

Ad Hoc Transient Groups: Instruments for Awareness in Learning Networks

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Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies
celstec.org



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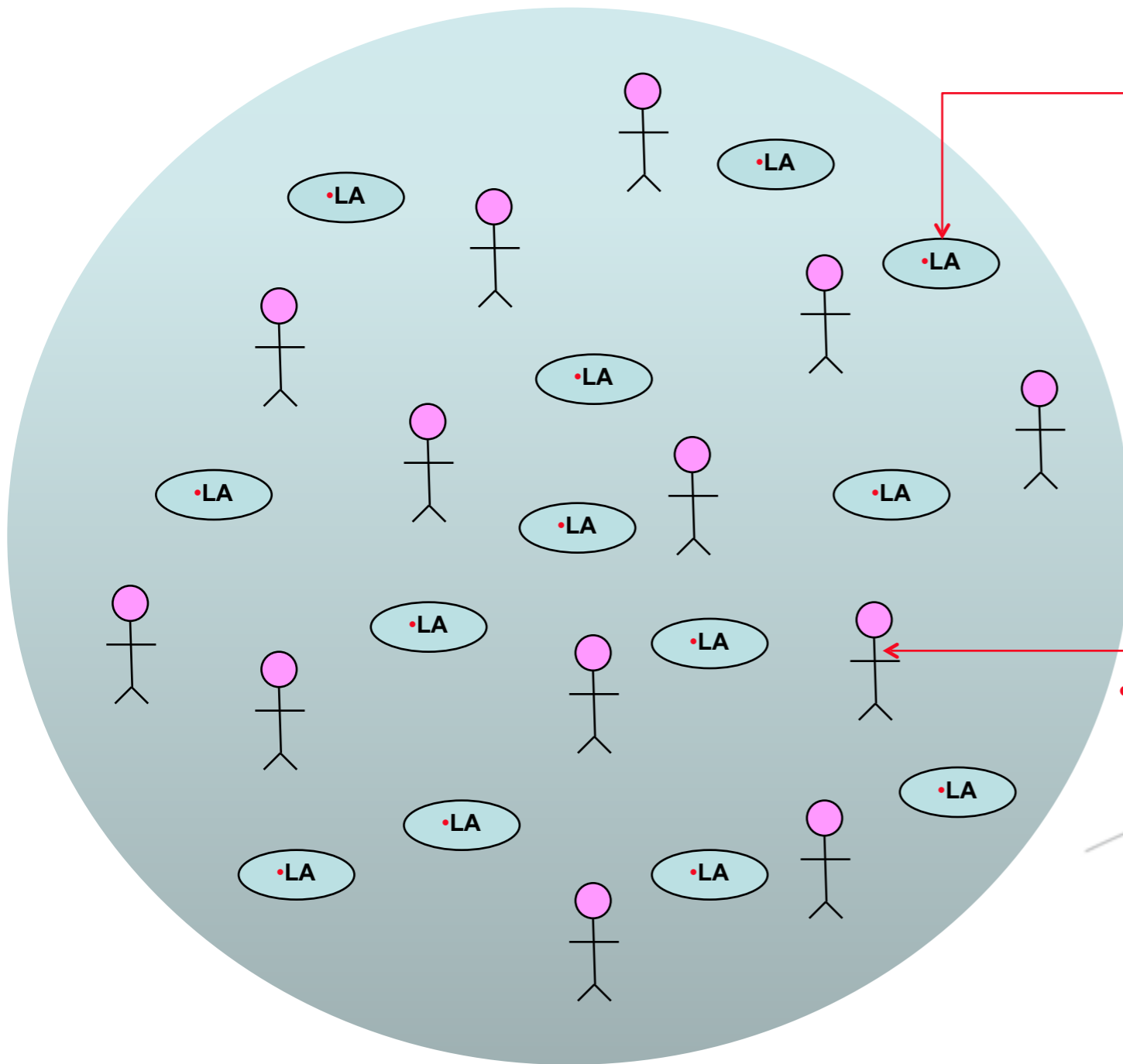


Lifelong Learning & Learning Networks

- Lifelong Learning
 - Learning as integral part of our life
 - Formal, non-formal and informal learning options
 - Essential to sustained economic growth
- Learning Networks
 - Online social networks, participants share their knowledge and jointly develop new knowledge
 - Designed to facilitate Lifelong Learning, professionalisation



Learning Network



Learning actions

- help learners to acquire a competence (formal/non-formal/informal):
 - courses
 - assessments
 - learning resources
 - workshops, etc..

