



## Activity Report 2020

As for the previous year, in 2020 ASLERN did not expand. The Association registered the loss of some memberships compensated by the registration of few new ones. The trend is to lose Institutional memberships and to increase individual memberships.

As in the past, ASLERN has successfully organized its yearly International Conference, the fifth, that originally was planned to be held in person in Bucharest and that, due to the Covid-19, has been transformed into a fully on-line conference supported by the infrastructure of the Aveiro University. All sessions of the conference have been recorded. Due to the pandemic the International Student Contest on "People Centered Smart Learning Ecosystems" has been cancelled.

Considering the border conditions in which we had to operate, the conference has been successfully managed. The event allowed to set up an organizational coordination among the ASLERN members that could be very useful for the future editions of the conference. As for the previous edition we had a limited participation of ASLERN members partially compensated by the participation of local (Romanian) participants (overall 34 papers have been submitted with an increase of about 12% with respect to the previous conference edition). It is confirmed once more that the Association has difficulties in attracting and aggregating potential stakeholders. A stronger commitment of ASLERN members at local (regional/national) level to increase awareness about the ASLERN vision and actions - that aim mainly at a cultural change rather than to the acquisition of economical and/or individual advantages - will be essential. Perhaps it could be useful to organize a survey aimed at investigating expectations of potential stakeholders.

Another issue is the shortage of resources that is experienced by several research groups. Apparently the forced virtual organization of SLERN 2020, that induced a reduction in the cost of participation, has attracted a larger number of submissions. It might indicate that in the future organization of SLERN conferences in the blended format should be seriously taken into consideration. At the same time the habit to give and attend webinars, that became popular with Covid-19, should be considered as an opportunity for dissemination of ASLERN vision and the activities of their members. For this reason the Youtube channel of ASLERN has been created and videos of the conference sessions have been made available to everyone.

The 2020 SLERN edition has been marked by

- the keynotes given by Albert Sangrà Morer and Nic Nistor that allowed to cross-fertilize the ASLERN environment;
- the publication of the conference proceedings with Springer
- the organization of a very timely open round table on the "Transformations of learning ecosystems induced by COVID-19: reflections and future perspectives"

As usual an IxD&A journal special issue has been devoted to SLERN conference, issue n. 47. It collected a quite relevant number of submissions and has been published recently. On occasion of this special issue IxD&A inaugurated the video session, its Youtube channel and the event Meet



the Authors. On the same occasion IxD&A has also started the issuance of blockchain anchored e-certificates for video speakers and issue cochairs. The same technologies provided by Blocko.com (a spin-off the University of Nicosia) will be used in the future also for the issuance of e-certificates for the SLERD conference.

This year ASLERD has not taken part in the submission of any European project , a fact that deserve attention.

On the other hand ASLERD has promoted a survey to investigate the effect of pandemic on learning ecosystems. While, within the association, the survey was promoted only by the ITD-CNR and the University of Tor Vergata, it succeeded to attract scholars from tex extra-European countries - IRAQ and Mexico - and allow to perform interesting comparative studies. The related publications have largely contributed to the awareness of the ASLERD action: one of them collected more than 27000 reads and become for a week trend topic of the special section of Research Gate dedicated to the COVID\_19.

The communication activities on the social channels are continuing as usual but also this year no efforts has been put in place to seriously increase the number of followers. It can be a goal for next year with the aim to attract new ASLERD members and disseminate further the ASLERD vision.

Overall we have been slightly capable to

- make growth the level of joint researches;

and not capable to:

- support the preparation of further joint scientific proposals;

- make increase substantially the “consolidated memberships”. The increase of consolidated members continues to be a goal also for the years to come.

The renewal of the ASLERD website is still currently underway and will be competed as soon as the mirror will be created in a server located at the Bucharest (already made available).

### *Regional activities*

The Italian branch of ASLERD has continued its training consulting activity and produced some incomes in favor of the Association (basically the only incomes in excess to the membership fees). In particular it has contributed to develop high quality on-line alternate schemes characterized by a blockchain anchored e-certification.