Boosting Classes 2.0 for high-quality teaching in adult education

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O2/BoostClass 2.0 e-Platform – User's Guide

Erasmus+ Programme: KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

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Elaborated by	CERI (BG)
Activity related	**O2/A5** – Development of the teachers'guidelines, BoostClass 2.0 e-Platform – User's Guide
Deliverable No. and title	**O2- Promoting digital skills for classes 2.0 development in adult education**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This guideline has been developed under the O2 Promoting digital skills for classes 2.0 development in adult education.

The aim is to explain what the BoostClass 2.0 virtual learning environment (VLE) is as well as to provide some useful instructions and tips on how to access resources, how to navigate the learning content, and register achieved progress and as well as how to communicate with other participants in the training using the functionality and tools integrated into the e-platform.

The BoostClass 2.0 VLE is hosted by CERI, Bulgaria. This environment has been developed as a sub-space of the virtual educational space of CERI.

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1. BOOSTCLASS 2.0 VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)

1.2 Main design principles of BoostClass 2.0 VLE

In order to deliver all training activities related to the modules and topics specified above and tailored to the professional needs, language preferences, time zones, and the geographical locations of the target groups' representatives, it was developed a BoostClass 2.0 VLE based on the open-source software platform Moodle.

BoostClass 2.0 VLE was designed, implemented and hosted by CARI, Bulgaria as a part of the organisation's educational space.

Taking into consideration that the training to be delivered via the BoostClass 2.0 VLE is addressed to educators engaged in adult training, CERI took into deep consideration the modern principles of adult learning (i.e. Andragogy[1]). The application of the adult learning theory principles to e-Learning addressed to educators and implemented in the framework of the BoostClass 2.0 training methodology consists of the following:

- Participants in the training are voluntary learners and they learn because they want to. They learn best when they have decided they need to learn for a particular reason.
- Teachers need to see that the subject matter and the methods are relevant to their activities and to what they want to learn.
- Educators come with rich life and job experience that needs to be acknowledged: They should be encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge.
- Adults learn best when new information is reinforced and repeated. They need time to master new knowledge, skills, and attitudes. They need to have this mastery reinforced at every opportunity.
- Adult learners learn better when information is reinforced and repeated as well as presented in different ways – usage of different contents' formats and variety of teaching techniques.

Taking into consideration these fundamental adult education principles was decided the course to be self-passed and organised as a sequence of training modules which contain learning objects representing the specified topics in several formats in order the potential trainees to be able to construct their flexible learning paths and to be able to follow their preferrable learning styles.

1.3 BoostClass 2.0 VLE conceptual model

The self-paced e-training courses in English and in all four national languages - Bulgarian, Italian, Romanian and Spanish are delivered to the target groups' representatives via tailored virtual learning environment.

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[1] *Knowles, M. (1984). Andragogy in Action. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; ISBN: 978-0875896212*

CERI is responsible for development of overall design and architectural structure of all BoostClass 2.0 courses as well as for the overall implementation of the English and Bulgarian implementations of BoostClass 2.0 courses.

The learning contents ot the Italian, Spanish and Romanian course versions has been developed and uploaded by representatives of the partner organisation(s) from the corresponding country. Communication and support of the representatives of the target groups from a given partner country is a duty and responsibility of the partner organisations from this country.

The core technologies behind the VLE are Open-Source and include PHP, MySQL Database, Apache Web service and RED5 Media Server. The object-based and modular nature VLE and the services built on it allow for flexible combining of the available modules.

The Home page of the BoostClass 2.0 VLE will be accessible for all interested parties via the project website. To access a given course published in the platform username and passwors are required.

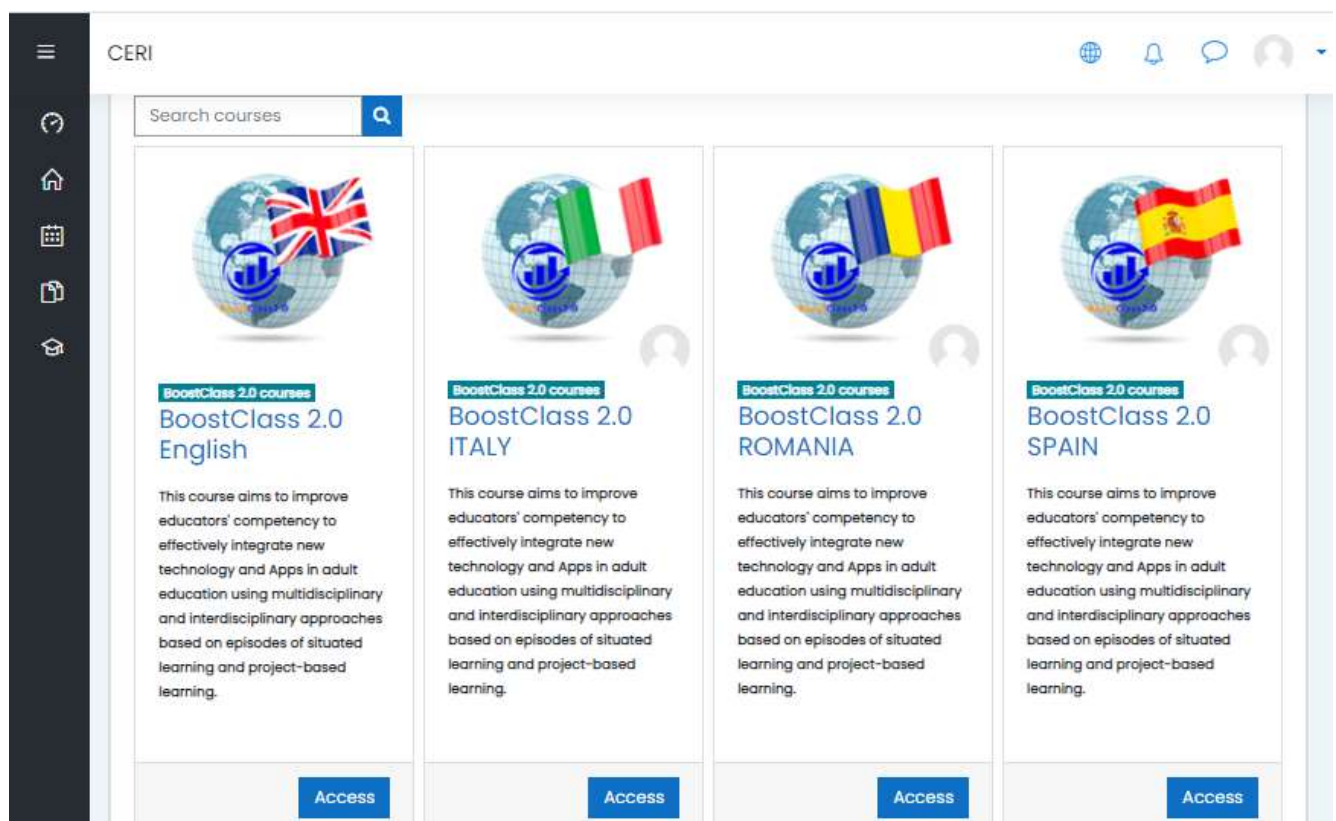On the next figure is presented the front page of the BoostClass 2.0 VLE.

