

E-LEARNING ACTIVITIES DURING PANDEMIC: PROJECT LIFE CLIVUT

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ABSTRACT

New technologies have significantly entered our lives and online services offer the opportunity for sustainable regional development. Electronic services offered by the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's), have proved an important tool in efforts to disseminate e-learning in modern education during the pandemic especially in confinement. E-Learning is the delivery of learning and training via digital resources. E-Learning is based on formalized learning and it is provided through electronic devices such as computers, tablets and even smartphones that are connected to the internet. The global pandemic has drastically changed the way that people learn worldwide. Citizens, experts, students from all around the world have suddenly shifted from classroom learning to online learning. This type of learning that is independent of place and time, extends learning to people around the world. This paper describes seminars that took place online in the framework of LIFE CLIVUT project (Climate value of urban trees-LIFE18 GIC/IT/001217).

KEYWORDS

E-Learning, Green Development, Tele-Education, Social, ICTS

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the rapid change in technological progress and the globalization trend in education, new methods and perspectives such as E-learning have opened to educational practice (Hassan Ja'ashan, 2020). E-learning refers to the learning that utilizes electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom (Al-Atabi and Al-Noori, 2020).

The electronic services provided by the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's). They are an important tool in efforts to disseminate the electronic learning (e-learning) in modern education. The new technologies have entered our lives dynamically and online services are the lever for sustainable regional development (Andreopoulou, 2008; Kirkenidis and Andreopoulou, 2011). The extreme development of technology and the trend of continuing education in all fields make the tele-Education one of the highest form of modern education (Kirkenidis and Andreopoulou, 2011). Distance learning is a modern field of education that focuses on teaching methods and technology with the aim of delivering teaching, to students, citizens, experts who are not physically present in a traditional educational setting. It has been described as "a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both" (Bušelić, 2017). The pandemic created new challenges and caused disruption in the Education sector. The face-to-face teaching replaced by E-learning (Bashir et. al., 2021). As a result, the higher education market has become increasingly competitive with the addition of distance and open education models (Cunha et al., 2020).

E-learning is a tool via it the direct transmission of knowledge is provided, without spatial limitations (Kirkenidis and Andreopoulou, 2011). In recent years, the countries need to adopt a new development model for them· a development model that serves people and their real needs. E-learning is a promising educational medium and a new teaching methodology that contributes to effective student learning (Encarnacion et. al., 2021).

Green development is a proposal for a new kind of pioneering development, where the environment and quality is not a parameter or another industry policy, but the main axis and basis of an innovative and alternative development plan of a country in the global socioeconomics (Andreopoulou et. al., 2006). One of the main

advantages of using ICT is the dissemination of knowledge to extension agencies through appropriate information models can be fed back to the international agroforestry community on research or policy making level (Andreopoulou et. al., 2011). Also, electronic services offered by the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's), is important decision making tool (Black, 2002; Koutroumanidis and Andreopoulou, 2009; Kirkenidis and Andreopoulou, 2015). Expect for e-learning, during the pandemic the use of social networks increased. Social media are interactive Internet applications that facilitate creation, curation, and sharing of user-generated content (Davis, 2016). Social media during the pandemic played an important role in dissemination of information across the world (Demuyakor, 2020).

The LIFE CLIVUT - Climate value of urban trees (LIFE18 GIC/IT/001217) project is coordinated for Greece by the Forestry Laboratory of the Department of Forestry and Natural Environment of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. A key objective of the project is to leverage academic expertise to better assess the importance of urban green in climate change mitigation and CO₂ sequestration dynamics. The project partners are the University of Perugia (Università degli Studi di Perugia - Dipartimento di Ingegneria Civile ed Ambientale), the Municipalities of Bologna and Perugia, the Italian Institute CESAR (Centro per lo Sviluppo Agricolo e Rurale) and the Portuguese Institute ISG (Instituto Superior de Gestão, ENSINUS-Estudios Superiores SA). The main aim of LIFE CLIVUT project is to develop and implement a Strategic Management of Urban Green Spaces, with focusing on the mitigation of Climate Change, adapted to medium-sized Mediterranean cities. Both its planning and its implementation will be based on participatory processes, between the local government, scientists, professionals and citizens. During, the pandemic seminars took place online that many experts, students, citizens and stakeholders attended them. Also, the LIFE CLIVUT project has a website (www.lifeclivut.eu) and pages in social media to inform citizens, students and stakeholders on issues related to climate change, urban greening as one of the main purposes is to increase awareness.

2. E-LEARNING COURSES

In the framework of the action C.1.1 'Urban planners capacity building' of the European LIFE program LIFE_CLIVUT_LIFE18 GIC/IT/001217 the laboratory of Silviculture, Department of Forestry and Natural Environment, Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment, of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, have organized four 4-day online courses via platform ZOOM. These educational seminars addressed both at experts and at students were foreseen by the project by physical presence. Due to confinement the educational seminars carried out online. The positive point of this process was that that experts and students from all over Greece attended the training seminars who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

The first step of the planning process is the construction of a deep Knowledge of the existing situation (structure, performance, location, ownership and accessibility of green spaces) and the awareness in these actors of the existing and potential contribution of green spaces to the mitigation of Climate Changes in Cities and to citizen well-being. The capacity building will be based on: short basic courses (8 session of 4 hours each. Each session had a different topic) managed by professors and researchers of the university and with the engagement of international lecturers: urban tree dendrometric and phenological characteristics and function in urban environment the ecosystem approach in urban planning, management technics and planning rules improving the environmental and climate performance of urban trees, How to plan and manage urban green asset through Urban Green Asset Management System. Experts, students and citizens attended the courses.

