



In preparation for the LE:NOTRE Spring meeting (Versailles '09) topic "e-learning" we came up with the idea of consulting the ELASA mailing list in the form of a quick online survey. This allowed us to broaden our insight in the possibilities of e-learning and the way landscape architecture students are already making use of them or envision the subject. In a preparatory web-meeting on March 29th we discussed questions to be asked. Seven questions were put into an online survey tool and send out to the ELASA-L list. Following questions were asked:

- Did you ever make use of online tools and resources for your studies?
- Which kind of online tools and resources?
- Were these resources provided by your university or did you look for them by yourself?
- What do you think E-Learning could do for your education as a landscape architect?
- Which country are you from?
- What is the name of your current university?
- Period of studies?

This survey got published and communicated on Monday March 30th and was closed down on Friday May 1st. During this one month period, we managed to collect 63 filled out surveys. Although we initially hoped to have even greater response we feel this was a very interesting first test which has possibility to be repeated in the future for other subjects. Having received the responses it seemed an important step not only to bring them together, but also to analyze and understand them, and write down the conclusions in the form of this report.

[01] RESPONDENTS

To be able to interpret the findings correctly, it's crucial to give an insight in the survey population. We can see a large representation of Hungarian people, which make up for more than a quarter of the filled in surveys. Both Portugal and Slovenia had an equal amount of respondents. The distribution of respondents has also been visualized on a map which can be found on the next page (see **Fig. 1.3** 'Number of respondents per country').

■ COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Which country are you from?	
<i>answer</i>	<i>%</i>
Unspecified	3,28%
Austria	3,28%
Belgium	1,64%
Czech Republic	1,64%
Germany	3,28%
Greece	1,64%
Hungary	26,23%
Ireland	3,28%
Italy	3,28%
Latvia	9,84%
Norway	1,64%
Poland	6,56%
Portugal	13,11%
Republic of Serbia	1,64%
Romania	1,64%
Slovak Republic	1,64%
Slovenia	13,11%
Turkey	1,64%
United Kingdom	1,64%