Participants

- learners, institutions, trainers, teachers...

Learners

- self-directed learners, responsible for their own learning process
- heterogeneous with respect to competences they have and their learning goals



Learning Network: Services

- Recommendation
 - People, peers, experts, groups, teams
 - Resources: learning content, materials, readings
 - Learning path: learning offers
 - Next step to follow
- Advice
 - Study progress
 - Formative feedback
 - Learning strategies
 - Self-assessment



Learning Network: Examples

- Communities of employees who want to improve customer services
- Lawyers who want exchange knowledge and experience
- Librarians who want to update their competences, and discuss over the new challenges for libraries
- Communities of teachers who exchange their experiences and seek for collaboration

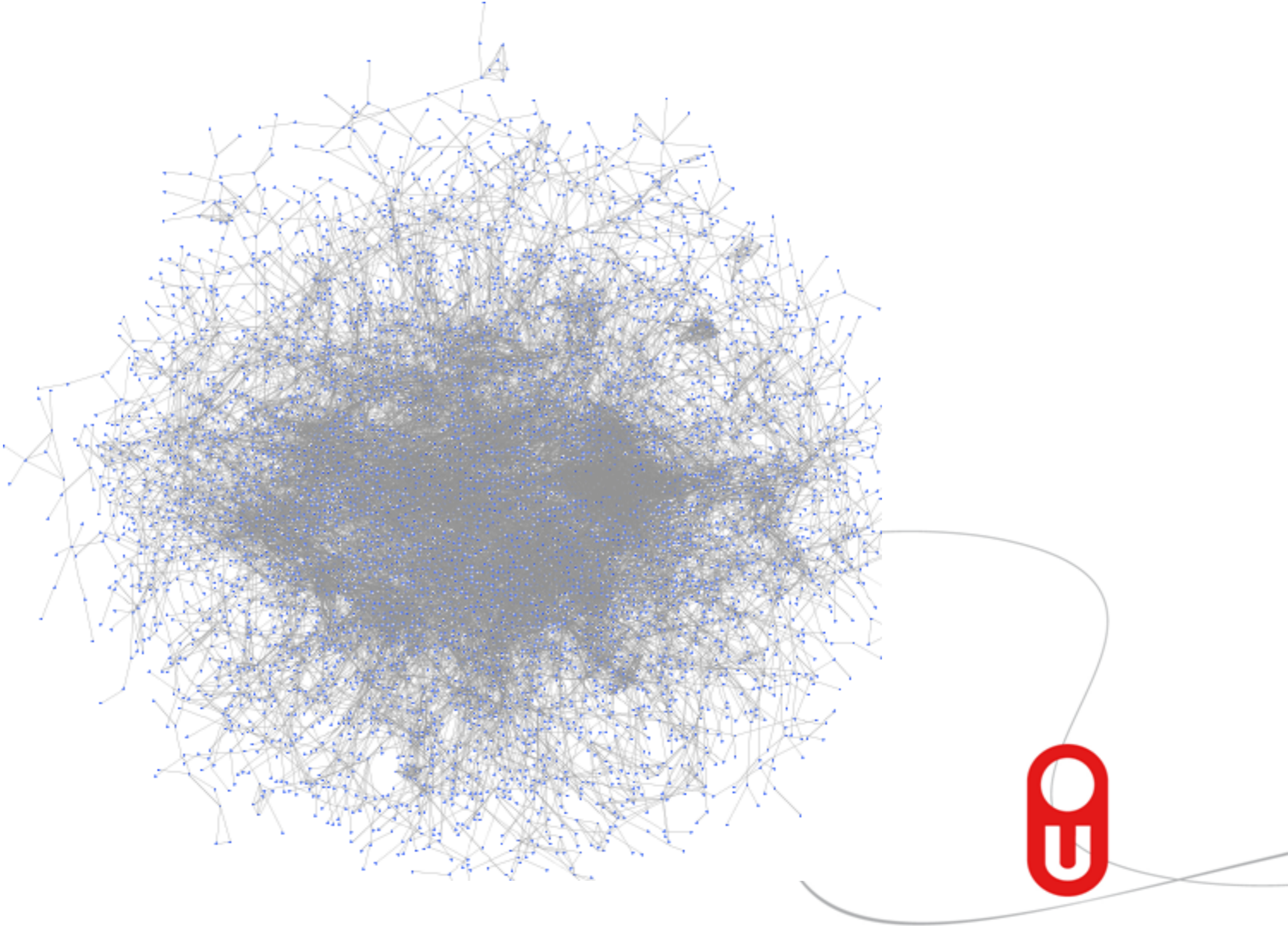


Learning Network: eTwinning

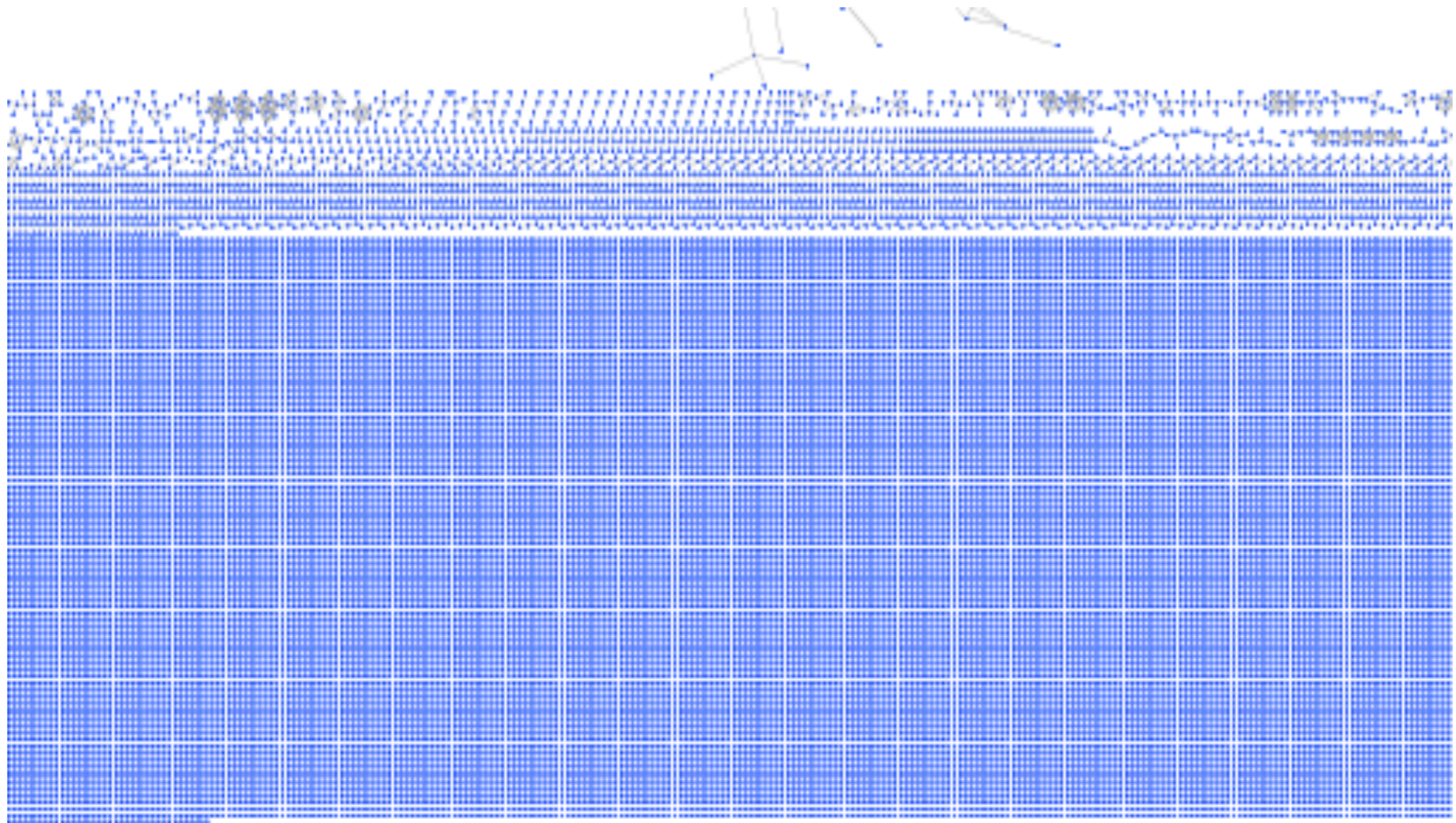
- Network for schools in Europe, over 160.000 users
- It promotes teacher and school collaboration mainly through projects (improving teaching skills, projects between students from different countries)
- Strong core group of participants, but...
 - If we take into account those not connected
 - The majority of teachers are isolated and invisible to the rest of the network (no awareness)