Figure 1 Home page of the BoostClass 2.0 VLE

The e-learning material for the courses, delivered through a VLE, is developed in the form of learning objects (LOs) - smaller independent pieces that can be used independently or in combination with other material to form higher level objects covering the learning needs of the users on demand at any place and at the right time and according the LEGO metaphor, where a learning object should

be Reusable, Accessible, Interoperable/portable, and Durable. An important aspect for reusability and personalization is the granularity of learning objects. The main idea behind the learning objects concept is that instructional designers can build small instructional components that can be reused a number of times in different learning contexts.

1.4 Learning content formats

For each content topic the following types LOs in all national languages of the project partnersas well as in English have beed developed:

a) Multimedia lessons - Interactive learning content built up by an audio explanation synchronized with a slide presentation and provided with a hypertext index allowing the learner to navigate the lesson's content. All multimedia lessons are developed in line with the requirements and recommendations of the broadly accepted e-learning standard SCORM. The tracking system marks the activity as completed when the lesson is reviewed from the very beginning to its end. (this format of learning content is supported in Bulgarian, Italian, Romanian and Spanish section of the course only).

b) Lecture Notes are textual documents presenting in detail the lesson's topics and /or different perspective of the contents already explained as well as list of referent materials. They are text materials necessary for the training. These contents are converted in PDF and are downloadable in order to be used in off-line modality. Clicking on the title of the document will open it into a pop-up window with a functionality supporting the reviewing in line with your preferences such as window size, font size, layout, and etc. The tracking system marks the Lecture Note activity as successfully completed if the file content is reviewed at least once.

c) Slide objects are standard presentations about the module topics realized by the subject domain experts and converted in PDF format. This content is downloadable in order to be used in off-line modality. Clicking on the title of the document will open it into a pop-up window with a functionality supporting the reviewing in line with your preferences such as window size, font size, layout, and etc. The tracking system marks the activity as successfully finished if the learner open the slide object at least once.

Figure 2 Types of learning objects per topic

2.   BoostClas2.0 VLE – USER GUIDE

2.1 How to enter the BoostClas2.0 VLE and the course

1. You can use a direct link which to be placed in your brawser address line: https://cerizone.eu/czmoodle/course/index.php?categoryid=4 or a corresponding tab from the project website (for now this is under construction). You will see the following screen shown on the next figure(Figure 3).

Figure 3

2. Click on Log in button (upper right corner – Figure 3)
3. Insert your username and password in the dialogue window and click Log in button to enter the platform (Figure 4).
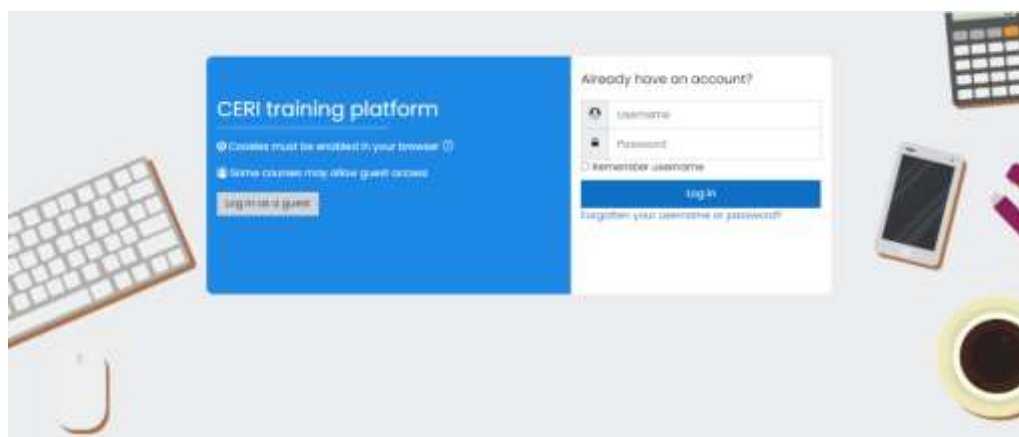

Figure 4

2.2 How to enter the BoostClas2.0 course

All course's versions are represented via icons where the national flags are shown and the name of the country is included in the course title.

