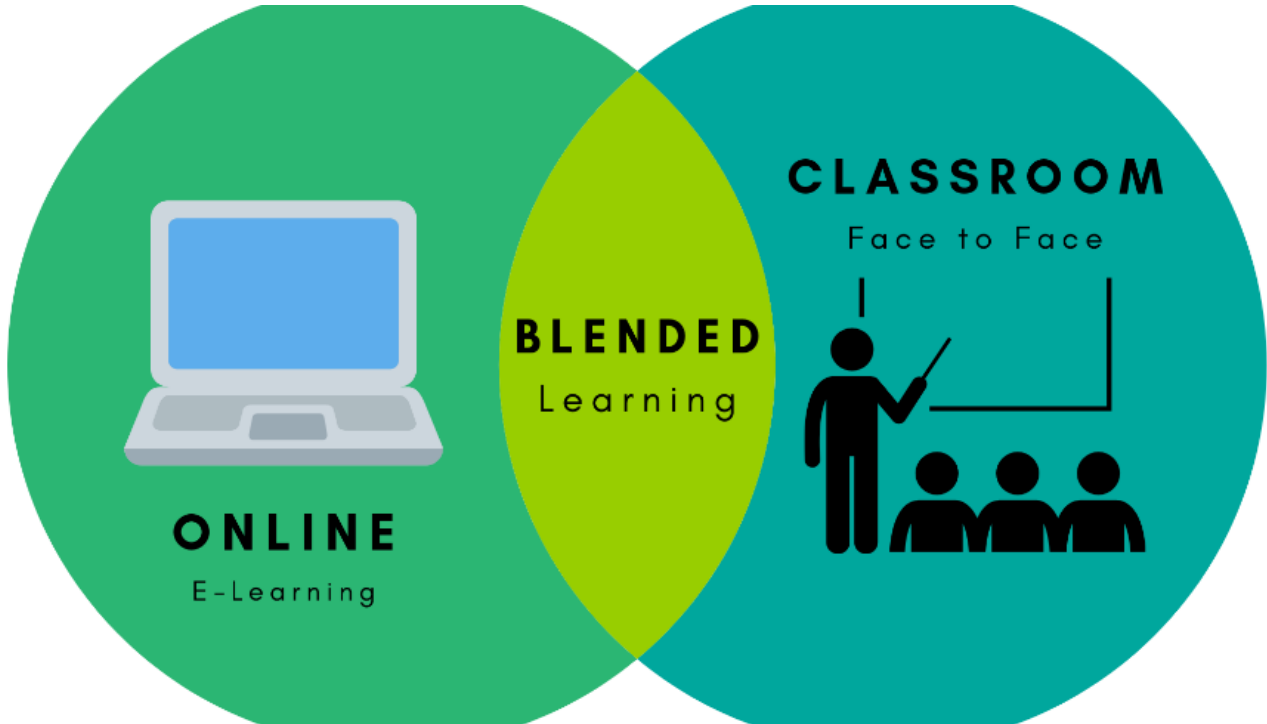


SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ECO-FRIENDLY ACTIONS NETWORK

S T E F A N P R O J E C T 2 0 2 0 - 2 0 2 2 N E W S L E T T E R



POST COVID-19 ADAPTATION FACE TO FACE OR ON LINE TRAINING: WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD TO FOLLOW?

The use of online training it has become common practice driven in recent decades by new technologies (ICT) and the spread of the Internet everywhere in the globalized world. As a consequence of the impact of COVID-19, all kind of "face-to-face" learning around the world have necessarily changed into online mode mainly during the lockdown period (2020-2021).

This means virtual education has been accepted as a new standard of education processes: formal and informal, from primary school to the last year university level, included private and public sector, and obviously the same for all other informal courses.

One of the key questions on education, as we are emerging from the pandemic peaks of COVID-19, is to identify what is best to do in learning process: go back to "face-to-face" or stay in the virtual world? Blended learning seems to be the appropriate alternative: the combination of both, "face-to-face" and online learning.

The World Economic Forum survey revealed that seven of ten adults worldwide (72%) think that, in five years, higher education will be done online at least as much as on-site. Specifically, almost a quarter of adults worldwide (23%) believe that in five years, higher education in their country will be carried out entirely or mostly, online. The other half (49%) believe it will take place both online and on-site.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



BENEFITS OF BLENDED LEARNING

One of the most obvious advantage is to considerably broaden the geographical scope in access to education, since the virtual mode allows you to:

overcome all geographical barriers but also the limits imposed by the pandemic, reduce economic costs as well as increasing the compatibility of training time with work or family commitments.

Another big advantage is that of allow greater autonomy in the organization of study time. However, students are required to have a greater sense of responsibility in managing their free time and study.

Blended learning allows you to enjoy these benefits which is associated with the possibility of maintaining face-to-face contact with colleagues.

CHALLENGES OF BLENDED LEARNING

As a result of blended learning the roles of teachers and students change significantly: students must learn to be responsible for their own learning process and teachers should take on roles such as training material designers, multimedia resources producers, managers of the learning environment and online tutors. Indeed, a big challenge is the methodology of course design (Osguthorpe and Graham, 2003).

These authors suggest that teachers must address various pedagogical and logistical aspects, such as: how often teachers and students meet face-to-face and how often they will do it for complete the online activities, define the purposes that each meeting will have to be reached during the "face-to-face" meetings compared to the online meetings, etc.- It is clear that the challenge of learning and teaching online modifies conventional roles of students, but also of the teachers and of the training materials as well. In this sense, it is necessary that teachers ensure that the pedagogy to be implemented and the material to be used are appropriate to blended training.



THE FIRST FACE TO FACE MEETING BETWEEN STEFAN PARTNERS WAS HELD IN SLOVENIA

The 3rd transnational meeting of the Sustainable Tourism Eco-friendly actions network project was held in presence in Koper city, Slovenia, during the 9th and 10th November by all partners representatives. This encounter was focused on methodology validation, presentation of the structure of the e-learning platform and organization of the training material contents to be develop for the e-learning courses in the next project phase.

ECO-TOURISM BLENDED LEARNING

As part of the activities programmed, STEFAN project is designing a virtual platform for sustainable tourism and eco-tourism training materials in order to increase the skills and capabilities of tour operators, professionals, entrepreneurs and people who works in the tourism sector in partners countries. In this sense, these virtual courses are planing to be as a complement of traditional face-to-face learning in order to promote blended learning on eco-tourism.