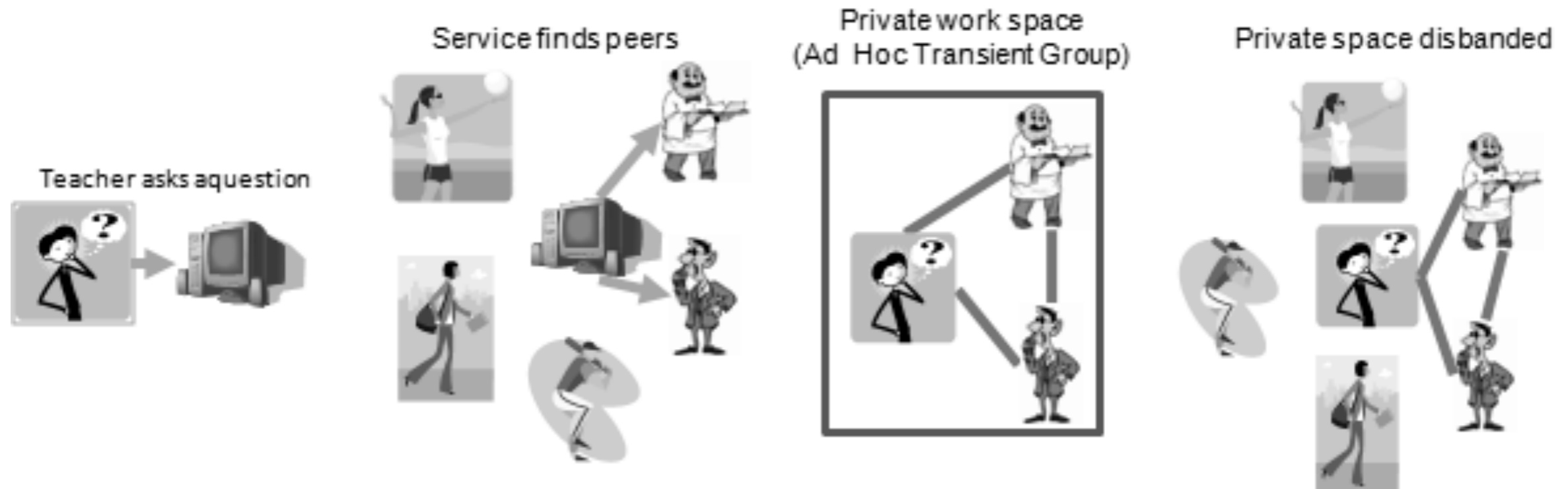
The eTwinning Network



The eTwinning Network



Ad Hoc Transient Groups (AHTGs)



Availability: # requests accepted vs. # requests accepted by all participants.