After entering the BoostClass 2.0 VLE, click on the tab of the course to enter into it.

If you have not filled your access credentials for Log in:

1. Click on the tab with the title of the course you want to access. For example let us click on the tab of ce-course BoostClass 2.0 English (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Note: Do not forget that you should be enrolled to a given course in order to be able to enter in it.

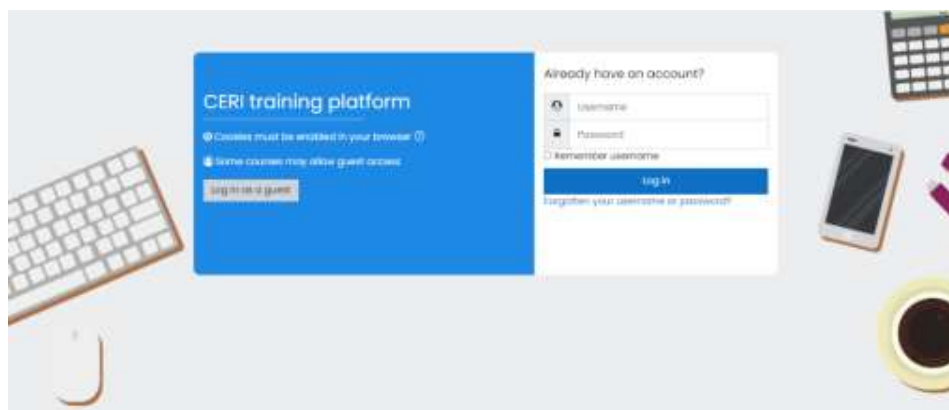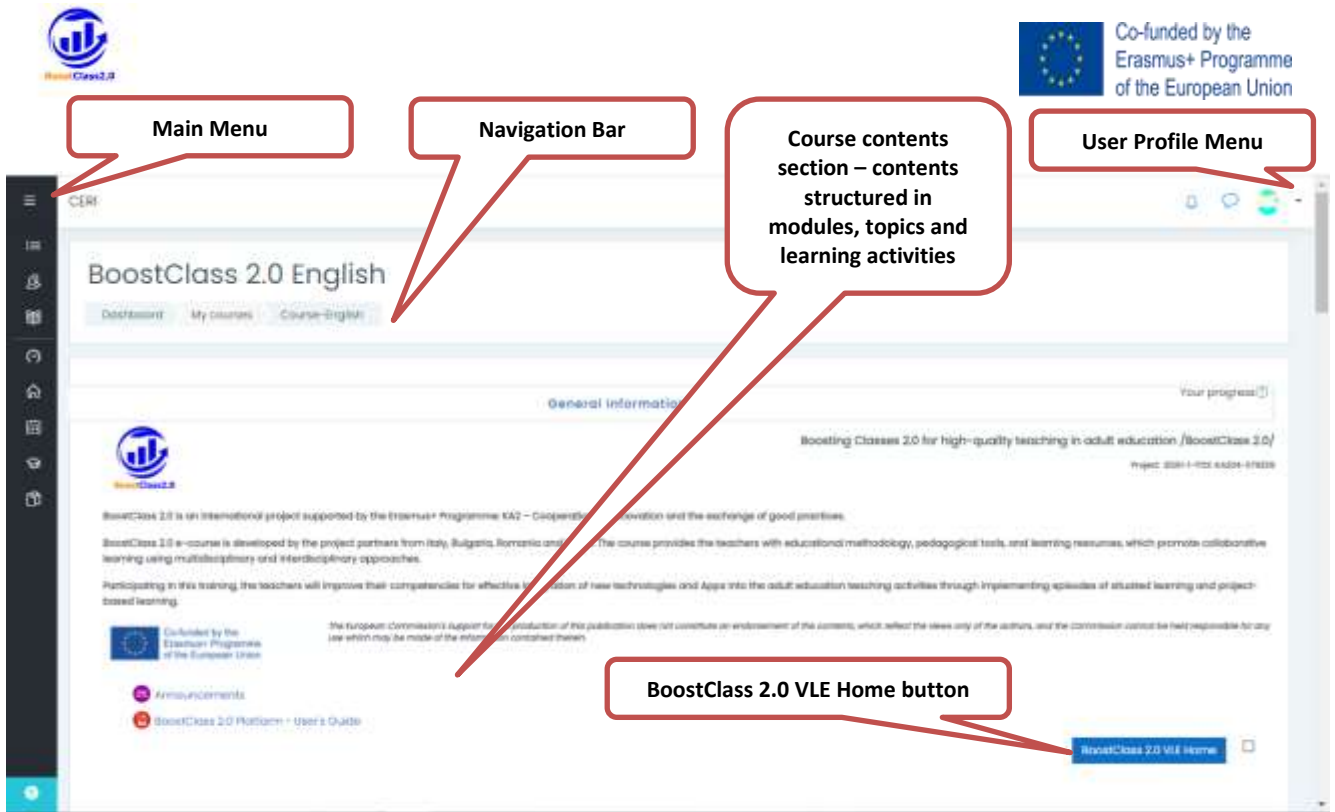2. The *Log in dialog window* appears (Figure 6).

