

ICT tools used for the online RELANG workshop in Serbia

Moodle

We created a page on Moodle dedicated to the workshop, where all the information and materials related to the event were uploaded: the agenda, Zoom links, documents and any other materials/worksheets/tasks that we would print out in normal circumstances or ask the participants to read/consult before or after the workshop.

First, the RELANG page on Moodle was set up, and the agenda and general resources that the participants needed to consult before the workshop were uploaded. Then, the participants were asked to create an account on Moodle if they did not have one and then enrol on the course several days before the workshop, following the instructions given by the local organiser. They could then access the workshop page where they could see the available information, use links and download materials, as appropriate.

There is a possibility to add 'announcements' in Moodle, which can be quite convenient. It is used for publishing and sending important information to participants. All the participants are subscribed to it by default, which means that they get an email whenever there is a new announcement on Moodle. We used announcements for welcoming the participants, sending Zoom links, inviting them to read/look at particular documents, do homework tasks, etc.

We did not upload all the materials and links at once in order to help the participants find the information they needed more easily. For example, before the event we uploaded the agenda, general resources and the ECML video; Zoom links for each day were posted only the day before, and then removed after the end of a session; presentations and documents used during a session were uploaded after the session.

Participants did not log in to Moodle during live sessions, but used it before and after them.

Google Drive and Google Docs

We used Google Drive and Google Docs for sharing documents with the participants and collaboration during the workshop. First we put all the documents that we wanted to share with the participants on Google Drive. To get links to the documents that should not be editable, we opened them on Google Drive and used these URLs. To get links to the documents that should be editable, we opened them in and then saved them as Google Docs, and used these URLs.

We made a list of all the links to be shared with the participants in chronological order, specifying when (day, session, activity) and with which group they needed to be shared. In this way, the links (with the names of documents they referred to) could just be copied from the list and pasted in the Zoom chat box, which made the sharing process faster.

Such documents are filled in/edited online, so the participants did not have to send or share completed worksheets as the consultants could see all the modifications to the documents in real time.

Zoom

Participants followed the workshop via Zoom. The creator of the meeting is the host, and consultants should be given the role of co-hosts so that they can share their presentations/documents.

Special attention needed to be paid to group work activities, for which we used breakout rooms. Before such activities, the moderator needed to make breakout rooms and then assign participants to them, either manually or at random (automatically). We wanted to have participants from different types of institutions in each group, so we had made a list of participants per group in advance and during the event manually assigned them to breakout rooms. The process of manual group assignment takes a couple of minutes so it should ideally be done during the previous activity or while the consultants are giving instructions for group work. Instructions for group work were given while all the participants were still in the main room, so that the participants could start working on their task immediately after joining their breakout rooms.

We shared links to the documents to be used in the chat box. Regarding the chat in the main room/breakout rooms, the following should be noted: 1) breakout room chat is only viewable in that breakout room; 2) main room chat does not show in breakout room chat; 3) each time a breakout room is opened, the chat starts empty (it does not include a previous instance of the breakout room's chat nor the main room chat); 4) a participant can see the messages in breakout room chat only if they are posted while the participant is in the breakout room. Therefore, if links for group work are shared in the main room chat, participants should click on them before joining breakout rooms. The links can also be shared in breakout room chat, but then the moderator needs to join each room one by one to paste the links there, which takes a few minutes.

Padlet

For some activities we made Padlet boards, where using this tool was appropriate – e.g. introductions, answering questions, commenting, brainstorming, exchanging ideas etc. These boards are created and stored online, and their URL is used for accessing or sharing them. Anyone with the link can add posts. Posts appear instantly and simultaneously, even when multiple people are working on the same padlet at once. Everyone with the link can see in real time everything that is being added to the padlet. This makes discussions after group work activities easier as everyone in the meeting can see the outputs in one place.