D.5.4 – Web based teachers' community

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1.0	08.2011	All	Basic structure	Evita Tasiopoulou
2.0	10.2011	All	Update content, add screenshots	Evita Tasiopoulou

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1. Introduction

The main purpose of the UniSchooLabS project was to improve quality in science education in Europe, by promoting collaboration between universities and schools in the provision of remote access to science laboratories for primary and secondary schools through internet-based services.

The current deliverable describes the tools and functions of the public Teachers' community which is accessible through the UniSchooLabS web portal.

2. Role of the Teachers community

Throughout the project, Teachers' community has adopted two (2) different structures in order to address and cover the needs of its audience.

At the beginning of the project, community was made available to UniSchooLabS Pilot teachers only. Teachers had to register and identify themselves by providing the system with a login and password before being able to use its services. At that point, the main role of the Community was to provide teachers with online, quick and efficient support in order to facilitate and ensure the realization of their Pilot activities.

During that time, teachers had the opportunity to exchange with the other Pilot schools, share their experiences and problems plus provide the UniSchooLabS development team with precious feedback on the Toolkit and its features. The provision of online help and support has helped teachers to successfully complete their Pilot activities and also triggered a number of modifications and improvements that shaped the Toolkit.

Figure 1 UniSchooLabS community

After the completion of the Pilot activities and the finalization of the UniSchooLabS Toolkit, the online teachers' community has been restructured and redesigned in order to serve the needs of its wider audience.

Access to the community is now available for both identified and non-identified users. Teachers have the option to either register and contribute to the community or participate under the "anonymous" status.

Message boards and document library have also been restructured in order to reflect the new, open role of the community.

3. Teachers community

3.1. Introduction

Figure 2 Introduction

A small introduction welcomes newcomers to the UniSchooLabS community. Users are provided with information on the material and support they can expect to receive as long as the various users groups that the community serves and targets.
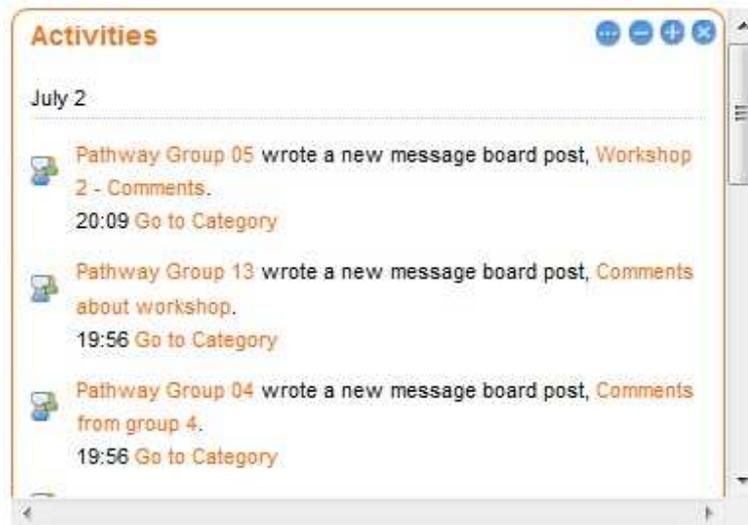
3.2. Activities

Figure 3 Activities

The Activities section shows the latest actions performed by the community members. This small box, displays approximately ten (10) of the latest activities with links to the person who has performed them plus to the outcome of their action. In this way, users can easily and quickly access the latest content addition/comments/documents.

3.3. Message boards

Message boards have been organized in the following categories:

- **General questions & ideas:** Place for users to ask any question related to UniSchooLabS and also share any ideas or suggestions they might have on the further development of the project, content, website etc.
- **Laboratories & activities:** Each laboratory and related activity has been allocated with a dedicated board where users can discuss, exchange and support each other. Respective boards are supported and moderated either by the laboratory owners themselves or the Pilot teachers who have actively used them during the Pilot phase. In this way, users have the opportunity to probe into the laboratory and/or activity of their choice in a safe environment while receiving inside info and support.
- **Pedagogical support:** A place where users can receive answers on any pedagogical issues related to the application and use of the available laboratories and activities. Support and ideas on how teachers can make use of the Toolkit in the most optimal and appropriate for their context way, is also provided.
- **Technical support:** Questions related to the various functionalities of the Toolkit, how-to issues plus reporting on problems or technical difficulties that users might experience, can be submitted and answered through this board.

3.4. Document library

Figure 5 Document library

The Document library has been organized and structured around a number of folders, in order to facilitate users finding the material they need.

- **Public Project documents:** Public deliverables and official documents related to the project are shared through this folder.
- **UniSchooLabS brochures:** Both general UniSchooLabS plus the Policy makers' brochures can be accessed through here. Users have the possibility to view or download and print the respective brochures at their own convenience.
- **UniSchooLabS logo:** The official UniSchooLabS logo in various sizes and analysis can be viewed and downloaded for further use.
- **Workshops' folders:** As a follow up to the various UniSchooLabS workshops, partners in charge of them shared the related presentation and documents through their respective folders. A great way for participants to have a collection of all material and for anyone interested to get a taste of the work and activities carried out during the workshops.

4. Conclusions

The updated Teachers' community aims to provide users with a platform where they can easily access a variety of information on UniSchooLabS, plus exchange with other users in an easy and safe way. Based on its form and content, the UniSchooLabS community will remain at the center of the project's activity, ensuring the continuation of the community's activities even after the completion of the project.