Figure 6

3. You have to insert there your username and password and then clicking on Log in button.

2.3 Main elements of the course window

When you enter the course you will see the following screen (Figure 7):

- Main menu is described briefly in the next table (See Table 1):

	Click here to shrink the main menu so only icons to be visible or click again to open a more detailed outlook.
	Click here to see the Course sections (modules). You can jump to any course module clicking on its title shown in the opened Course sections sub-menu.
	Click here to open the list of all participants in the course. You can communicate with them via integrated tcommunication tools (See section 2.5 of this document)
	Clicking on Grades you will see all your grades in this course if any.
	Clicking here you will see the list of courses you are enrolled in + your progress in each of the courses as the accomplishment percentage.
	Access to the CERI e-learning platform main page
	Access to your course calendar
	Clicking here you will see the list of active courses you are enrolled in. You can jump into any of these courses any time just by clicking on the course title from the appeared sub-menu
	Clicking here you will have access to your private files if any.

Table 1 Main Menu - elements and functionality

- Navigation Bar – you can use it to go back on the navigation path you already have generated. Of course, you can use the forward and backward buttons of your brawser line any time as well.

Figure 7

- User profile menu - click on the arrow next to your profile icon (upper right corner) will open the Profile menu. The options in this menu are described in the table below (Table 2):

	Icon for notifications (activated will show the available notifications); Messaging icon (click to enter in messaging system of the VLE); profile picture, access to the profile menu. Click here to see the current state of your profile. Click here to open your list of active courses and percentage of completion achieved for each of the courses. You can go to any of the courses in Dashboard clicking on its title. Click here to be able to edit your profile. Click here to see your grades for this course (if any). Access to messaging system integrated into this environment. Set of preferences. Log out from the VLE

Table 2

- Course content section – you can access any of the elements integrated into this course clicking on its title. You can follow the predefined linear order in which the modules / topics / learning objects are listed from top to the bottom on the course site OR you can construct your pathway accessing these learning objects which you want based on your necessity, problem you need to solve, interest and so on. Each LO is marked as passed by the system after its first opening but you can open and review the same object as many time as you want (See Figure 8).
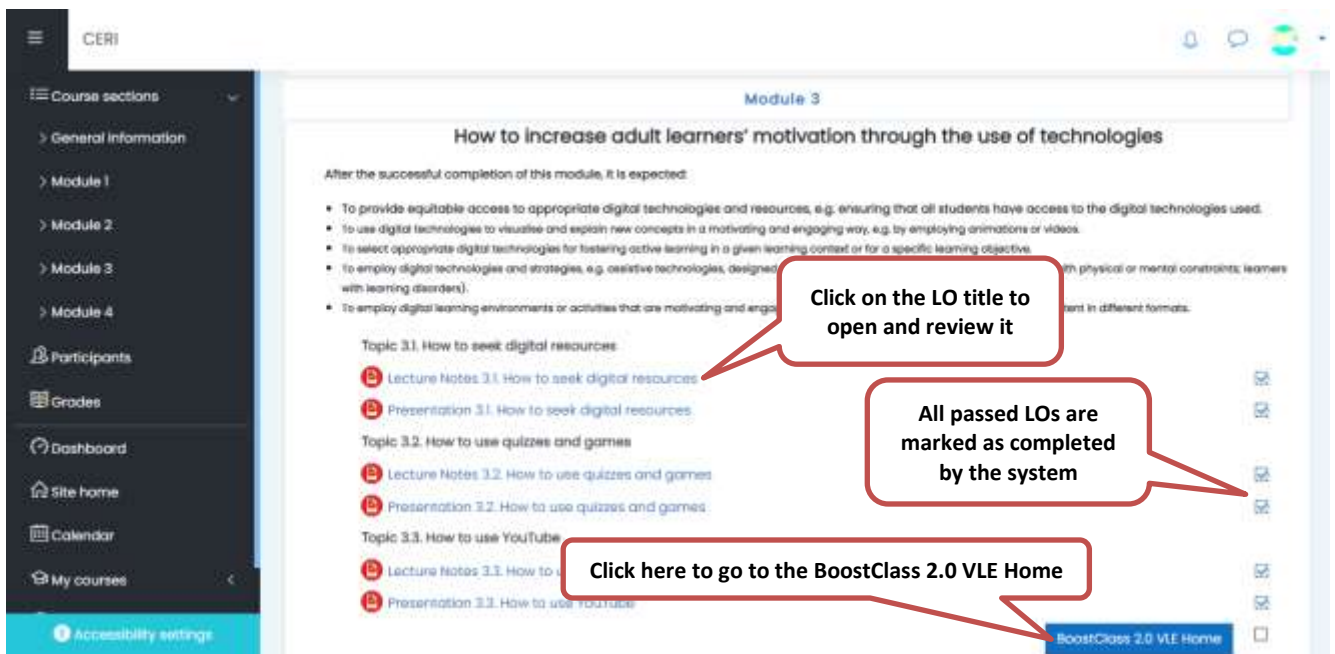
Figure 8

- BoostClass 2.0 VLE Home button – you have such button in the down right corner of each course module (section). Clicking on it you will be returned to the home page of the BoostClass 2.0 VLE. You can use it any time you wish.

