, if necessary.

6 Conclusion

The digital learning environment empowers students to learn in a contemporary manner, unrestricted by location or time, utilizing a variety of digital tools to enhance their study and learning experiences. The e-learning platform assists learners in visualizing their desired learning journey.

In designing the online community, we've taken into account that every experience a learner has can impact their learning process. As such, we've examined the e-learning platform and its content holistically. To maximize effectiveness, the online community is designed with the learner's perspective in mind, fostering the desired learning outcomes.

We've strived to make the e-learning platform comprehensible, ensuring that learners always understand what is expected of them. This approach should prevent confusion, which can detract from the learning experience. We've paid particular attention to accessibility and usability, working to guarantee that the platform is available to all. Additionally, we've made sure that learners can easily find a way to inquire about any uncertainties they may have.

The possibility of interaction was seen as important in implementing the online community. For this reason, the social media accounts Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn are linked as part of the community. Linking gives the opportunity for interaction, commenting, up-to-date material, and the exchange of experiences.

Through the online community, we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Enhance agility, availability, and efficiency.
- Stimulate interest in online and self-study materials.
- Transform training materials into an engaging format.
- Ensure the quality of online materials.
- Foster self-directed learning.
- Enhance interaction and collaborative learning.

The table is based on the shared pedagogical model (see details in T.3.1.) of the SAFE project and has been supplemented by adding the perspective of the online community.

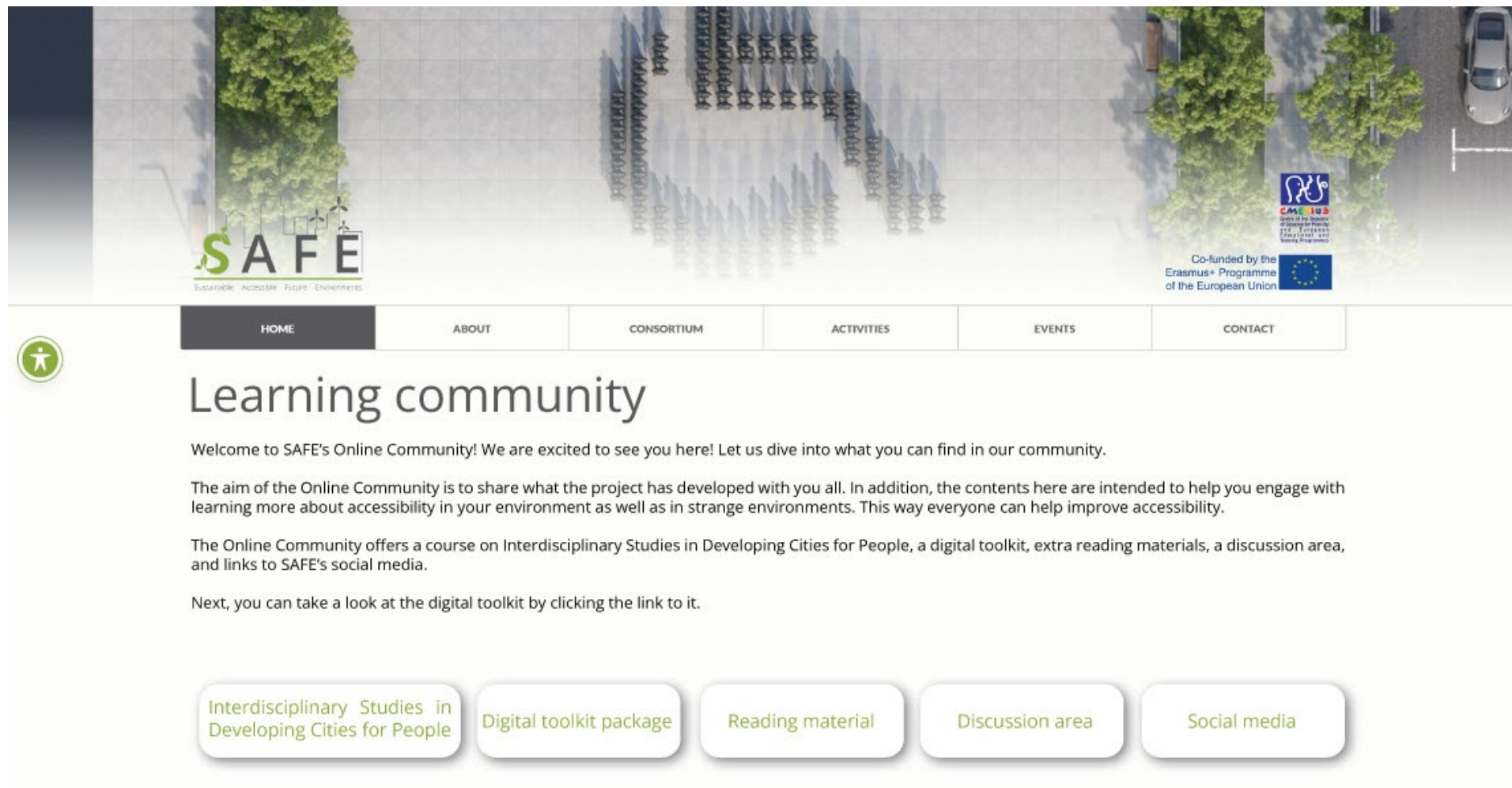
TOOL	CATEGORY	EVALUATION	USAGE IN SAFE	ONLINE COMMUNITY ASPECT
Canvas	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. offers possibilities for communication, material storage. On the other hand, requires registration.	X /✓	Might be ok during ISPs if needed common platform. From 1 st ISP we have used googledrive as communication platform.	NA
E-Mail	COMMUNICATION. In use for communication for starting the pre-tasks, or for arrangements for ISPs etc.	X /✓	Reaches well - material is stored. However, it is loading and not collaborative, does not support collaboration. Sometimes it can be considered as too slow communication tool in an urgent situation.	Information for ISP participants. Possibilities for further questions.
E-portfolio	DIGITAL FORM OF A PORTFOLIO. The e-portfolio consists of writings and photos, short presentation of candidate, and motivation letter.	X	Maybe not. Since it is not widely in use, there are some possibilities though	Selection of ISP participants.
Facebook	SOCIAL MEDIA.	✓	Groups are possible. But it is personal for educational purposes. Also, there are data/privacy issues.	Advertisement of the online course Presenting the findings and events of the project. Social media page linked.
Google Drive	COLLABORATE/ONLINE STORAGE.	✓	Yes, there is no cost (at least now). It is also easy to use and is integrated with google documents that allow collaborative working method.	Material storage for preparation phase, not in use in the implementation phase.
Google meet	Using Google Meet (one university has an academic account in Google Meet). This allows us to receive automatically the list of participants and if we need to	X	Maybe not, since the academic account is in use only in one university	NA