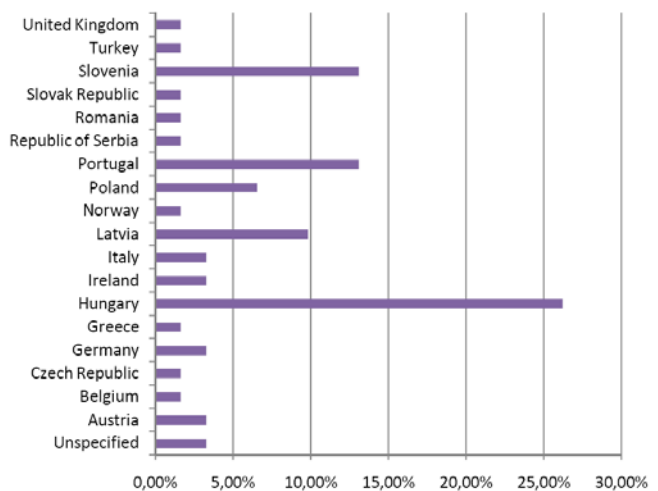
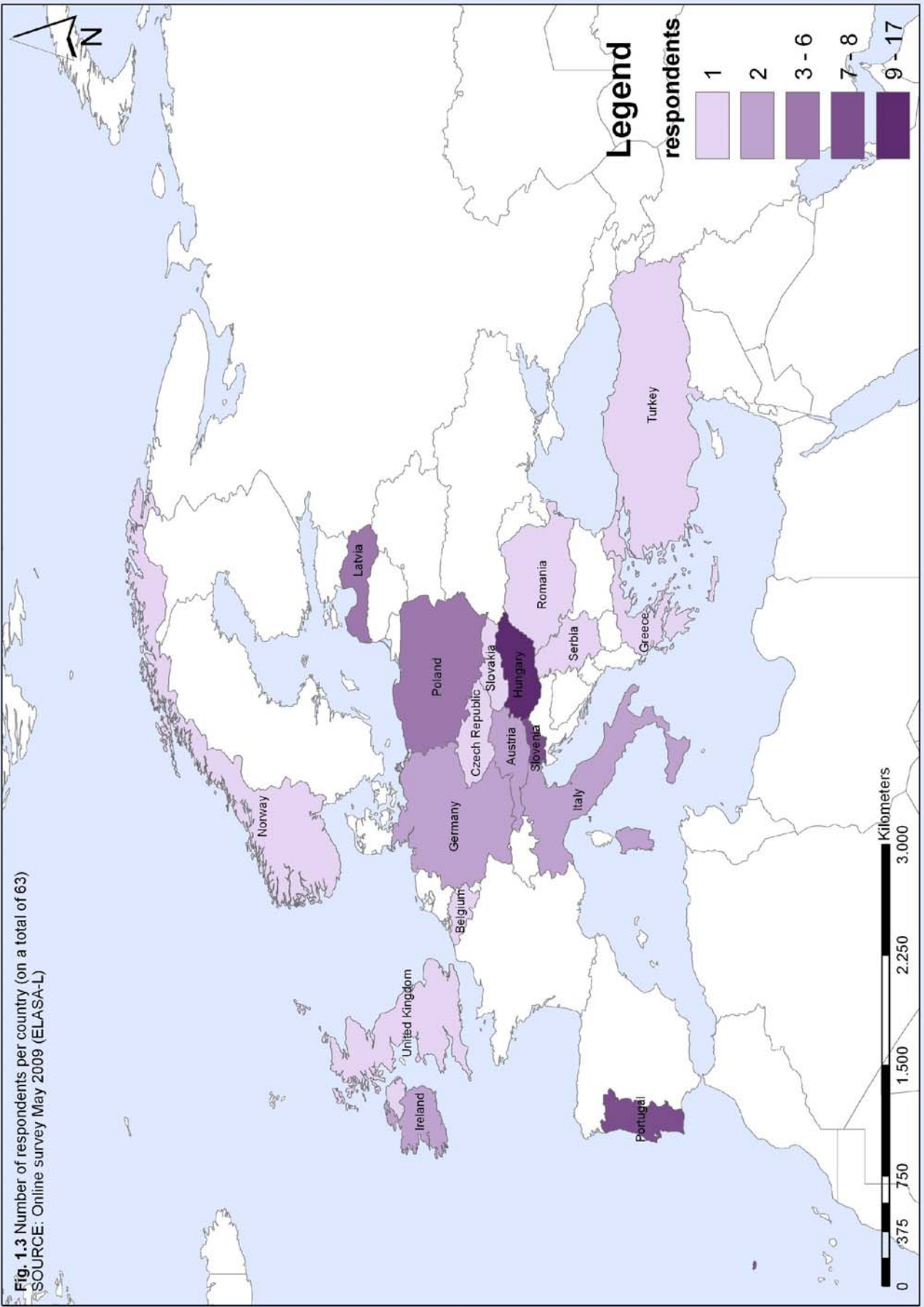


Fig 1.1: Table of percentual division - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

Fig 1.2: Graph of percentual division - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)





■ **SCHOOL ATTENDING**

LE:NOTRE NETWORK MEMBER SCHOOLS

- Agronomy High Institute; Lisbon Technical University (Lisbon) (1/63)
- Catholic University of Lublin (Lublin) (1/63)
- Corvinus University of Budapest Faculty of Landscape Architecture (Budapest) (16/63)
- Dresden University of Technology (Dresden) (1/63)
- Edinburgh College of Art (Edinburgh) (2/63)
- Istanbul University (Istanbul) (1/63)
- Latvia University of Agriculture (Jelgava) (7/63)
- Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry Brno (Brno) (1/63)
- Norwegian University of Life Sciences (Oslo) (1/63)
- Polytechnic University of Valencia (Valencia) (1/63)
- Slovak Agricultural University in Nitra (Nitra) (1/63)
- Technical University Berlin (Berlin) (1/63)
- University College Dublin (Dublin) (1/63)
- University of Belgrade, Faculty of Forestry (Belgrade) (2/63)
- University of Genova (Genova) (1/63)
- University of Ljubljana (Ljubljana) (8/63)
- University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna (Vienna) (1/63)
- University of Porto (Porto) (6/63)
- University of Sheffield (Sheffield) (1/63)
- Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences (Wroclaw) (2/63)

OTHER SCHOOLS:

- Ecole Nationale Supérieure d' Architecture Paris La Villette DSA option Paysage (1/63)
- Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst (Sint-Lucas Gent) (1/63)
- Technological educational institute (t.e.i.) of Kavala, branch of drama, department of landscape architecture (1/63)
- Wyższa Szkoła Zarządzania i Ekonomiką w Tucholi (1/63)

UNSPECIFIED:

- three persons didn't specify their school

■ **PERIOD OF STUDIES**

Period of studies?	
answer	%
first year	5,00%
second year	6,67%
third year	11,67%
fourth year	21,67%
fifth year	35,00%
sixth year	16,67%
seventh year	1,67%
eight year	1,67%

Fig 1.4: Table with the period of studies - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

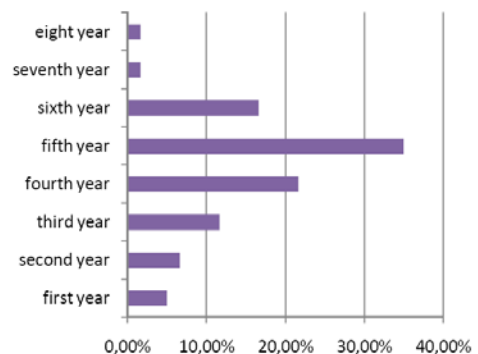


Fig 1.5: Graph visualizing the period of studies - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)



[02] E-LEARNING: WHAT & HOW

The next part of our questionnaire focused more on the types of e-learning applications that are used and the origin of those sources.

■ USAGE

The first – and quite obvious – question was whether or not specific online tools and resources were already used in reference to their landscape architecture studies. Since most of the respondents are subscribed to the ELASA-L list, this on itself already shows an interest in the use of internet as an information source. Only a marginal part of the respondents indicated not to have made use of online tools before.

Did you ever make use of online tools and resources for your studies?	
answer	%
yes	98,41%
no	1,59%

Fig 2.1: Current use of online tools and resources - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

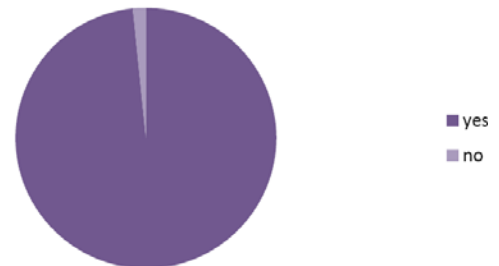


Fig 2.2: Graph visualizing the current use of online tools and resources - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

■ TYPES OF E-LEARNING SOURCE USED

Since the term e-learning covers a large span of applications and sources, we asked for the types of e-learning they made use of. We can conclude clearly that downloading class PowerPoint's (78%) and syllabuses (57%) is very common amongst our survey population. Getting information from prerecorded audio or videosources was used by a third of our respondents. However we noted that more interactive ways of e-learning with the possibility of question asking like streaming live video lectures (13%) and forums (33%) are not exploited to their fullest possibilities. We think this is the result of seeing e-learning as merely an addition to traditional course (classroom-based) learning, whereas if some courses would be taught uniquely through an e-platform this would be more the case.

From our own experiences we can tell that forums on courses we follow at school are being used little to none, since topics can more easily be discussed with other students or professors. In this case, an online discussion platform offers very little additional value to the learning experience. If we look at the way the ELASA-L is being used you can see this does offer interesting discussions and knowledge sharing, since this online platform isn't in direct competition to real life communication but connects landscape students worldwide. Still the biggest challenge is to transform an online discussion platform into a useable knowledge sharing resource.

Which kind of online tools and resources?	
answer	%
digital syllabus	57,14%
class powerpoints	77,78%
prerecorded audio or video lectures	33,33%
live audio or video lectures	12,70%
online discussion platform	33,33%

Fig 2.3: Types of online tools and resources - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

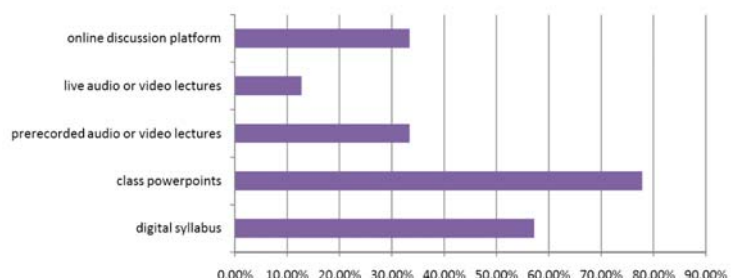


Fig 2.4: Graph visualizing the types of online tools and resources used - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)



■ ORIGIN OF E-LEARNING SOURCE

When asked about where they got hold of the e-learning content, or rather who provided the information, we found that students are eager to look for e-resources themselves (82%). What was kind of eye opening is that only 62% of the survey population indicated to have e-resources provided by their university. This shows that there is definitely room for improvement, something the LE:NOTRE platform can be of great help and value.

