› 1   Introduction to and rationale for the handbook

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The present handbook is the result of a two-year European Learning Partnership. The Grundtvig partnership MyMobile responded to the current trend towards individualisation in mobile and network communication. It reacted to today's socio-cultural and technological developments, in which computers, laptops and mobile phones provide ubiquitous individual access to communication, entertainment, shopping, internet, media offerings or knowledge archives. For adult users, particularly older persons, degrees of access differ greatly: in some professional and personal contexts, practically no mobile applications are in regular use. Considering the dynamic development of the smart-phone sector and e-learning, there is an urgent need for a constructive response in adult education towards enabling specific target groups to participate in the digital world, making "mobile learning" accessible to more adults.

These technological developments create new pedagogical challenges and offer opportunities for learning at any location – particularly for those who have difficulty with learning. Teaching institutions are called upon to respond to this development. Societal individualisation is producing a demand for new and informal paths to learning, outside of formal educational structures. It is essential that these learning contexts be utilised effectively for lifelong learning. Here, mobile learning can provide new insights and options; it offers possibilities for learning in individualised contexts. Especially for target groups that are educationally disadvantaged, developing didactic methods in mobile learning can lead to more inclusive and effective paths of transfer.

This cooperation among four partner institutions in several European member states (Belgium, Germany, Italy and UK) generated a coherent and comprehensive overview of their successful approaches, which are described in this handbook. Through the mutual development of a shared understanding of "mobile learning", assessment based on practical learning scenarios, and the dissemination of examples of best practice with the aid of this handbook, the project MyMobile supports the idea of lifelong learning as a key concept of the European information society.

What you can expect from this handbook

Chapter 2 outlines the project design, the collaborative process in the learning partnership, and the project outcomes and results.

Chapter 3 introduces the basic concept of mobile learning and the theoretical groundwork of the MyMobile project. The authors Pachler, Seipold and Bachmair are members of the London Mobile Learning Group at the Institution of Education, University of London. They establish the thesis that the use of mobile devices for learning in an informal context is inevitable, and they deliberate on whether institutional pedagogy is necessarily the most efficacious context for learning.

Chapter 4 gives a review of the training scenarios tested by the four partners in their countries. The first workshop, realized by the Institute of Education, University of London, focused on the integration of young adult learners at a distance to formal education. The second and third scenarios were developed by the University of Florence. One focuses on adults' self-promotion skills for job seeking, through digital storytelling and the use of mobile phones; the other develops young adults' self-expression skills through mobile storytelling. Scenario four depicts mobile learning situations from a cross-generational house in a rural area of Germany working with older persons. And the second German workshop – scenario No 5 – was addressed to young adults who are attending college or university to qualify as educators. The two Belgian scenarios relate to a workshop entitled "Become a Media Coach" that trained educators who are working in cultural, social, or educational organisations. A mobile dimension was included throughout the project.

Chapter 5 aims at identifying some trends in the practice of mobile learning in adult education and provides some recommendations for policy, practice, and research. The authors attempt to identify strengths and weaknesses of the project scenarios as realised in order to derive implications for practice and policy for mobile learning and adult education.

Chapter 6 includes a list of apps and tools used or mentioned within the scenarios, along with other tools that partners consider relevant. Chapter 7 contains information about the authors of the handbook.

With this handbook, the European Learning Partnership MyMobile intends to contribute toward implementing the concept of mobile learning in adult learning and the dissemination of this concept in the European context.

We look forward to your feedback on the project experience, the outcomes and results, on the handbook and on our recommendations about mobile learning. Please respond to › www.mymobile-project.eu/spip.php?rubrique7