	record the sessions, and to deny the access to external people.			
Instagram	SOCIAL MEDIA.	X /✓	For marketing purposes, and for project management. Final course promotion ect.	Advertisement of the online course. Presenting the findings and events of the project. Social media page linked.
Intranet system (ISAPS)	ON-SITE CLASSES are supported with e-mail communication, office hours and intranet system (in one UNI)	X	Not a collaborative channel.	NA
Kahoot	Moreover, there are different tools that can be use both in the classroom and remotely, such as Kahoot (kahoot.com).	X /✓	It can be used as an extra tool for inspiration or testing but is not for learning process as defined in SAFE.	NA
Learning diary	Consists of digital collection with which students can document, reflect on and/or present their own learning process (i.e. for example their own learning goals, learning plans, task and work results).	✓	As a tool to reflect at the end of ISP, on-day collection of informations.	To be used as an end report to reflect on finished study course.
Microsoft Teams	Used for real-time ONLINE LECTURES , 1-to-1 consultations, during the pandemic also for more interactive types of classes such as workshops or seminars.	X /✓	Fits for the smaller groups for communication, also for material storage.	Information and collaboration platform for ISP, in on-line cases.
Miro	Collaborative DESIGN PLATFORM.	X /✓	Ok for groups to collaborate. However, supervises towards electronic collaboration and might limit creativity.	On a case-by-case basis.
Moodle	LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. The platform allows to create discussion forums for students to debate, chat with them, do exams, surveys, and so on which greatly facilitates the teaching task.	X	Already in use in some partner organizations. Challenge is inflexible and formal usage (need for registration etc.).	Linking – enhances the broader usage of the online course.

ONTE	GENERAL E-LEARNING PLATFORM for the entire university (based on Moodle but enhanced and tailored). The platform has been in use since early 2010s to support and enhance the classroom learning process (in one HEI).	X	In use in one partner university. Challenge is inflexible and formal usage (need for registration etc.).	NA
Padlet	COLLABORATION.	X / ✓	Yes, suitable tool for innovations, generating ideas. However, it is not a primary choice for SAFE platform, only supporting collaboration.	On a case-by-case basis.
Quizizz	Quizizz (quizizz.com) and so on that helps us to develop an adequate BLENDED LEARNING and to achieve the engagement of the students with the subject.	X / ✓	It can be used but is not necessary.	NA
Slack	COMMUNICATION.	X / ✓	Project work elements. Recent development has improved the usability.	On a case-by-case basis, some partners might use in preparing for ISPs.
Trello	COLLABORATION, ORGANIZING .	X / ✓	Might be ok for organizing teamwork, planning	On a case-by-case basis, some partners might use in preparing for ISPs.
Twitter → X	SOCIAL MEDIA.	X / ✓	Possibility for information collection or disseminating project actions. Not suitable for teaching. Development of Twitter is not going on encouraging direction.	NA
Webex	Occasionally used for general seminars for staff and students provided in one HEI by external partners (e.g. training companies).	X	In use in one partner university.	NA
WhatsApp	INSTANT MESSENGER.	✓	Yes, can be used for example among team communication. For a larger group, it might cause too much information and challenges with finding the right information etc.	If needed for rapid information, not a general channel for communication.

Wiki	Content can be created and edited collaboratively in virtual space. As part of an assignment/examination, a text can be created collaboratively and, if necessary, supplemented by various other media such as audio or image files.	X	Not in general use, not suitable to this purpose.	NA
WordPress	LEARNING MATERIAL WEBPAGE.	✓	Yes. Easy access and usability, also enables individual usage.	In use as a solution for SAFE online platform.
YouTube	SOCIAL MEDIA/VIDEO SHARING.	✓	Needs another solution for communication purposes. A huge free learning resource.	Used in part of materials.
Zoom	ON-LINE COMMUNICATION. For teaching, collaboration, widely used in universities. Video conferencing	X /✓	Not for permanent use, but maybe for short teaching during the pre-tasks etc. Safety issues can be taken care of with UNI versions	On a case-by-case basis.

First page of the online community on the web page





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