The 2-day online courses 'Urban Planners capacity building for designing and implementation of Urban Climate Green Asset Strategy' addressed to experts and the other 2-day online courses 'Climate Value of Urban Trees' to citizens and students. In total 150 people attended the online courses (Figure 1). The lectures presented their subject in Greek language.

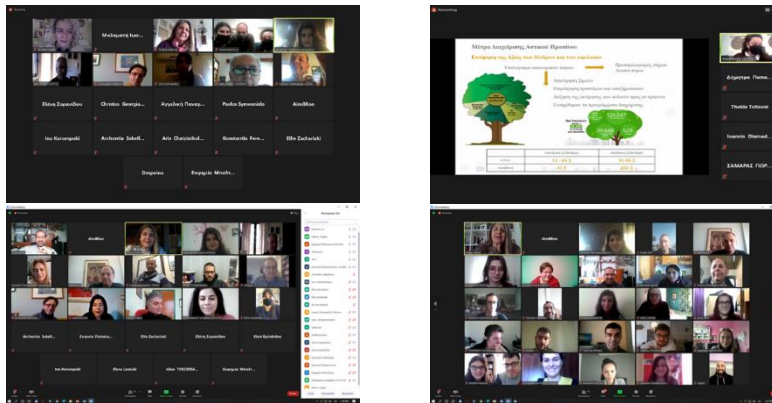


Figure 1. Online courses in the framework of Action C.1.1

In the context of the action C4.1 “Business awareness” of the European LIFE program LIFE_CLIVUT_LIFE18 GIC/IT/001217, the laboratory of Silviculture, Department of Forestry and Natural Environment, Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment, of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, have organized four 4-day online courses through ZOOM platform. The aim was to increase the awareness of the different business sectors that present in the urban areas regarding the benefit for their business and for the Urban Community to actively participate in the Urban Climate Green Asset Strategy planting and maintaining trees in private places also for public use. According to action C4.1 “Business awareness” For business, sustainability and in particular Zero Emissions strategy can mean greater competitiveness and represents a continuation of its inevitable drive towards efficiency. The importance of this Strategy increases where there is local shared strategy promoted by local authorities and by citizens. This sub-activity is finalized to increase the awareness of entrepreneurs on the benefit of a more sustainable behavior and in participating in the Urban Climate Green Asset Strategy as a mean to exchanges their mission with the sequestration capability of new planted trees.

The courses were divided into four groups according to the four sectors (retail, industry, transport, tourism). The courses took place on November 30th & December 1-3th 2021. All groups carried the title: “The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Climate Change and Urban Green Management”, mainly for the businesses of Greece. 90 people attended the seminars (Figure 2). The seminars were uploaded in Greek language to the YouTube where everyone can watch them.

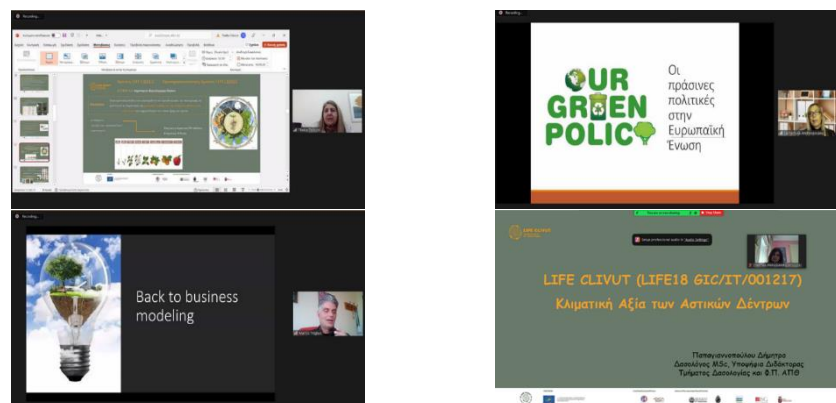


Figure 2. Online courses in the framework of C.4.1

3. CONCLUSION

The extreme development of technology and the trend of continuing education in all fields make the e-learning (tele-Education) the highest form of education. The services and goods was available through the Internet and other forms of data transmission, especially during the pandemic. The perfect organization, design, development and completion by a full team of associates present the needs and the professionalism needed for running online courses. This professionalism is linked inextricably with the evolution of technology and the offered solutions. The online courses that took place in the framework of LIFE CliVut project promoted the environmental awareness during the pandemic as many people had the opportunity to attend them. The new web technologies and their applications in e-learning are the tools for broad dissemination of knowledge without spatial and temporal constraints. The participants liked the educational seminars as evidenced by their participation in subsequent activities.

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