



The Contribution of Research and Innovation to eLearning Regions

Dr Andrew Robinson

Assistant Director,
The Open University (UK)

Vice-President,
European Institute for eLearning





eLearning and Regions : New Drivers of Change

- ❑ Regional Dimension to National DL
(OU, UNED, CNED)
- ❑ National Dimension to Regional DL
(FernUniversität)
- ❑ Emergence of Regional eLearning Strategies and Responses (UOC, UK regions, Poitou-Charentes)
- ❑ Trans-regional Learning Transfer
(Arab OU; Avicenna)





Assumptions and Scenarios

- Time displaces distance.....
- Regions challenge/complement nations....?
- New regional and new learning policies
- New eLearning providers will innovate and carry out research as well as being financially successful





Challenges

- ❑ Research into the real nature of regional demand and supply
- ❑ Learners are local, students are increasingly regionally based, demanding quality blended-learning opportunities
- ❑ New, refocused national and regional suppliers? New market entrants?
- ❑ Will regional providers and regional authorities have to work with large ICT corporates to operate and innovate at scale?





Questions

- How can eLearning help address and correct regional, social and economic imbalances?
- Will eLearning regions be economically successful regions?
- Development of eLearning strategies by regions and Regional Development Agencies





Questions continued....

- ❑ Bridging regional divides within regions
- ❑ Creating a new, sustainable lifelong learning culture
- ❑ Accessible learning pathways (anytime, anywhere) for *regional* needs, not tied to national funding streams
- ❑ eLearning strategies : a new form of attracting investment, retaining graduates, and sustaining multimedia and creative industries within regions
- ❑ Creating innovative products marketable inside and outside home regions





Wider Horizons

- ❑ Meeting the Lisbon challenge
- ❑ Role of FP6 > FP7 : accelerating the Agenda
- ❑ An EU regional policy for E-15 and E-25 which more actively encourages eLearning as a regional policy driver (from ESF to European eLearning Fund?)





Capacity Building

- ❑ Observatories (e.g. in Wales to focus intelligence gathering on specifically Welsh needs)
- ❑ Skills Needs Assessment : the workforce of tomorrow
- ❑ The learning needs for Regional leadership : public and private sectors





Coordinates

- ▶ a.h.robinson@open.ac.uk
 - ▶ www.open.ac.uk

- ▶ a.h.robinson@eife-l.org
 - ▶ www.eife-l.org