2.2.1 *How to navigate among the modules (sections) of the course*

1. Open the Main Menu.

2. Click on the Course sections tab to open a sub-menu describing the corse structure -

3. Click on the course module you want to jump to.

4. To shrink the course structure sub-menu, click again on Course sections tab (See Figure 9).
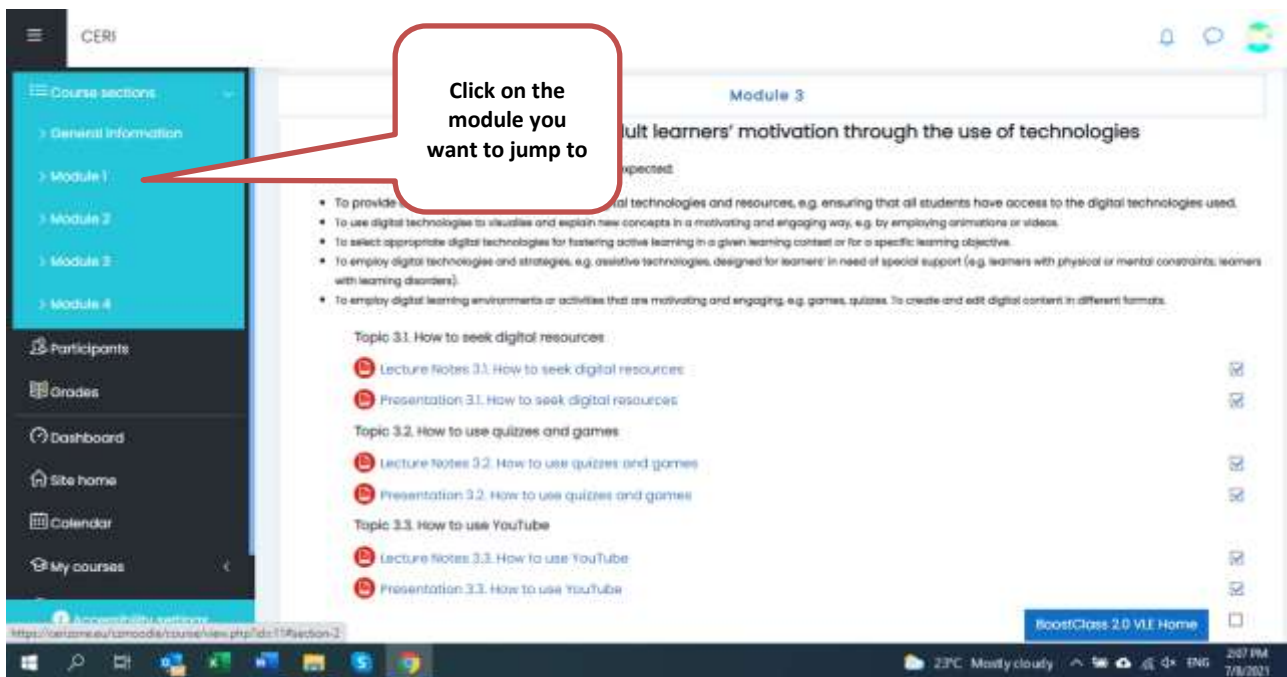
Figure 9

You can move from module to module in order you wich and any time you want.

2.2.2 How to navigate among my courses

In case you are enrolled in several courses, you can move from one course to the other any time and as many time as you want.

1. Open the Main Menu.

2. Click on the *My courses* tab to open a sub-menu describing the active cources you are enrolled in.

3. From the list of your active courses click on the title of the course you want to move to. The name of the course you are in is written in bold.

4. To hide the courses' list sub-menu just click again on the *My courses* tab (See Figure 10).
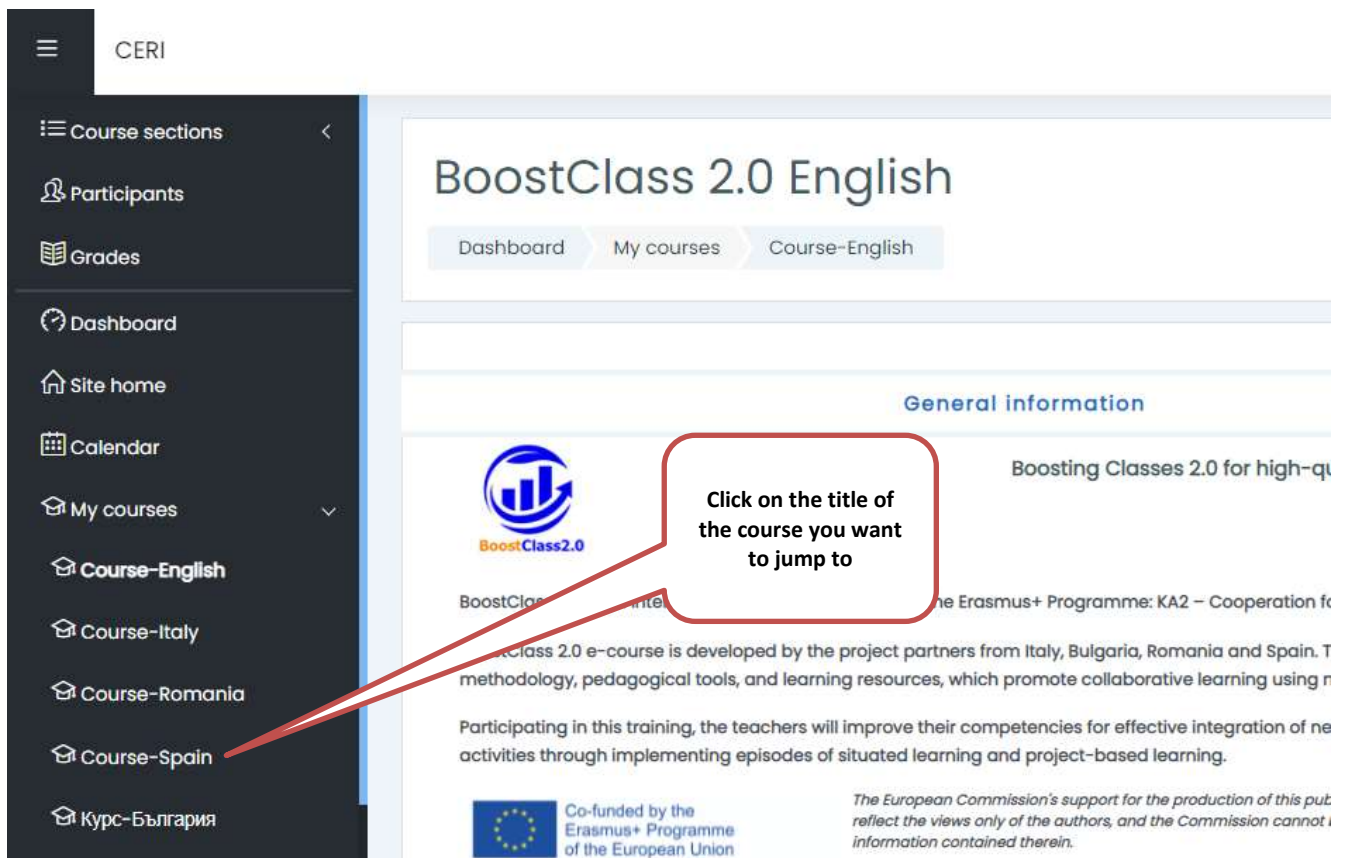
Figure 10