Were these resources provided by your university or did you look for them by yourself?	
answer	%
university	61,90%
myself	82,54%

Fig 2.5: Origin of online tools and resources - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

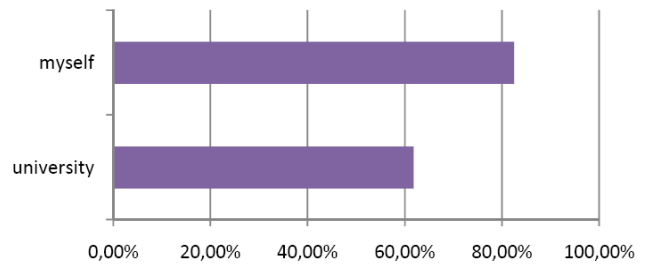


Fig 2.6: Graph visualizing the origin of online tools and resources - SOURCE: Online survey May 2009 (ELASA-L)

[03] E-LEARNING & EDUCATION AS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

In our questionnaire we made room for an open question titled 'What do you think E-Learning could do for your education as a landscape architect?' We can summarize the global and reoccurring feedback as following:

E-learning offers the possibility to look further into specific subjects of interest and helps to efficiently and flexibly make use of time since you can look into it when it suits you and to stay up-to-date with the profession. It also creates the opportunity to get hold of information from nearly everywhere worldwide, information that would otherwise be harder to get. Also to make international connections and experiences, or collaborate on a joint project. Someone also indicated that universities should provide more information over the internet (access to studies and research?). This connects well to what was found when asked to who provided the e-learning sources currently used (see **Fig. 2.5** 'Origin of online tools and resources'). Still others tend to take a more critical position towards e-learning, by - rightfully so - stating that landscape architecture is partly a subjective field requiring real-time interaction. A last item that came to our attention was the fact that e-learning is considered to be free. This brings up the discussion whether or not LE:NOTRE could charge an access fee in the distant future for its website in the unfortunate scenario that funding would come to an end. Unless universities would be willing to cover these costs, it seems likely nearly all of the individual students will refrain from making further use of the website.

Below, we collected all of the unedited individual answers to this open question. These can give you an idea of the diversity in answers we received.

- it could give me more from a subject i'm interested in, i could spend my time better, i could get wider view of existing landscape architectre ...▪it is great to find information freely available on the web. to communicate is important for landscape architecture students. i can develop independently with the help of online resources.
- good for student learning and interaction
- Great help when I need it
- save time, be more mobile, compact, enviormenatilly friendly
- Maybe.
- My education could be cheaper, easier and up-to date.
- It could be very useful
- It would be good, if the university would have more stuff available on the net.
- It provides sources and references from the parts of the world, that without it would be harder to gather it.



▪ - insight into recent projects - collaboration on study projects with students all over the globe and with professors (professionals) also - broaden our knowledge in landscape theory (e-books, articles..) - making our study more interesting, quality for those who like to explore and collaborate with students abroad - internet made things more at hand and with e-learning we will not need to go abroad (like exchange students) and students who cannot afford to go on exchange could also get international experience - landscape students will get more linked up

▪ to provide information and enhance to learn more about some techniques of landscape architecture

▪ Important thing: because of the subjectivity of landscape architecture, it needs "real-time interaction" between teacher and student. Web-based teaching couldn't substitute this, but could give wide opportunities for international team-works!

▪ -coordination of project group, easier working in the group because of an web based desk in the internet, which everybody can reach from any computer. - repetitions of the course content possible through the design of "learning-aim-control-test-programms"

▪ new methods, sources in landscaping fresh ideas

▪ I can use materials which are not available for me in a different way. E-Learning is combined with visualisation, and this method is the best for me to remember, and to make ideas, to be more creative.

▪ using the softwares, repeating the lectures at home, discussing with other students while planning

▪ Faster and more effective gathering of information. Finding information different from my professors' view, thus widening my knowledge and softening my attitude.

▪ gives more diversity to education

▪ I think it could be a good way of enhancing my knowledge, because next to work it's hard to go to courses, etc.

▪ It could help learn new technologies, materials, methods for planning, new softwares, the latest result of some research etc.

▪ yes, for searching different examples

▪ yes, I think it could be some help for all of us...I see that there are no references in our University...

▪ it is important because it enlarges the range of information we can have access to, and because the communication between students, professors and universities is facilitated.

▪ broaden my view. international collaborations, exchanging experience

▪ it is comfortable and easy

▪ E-learning is great because you have the chance to stay in touch with the latest information.

