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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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International Centre
for Technical and Vocational
Education and Training

Open educational resources for adult learners

Promising Practice 2021

Education
2030

Context

The Korea Open Courseware

The Korea Open Courseware (KOCW) is the largest platform for open educational resources (OER) in the Republic of Korea. It was set up to assist individuals wishing to access higher education learning resources by providing materials from over 224 universities and institutions from across the Republic of Korea and abroad. The platform was officially launched in 2009 and hosts videos of lectures, as well as documents, images and other learning aids.

Digital and technical skills gaps

Although the KOCW platform provides a wide spectrum of higher education resources, the Korean Ministry of Education and KERIS identified a lack of relevant resources in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). They subsequently worked with both employers and employees to map out areas for digital and technical skills training.

Providing content for adult learners in TVET

The Korean Ministry of Education and KERIS established the *Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity* in 2018. The project was launched via the KOCW platform and provides adult learners with OER in a broad range of TVET subjects.

Overview

Implemented by: Korea Education and Research Information Service (KERIS)

Where: Republic of Korea

Themes: Adult online learning and capacity-building

Status: Programme active since 2009

The Korea Education and Research Information Service (KERIS) is a quasi-governmental organization of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea. The organization promotes various projects and academic research related to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in education, ranging from primary to higher education. In addition to its development and implementation duties, KERIS serves as a think tank to provide empirical evidence on the usage and effectiveness of ICT in learning and teaching, with the aim of establishing a foundation for the successful development and implementation of ICT in education initiatives.

Objectives

The primary objective is to encourage self-initiated and self-directed TVET learning via access to an in-depth and wide spectrum of OER. This is further supported by the online platform's curating feature, which categorizes university/institution and lectures by specialization (e.g. humanities, social/natural/applied sciences, education, etc.) as well as by themes relevant to employment, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. The platform seeks to provide basic but quality learning resources to adult learners who might not know where to start searching for the contents they need.

The KOCW platform **http://www.kocw.net** *© KERIS*

Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity

The *Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity* provides a set of resources relevant to the key vocational needs of employees in modern day industry.

The learning materials come in the form of short-term online courses meeting the needs of the adult workforce across different age groups. Content is thematically organized into groups such as business start-ups, employment transition, and job competencies, reflecting the quickly changing workplace of the modern technical and digital society.

In 2020, 12 cyber universities across the Republic of Korea collaborated to create 12 short-term online courses, with a total of 75 learning modules (about six or seven per course). In particular, eight courses focused on different adult learners' job competency programmes, while four were focused on the theme of artificial intelligence (AI). These courses were added to meet the rapidly increasing demand for digital transformation skills.

The project offers an unlimited and equal-access space for higher education and TVET resources to anyone, anywhere. In contrast, recent statistics suggest that only around 13% of e-learning in the Republic of Korea is via open-access public platforms, with the large majority only being available behind paywalls or through private institutions. Given these figures, making educational resources widely available to all is of particular importance. OER can serve as an entry point for learners' without having to worry about prohibitive costs.

Outcomes and impact

Supporting individual learners' needs

The main impact of the platform overall is that it proves an invaluable resource to individuals wishing to access higher educational materials. The platform continues to meet the various individual needs of learners who can learn at their own pace as well as providing a space for institutions to share their resources.

COVID-19 pandemic

During the initial stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government closed entry to outside visitors into the Republic of Korea, meaning foreign students enrolled in university courses, but not already in the country, had to rely entirely on online learning. This, coupled with limitations on in-person teaching and learning, created an explosion in demand for online resources. KOCW was able to step in to provide supplementary online resources.
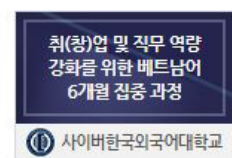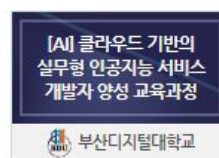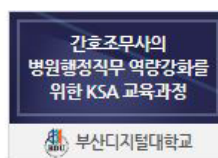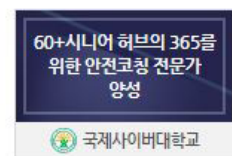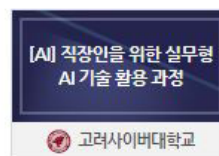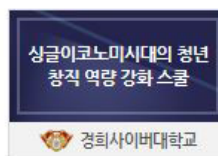
Accessible content delivery

The Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity is relatively new, but it is expected that its main output will be to provide free and accessible learning materials covering a wide spectrum of learning standards from basic-level beginner training, right through to progressive content modules for advanced learners. The intended long-term impact is to close the digital skills gap in the Republic of Korea and have a skilled workforce available to meet the demands of the labour market.

High quality resources

As a result of the collaborative partnership between the Korean Ministry of Education, KERIS and the cyber universities of the Republic of Korea, and the integration of the two initiatives (KOCW and Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity), the quality of open educational resources is continuously improving. Furthermore, as part of the project, a comprehensive assessment of the competencies of cyber universities was conducted with follow-up strategies implemented to strengthen their competitiveness within the e-learning market.

- SMT(Surface Mounting Technology) 산업 교육 과정 (6)
- 시니어요가 전문인력 교육 과정 (6)
- 4C 인재를 육성하는 코딩강사 양성과정 (7)
- LC2 코칭 역량 개발 과정 (6)
- 러브유어셀프, 뇌기반 감정코칭 전문가 양성과정 (6)
- 발달장애인 케어를 위한 50+ 시니어 지원인력 양성 과정 (6)

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60+시니어 허브의 365를 위한 안전코칭 전문가 양성
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면역력 UP ! 행복지수 UP ! 멘탈헬스 365
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간호조무사의 병원행정직무 역량강화를 위한 KSA 교육과정
부산디지털대학교

[AI] 클라우드 기반의 실무형 인공지능 서비스 개발자 양성 교육과정
부산디지털대학교

취(창)업 및 직무 역량 강화를 위한 베트남어 6개월 집중 과정
사이버한국외국어대학교

Courses developed through the Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity on the KOCW platform © KERIS

The future

KERIS plans to advance the two initiatives by expanding their usage through international collaboration, thereby contributing to building an ecosystem of quality education aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition, an expansion of the Content Development Project for Adult Learners' Capacity is planned to build up the repository of TVET resources. Rather than simply providing traditional learning materials, KERIS is working to develop an AI-integrated system that matches various learning courses to the individual learners' preferences and needs. This expansion further contributes to the government's directive of providing dedicated support for successful TVET, both in terms of quantity and quality.

Learn more

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To learn more about KERIS, visit:
keris.or.kr/eng/main.do

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Learn more on our website at:
http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/promisingpractices

Questions or comments? Contact our team at:
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