2.2.3. *How to navigate among the learning objects and related activities*

Entering the course site you see the overall structure of the course – the modules, topics and learning objects are structured from top to bottom representing pre-defined linear order for reviewin recommended by the course developers. You are not obliged to follow this order but you should review all LOs included into the course to complete it successfully.

To jump to any LO you have to click on its title.

For example we will open the Lecture Notes 1.1 Collaborative Environments of the course.

1. Jump into the Module 1 of this course
2. Click on the LO title.
3. The content is visualised in a pop-up window with controls of the zoom, layout, navigation, download, print, etc (See Figure 11). Apart from that you can move and resize the window as you wish.
4. After completion of content review just close the pop-up and you will be able to open any other LO form the course.
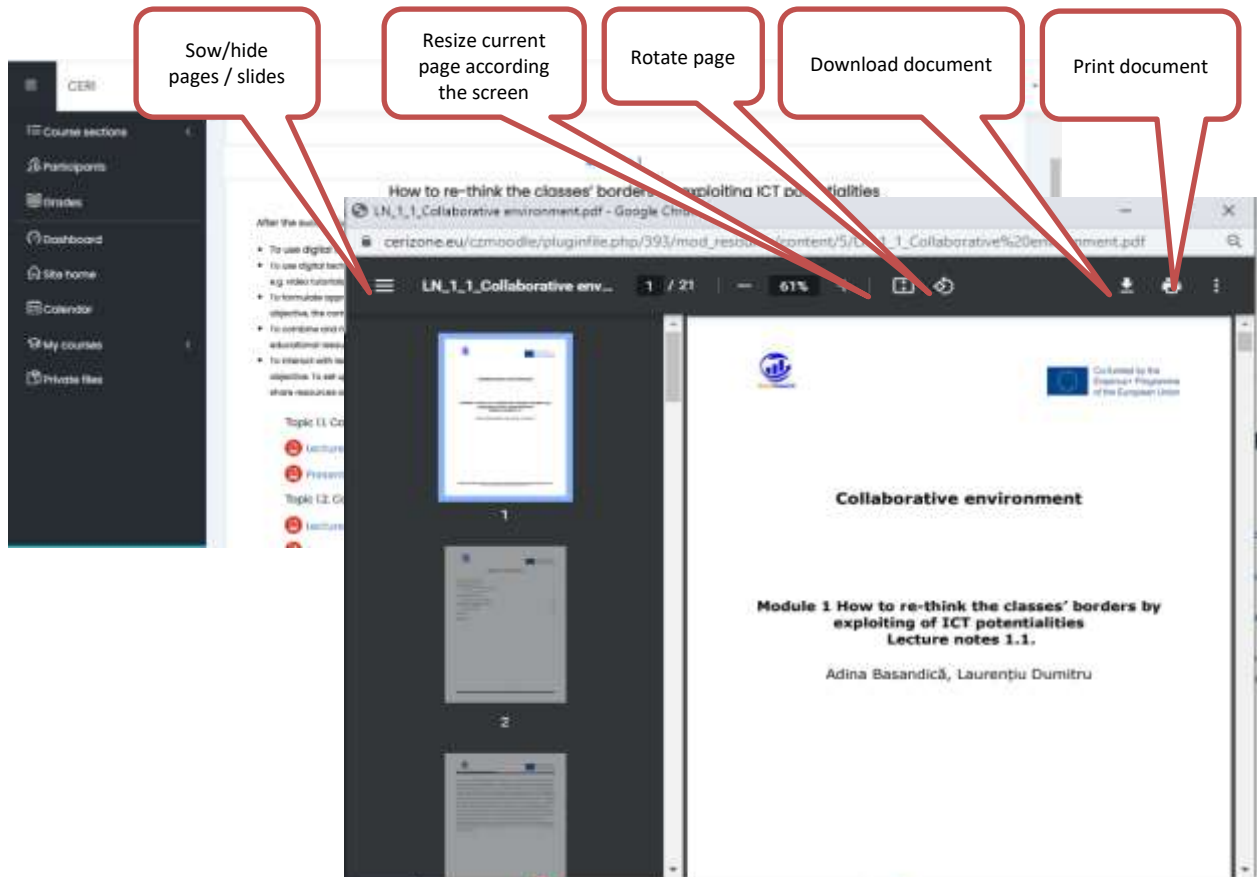
Sow/hide pages / slides