Content competency: Participants expertise subject(s) vs. question category

Language: Language of the question vs. participants languages

Wiki

Discussion forum

Chat



Expected effects: Social Capital

- **Decentralized network**

- Relationship Characteristics, how people are connected?

- **Sense of community**

- Sense of Connectedness, do people feel as part of the network?

- **Mutual support**

- Are people using the established relationships?



My Questions and Answers

My Current Question and Answer Space

Question Title **How do I start a project?**

Question **I have a question concerning the eTwinning Projects. I am still rather new here and I do not know where to begin to find partners and/or a project. Could you please give me some hints and tips how to start?**

Finding the right people to answer my question

Or select people from the list below:

People	Matching Score
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Person X ★★★★★★	82
<input type="checkbox"/> Person C ★★★	79
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Person N ★★★★★★	78
<input type="checkbox"/> Person J ★★★★★	71
<input type="checkbox"/> Person Z ★★	65
<input type="checkbox"/> Person M ★★★	65
<input type="checkbox"/> Person D ★★★★★★	55
<input type="checkbox"/> Person K ★★★★★	54

Questions I Asked

[How do I start a project?](#) - Open
 Invitation sent
 Invitation sent
 Posted 07-11-2009

[Where to start?](#)
 Person A ★★★★★
 Person B ★★★
 Posted 25-10-2009
 Closed 27-10-2009

People I Worked With

[Person A](#) ★★★★★★

[Person B](#) ★★★

[Person F](#) ★★★★★★

[Person G](#) ★★★★★

Answers I Have Given

[What to put in the Profile?](#)
 Person F ★★★★★
 Person G ★★★
 Posted 25-10-2009
 Closed 27-10-2009

Ask Anything

Question Title

Question

Question subject

Language of Question

My Current Question and Answer Space

Question Title [How do I start a project?](#)

Question [I have a question concerning the eTwinning Projects. I am still rather new here and I do not know where to begin to find partners and/or a project. Could you please give me some hints and tips how to start?](#)

Answers and Communication Space

Question posted on 07-11-2009

Invitation sent to Person X

Invitation sent to Person N

Post Comment

Has the Question been answered satisfactory?

Yes - Close the Question

No - Resubmit the Question

No - Close the Question

Questions I Asked

[How do I start a project?](#) - Open

[Invitation sent](#)

[Invitation sent](#)

Posted 07-11-2009

[Where to start?](#)

[Person A](#) ★★★★★

[Person B](#) ★★★

Posted 25-10-2009

Closed 27-10-2009

Answers I Have Given

[What to put in the Profile?](#)

[Person F](#) ★★★★★

[Person G](#) ★★★★★

Posted 03-11-2009

Closed 04-11-2009

People I Worked With



[Person A](#)

★★★★★



[Person B](#)

★★★★



[Person F](#)

★★★★★



[Person G](#)

★★★★★

Ask Anything

Question Title

Question

Question subject

Psycholo

Language of Question

English

Ask

Go To My Questions

Testing AHTGs

- Tested with a select group of eTwinners
- 3 months
 - Pre-questionnaire, sense of belonging (819); Rovai(2002)
 - 691 participants divided into 3 groups: AHTG, Forum, Control
 - Post-questionnaire (375: AHTG=103, Forum=118, Control=154)
- Influence of AHTGs tested on
 - Relationship Characteristics, Social Network analysis
 - Sense of Community, Questionnaire
 - Mutual Support: # questions asked, # answers given, ratio between them



Conclusions and Future Work

- Conclusions
 - Participants in LN need to be aware of each other
 - AHTGs allows participants can get in touch with each other in an easy, fast and meaningful way, increasing their social capital
- Future work
 - 2nd version of the prototype will be tested in eTwinning
 - Personal Learning Environments to support formation of “professional identity”
 - Dynamic feedback on digital identity creation
 - Development of networking skills



Discussion

- Dynamic nature of networks, hence difficult to test, evaluate TEL interventions
- How people learn in networks? How they build their identity?
- What is self-reflection in networked learning? Different conceptions, ... Do learners know how to self-reflect?
- Skills needed to perform in networked learning?

Questions?

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