▪ provide additional informations

▪ I think many people could share their knowledge this way. and it would be really weightful

▪ Complete those subjects' material which had not given us enough information for a successful exam.

▪ see and find lots of different information, views, solutions in our profession

▪ e-learning can be as search/exchange information model but I really do not believe that landscape architecture can be learnt in distance learning program although I have completed accredited program of diploma garden design at open learning course

▪ would make time management easier

▪ quick experience exchange

▪ to exchange knowledge with foreigner students and universities

▪ it's important for our digital future

▪ I think that is an important base of information

▪ There are no limits the way e-learning can help everybody acquire a better education

▪ E-learning could help and simplify my education.



- better communication between students and teachers, more sharing of information, access to different kind of information (images, videos..), faster actualization
- no opinion
- I believe that I can learn new things, that could not be taught in my country (landscape architecture in Serbia is really just starting to develop)
- elearning is the future of online education and the sooner landscape architecture gets on-board, the better.
- in my opinion e-learning helps us extend our knowledge about landscape architecture and also helps us to produce new ideas about the designing and the functionalism of an area. It would be great if there would be more e-books, about landscape architecture, available to the students that use this kind of extra knowledge.
- expand the possibilities of learning and sharing the knowledge
- to get fresh news, it makes it easier, faster...
- give practical information about any topic faster (like for example from the digital neufert), exchange work experience with other colleagues, provide tools for learning new programs (digital tutors) and also with the forum, that is already existing among elasa, get useful information when you need..
- it helps organizing and sharing files and working on them together in real time and gives the opportunity not to stay at one place.
- Yes i think it could be useful for landscape architects too while: - online you can reach the infos when every you would like (it is not fix hours when u have to be at the class and 'learn') - maybe the online teaching give you more and wider information about landscape architecture then what you can hear on one or two lectures - you can select which is interesting for you ..and so on..
- Makes one more aware of the full extent of the resources available
- it might help, but i don't know how
- I can use my time more efficiently.
- i think it is a supplement to conservative learning methods
- international overlook
- Given the global nature of the profession it is the best way to share information both within a learning environment and leading into professional practice. Also the large graphics packages and programmes that we use led themselves to electronic storage and access
- for example it could be very helpful to see a lot of projects filed into categories with the possibility to comment and discuss them
- Definitely make the "landscape architecture world" smaller and easily reachable to everyone who is interested. Helps me exchanging ideas as well as exploring many other more.
- make a database of ongoing events and interesting projects, so syllabus and portfolios could be updated regularly...
- Help me develop personal interests (in stead of taking in only what university teachers have to offer) and implement them in professional practice. Also discovering new techniques/studies that haven't reached professors yet.
- a/ is possible to use it everywhere where the PC is-I mean it's not necessary to take all your notes everywhere with you b/ for LA-it mainly helps with drawing PC programmes where is sometimes difficult to understand the "manual". E-learning shows very comprehensible way of learning!
- In my opinion is e-learning is not so good.
- Addition way to gain knowledge
- free education



[04] CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the current batch of landscape architect students – part of the so called Millennial Generation¹ or Generation Y (born between 1982-2001)- are in many ways dependant on digital technology and communication. Much unlike our precedent generations, making use of this technology comes natural and is seen as essential. Being the very first generation growing up with computers and internet (meanwhile widespread and affordable) we have high expectations in the field of e-learning. As people of our generation gradually find their way in setting up and contributing to these technologies, e-learning will most definitely develop further to unexpected proportions. Is there still need to emphasize the importance of continuing the investment of both time and money?

As for ELASA this was a unique and first 'experiment' in hearing the opinions of the students connected to ELASA and communicating these findings with LE:NOTRE. We thought this to be a learningful experience as it gives a founded insight in otherwise poorly documented subjects. We hope this survey & report will help LE:NOTRE to further enstrengthen their ideas and actions concerning e-learning with the opinions of the students in mind. Having other surveys in the future is definitely something that could be done for different subjects and to which ELASA would be more than willing to cooperate with LE:NOTRE.

We wish to thank all of those who filled in the online survey and thereby contributed greatly to the content and credibility of this report.

BRAGANÇA, Ana - HORACEK, Katarina - JOYE, Ruben - KLAGYIVIK, Maria - LORENZ, Florian - PASCU, Andreea - PIPLAS, Haris - RATKEVIČS, Guntis

¹ Howe, N; Strauss, W. and Matson, RJ (2000) Millennials Rising. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