Resize current page according the screen

Rotate page

Download document

Print document

Figure 11

2.4 How to register and track my progress

It is very easy you totrack which activities and objects you have already reviewed. Next to each supervised activity there is a box for tracking (Figure 12).
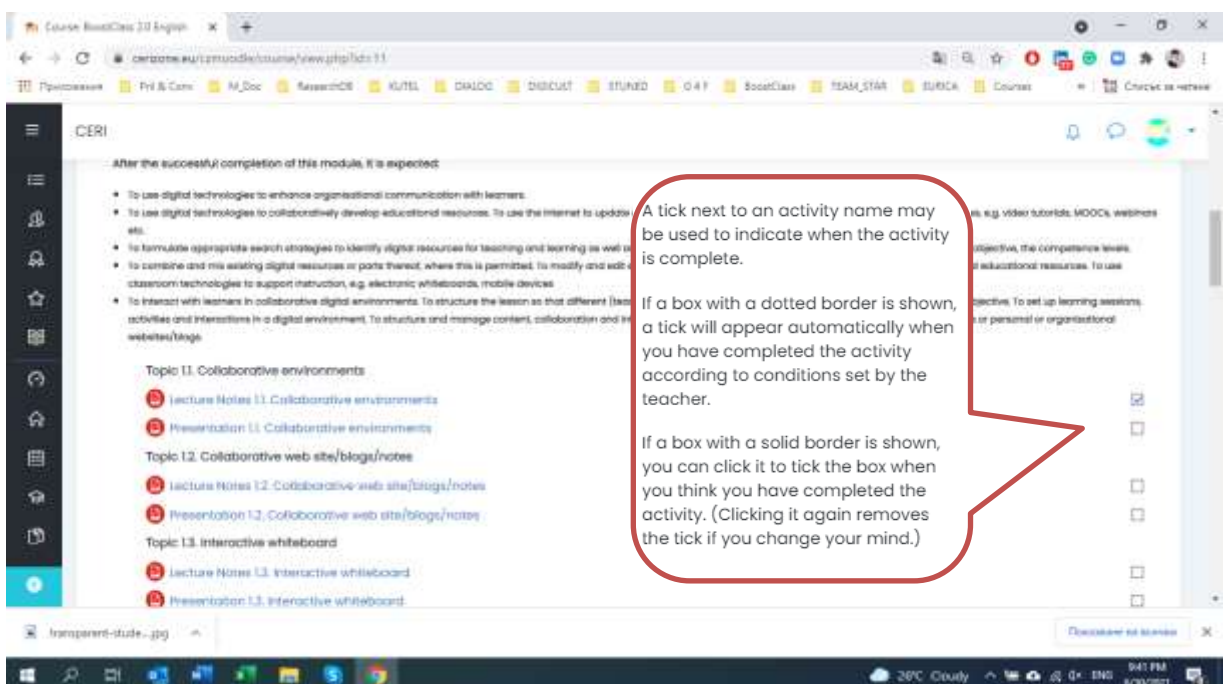

A tick next to an activity name may be used to indicate when the activity is complete.

If a box with a dotted border is shown, a tick will appear automatically when you have completed the activity according to conditions set by the teacher.

If a box with a solid border is shown, you can click it to tick the box when you think you have completed the activity. (Clicking it again removes the tick if you change your mind.)

Figure 12

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2.5 How to communicate with other participants

You can send messages to any of the participants registered in a given course using internal messaging system of the platform or via e-mail.

1. Click on the Participants ⬛ in the main menu.
2. You will see the list of participants in the active course (Figure 13).
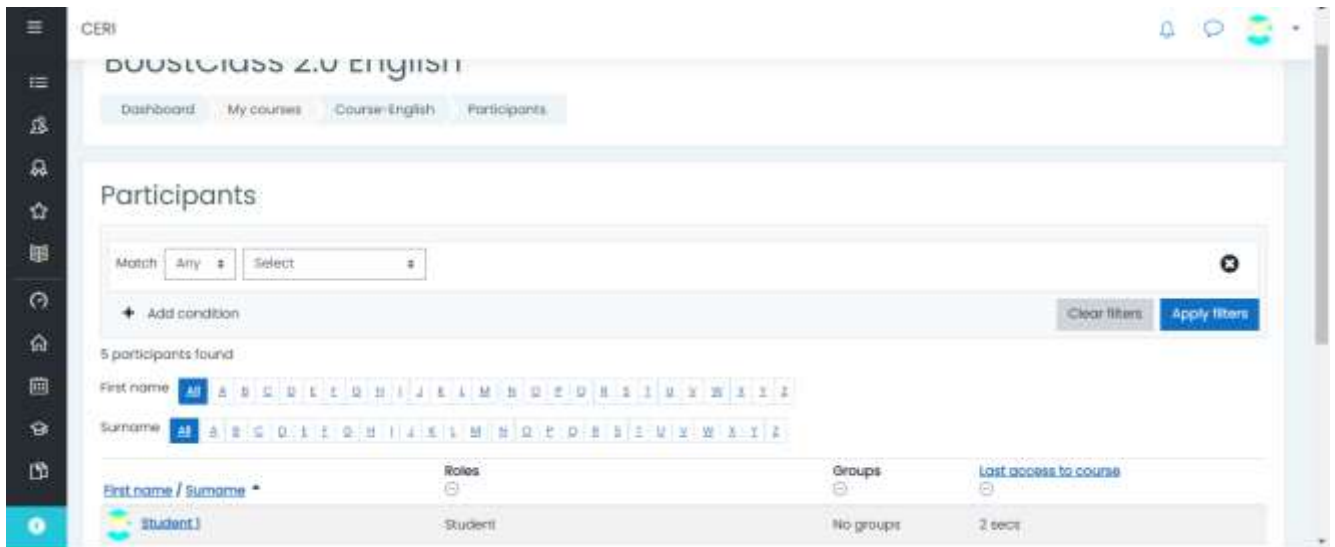

Figure 13

3. Click on the name of a person you would like to contact and you will see a page where is documented e-mail address of the person as well as a possibility to send him/her a message (Figure 14).
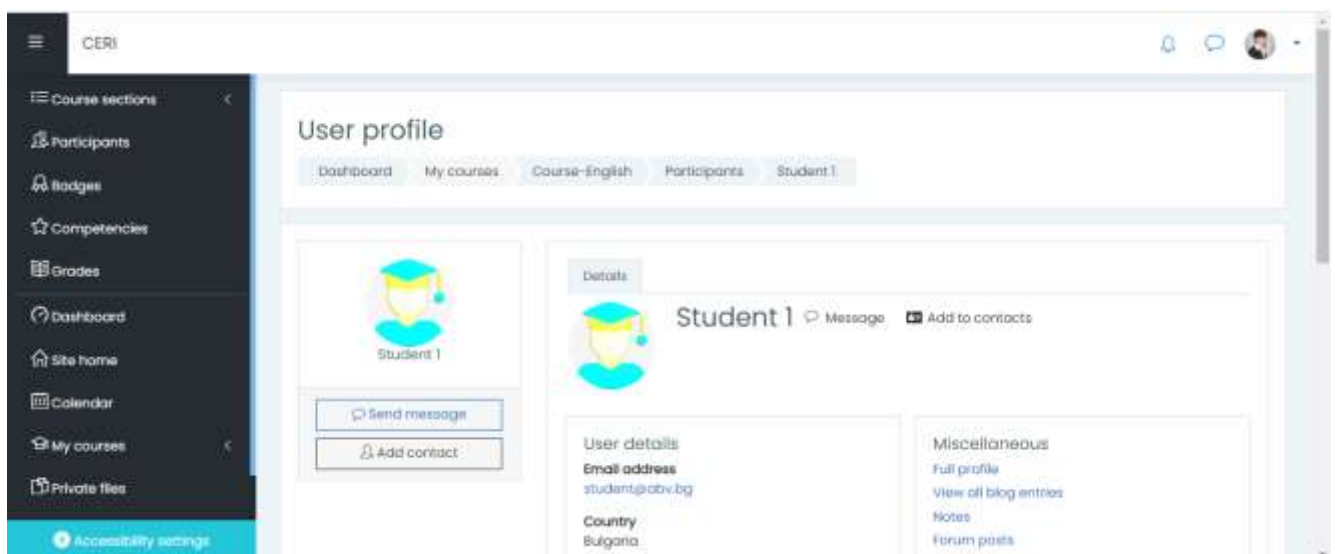

Figure 14

4. To send a message click on *Send message* button. Composing message window will appear to you (Figure 15).
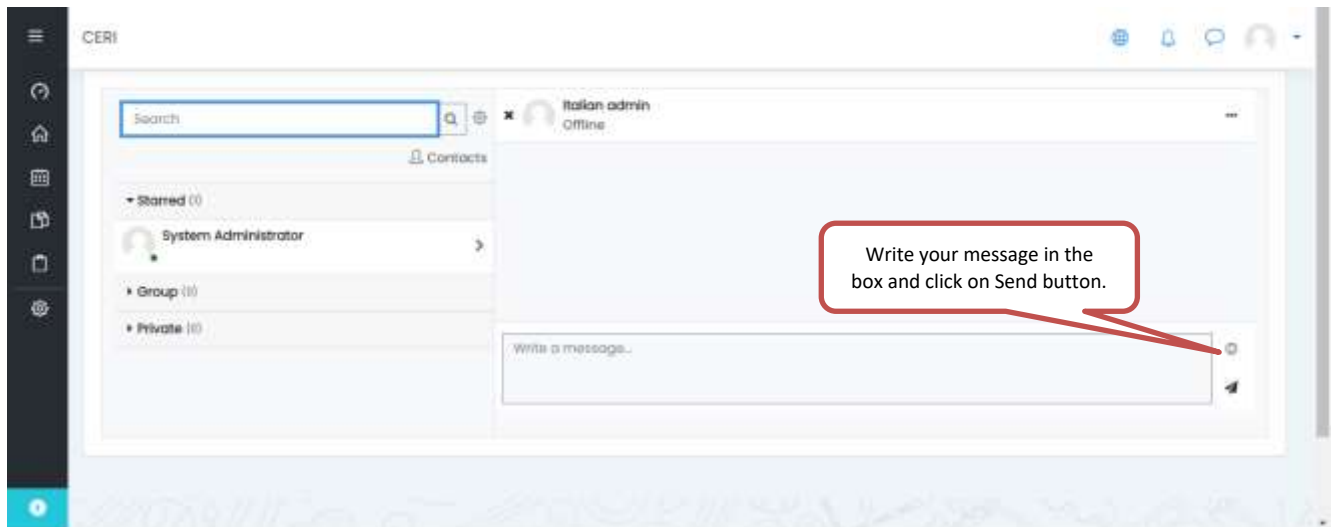

Figure 15