



## Una manera de Bacer Europa



Program to improve educational equipment for the promotion of reading and access to information

Consejería de Educación y Empleo

# Programa Operativo de Extremadura

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

OBIERNO

SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO DE PRESUPUESTOS Y GASTOS

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# Program to improve educational equipment for the promotion of reading and access to information

This programme, primarily intended to endow all the schools belonging to the autonomous community of Extremadura with access to digital publication, is aimed at stimulating and supporting teaching-learning processes. In addition, educational institutions will be provided with electronic devices to boost learning.

We may mention two main actions carried out up to the present moment:

- The digital library Librarium
- Distribution of electronic appliances

*Librarium* supplies the educational community with a broad catalogue of electronic books, magazines and audiobooks, which undoubtedly make up an incomparable educational resource. It particularly contains some literary works in different languages aimed at children and youngsters.

The library we are referring to is composed of two essential tools:

- On the one hand, the digital platform for book lending service, which provides nearly 9.000 titles for library loan and/or free download. It is available on the website via the following email address http://librarium.educarex.es. Also accessible through mobile applications downloadable across all major platforms (Android, IOS and Windows)
- On the other hand, the collaborative reading platform where both teachers and students may involve in reading, similarly offers an adequate tool where reading groups can be managed. It also enables to share and comment on the books supplied/delivered through the above-mentioned lending platform.

*The Librarium* platform also affords an account management tool through which it is possible to customize and perform some management operation tasks (catalogue, users, purchases, data reports, etc)

As for the distribution of the technological equipment, figures are the following: along the academic year 2017/2018, 3.010 e-book readers and 1.510 tablets have been shared out among 243 public schools comprising the Extremadura School Libraries Network (REBEX), whose main goal has been to ease digital reading and access to the *Librarium* catalogue.

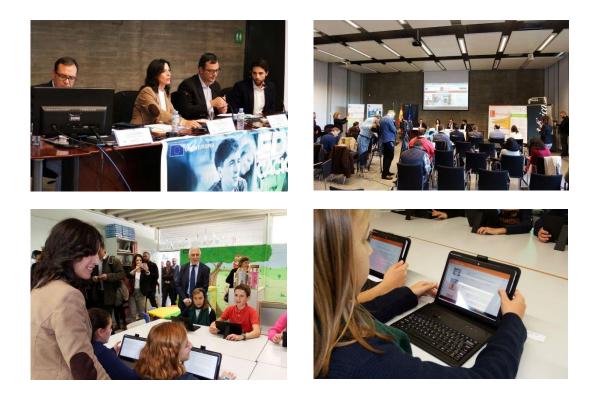
It is scheduled in the near future either the purchase of new computers for the management of the digital lending service and the expansion of the equipment distribution to schools out of the REBEX Network so far.

This action is considered Good Practice because:

1. This performance, largely disseminated both among potential beneficiaries and also the general public worldwide, has been regarded as a good educational practice.

The major initiatives carried out to spread the programme have been the listed below:

• Local, national and international press presentation of the digital library Librarium and of the remainder of initiatives stemming from the programme on the part of either the Consejería de Educación y Empleo and the press officer for the European Commission Offices in Spain. This event was held on the 9th November 2017 in Mérida. It was at the same time supplemented with an arranged visit to the CEIP Ciudad de Mérida where visitors were given the opportunity to gain a first-hand insight on how to use the digital library and the technological equipment allocated for that purpose.



- Information meetings were held among the Consejería de Educación de Empleo (The Regional Board of Education), the Secretario General de Educación (the General Secretary of Education) and headmasters coming from schools supported with public funds in levels prior to university. FEDER co-financing has been reported in all information sessions:
  - $\circ$   $\;$  1st December in Cáceres with 127 people attending the event.
  - $\circ~$  5th December in Zafra. 131 people attending the event.
  - 12th December in Mérida. 178 people in attendance.
  - $\circ$   $\,$  15th December in Plasencia. 142 people who attended the event.
  - 17th January in Castuera with 99 people present.

- Also, some training and guidance sessions took place. They were conducted by technical experts of the Reference Section in the Extremadura School Libraries Network along with the coordinator/s in charge of the school libraries from all the schools supported with public funds in those levels previous to graduate-level. As in the previous case, FEDER co-financing has been reported in such training sessions:
  - o 12th December in Cáceres where 127 attendants were called.
  - 15th December in Zafra. 131 participants called.
  - 21st December in Mérida. 77 participants called.
  - 17th January in Plasencia. 142 attendants called.
  - 19th January in Badajoz. 101 participants summoned.
  - 30th January in Don Benito. 57 participants summoned.
  - 1st February in Castuera where finally 44 attendants were called.





 Press release of Consejería de Educación y Empleo (Regional Board of Education and Employment)



• Dissemination articles in "La Gaceta", online publication belonging to the Consejería de Educación y Empleo (Regional Board of Education and Employment).





• Articles in the press disseminating the action in different media



 The publishing of 50.000 copies of the *Librarium* dissemination leaflet, issued among all the schools and services dependent on the Consejería de Educación y Empleo (Regional Board of Education and Employment).

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Besides, a presentation for *Librarium* is also foreseen and scheduled within the framework of the XV Extremadura Regional Federation of pupils 'parents associations in public schools. The above-mentioned event, which is entitled "Challenges and Concerns for the Educational System along the 21st century: inclusiveness, multilingualism, and pedagogical and technological innovation" will be ultimately held in Almendralejo (Badajoz) during the 21st and 22nd April 2018.

#### 2. Librarium includes innovative aspects.

It should be emphasized that with this outcome the Extremadura educational authorities turn out to be the first ones to arrange and make available an online lending service displaying such features with a crucial aim in mind, that of supporting and encouraging digital reading among pupils, families and staff from public schools, not only as a way to learn, but also as a means of entertainment.

Up to the present moment eBooks usage in schools has been broadly restricted to the free and legal-to-use repository available on line. On a regular basis these resources proved to be scarce and instable in terms of quality. On the contrary, *Librarium* offers two innovative possibilities for the whole class group. On one side, an only one title may be downloaded all at once by the whole class; on the other side, each pupil may make use of their most preferred device (tablet, mobile phone, computer or even e-reader). A further benefit is that both public and loud reading are encouraged through the use of the interactive digital whiteboard.

We cannot avoid mentioning the fact that the number of titles available, almost 9.000, the selection quality as well as the inclusion of recent years innovations have accordingly resulted in a greater adjustment to the potential demand within the educational sphere.

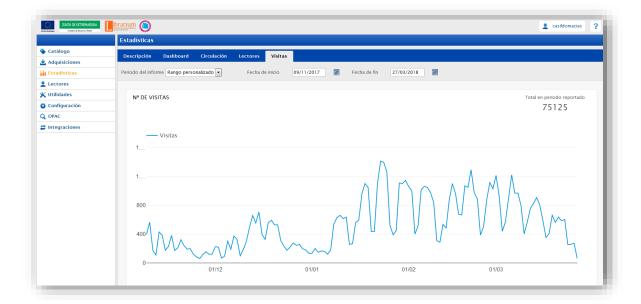
Likewise, the so-called platform facilitates and ensures an innovative digital and efficient work environment where the school community may share out some reading liable to be enhanced by means of activities, entries, remarks and audiovisual materials designed for that purpose.

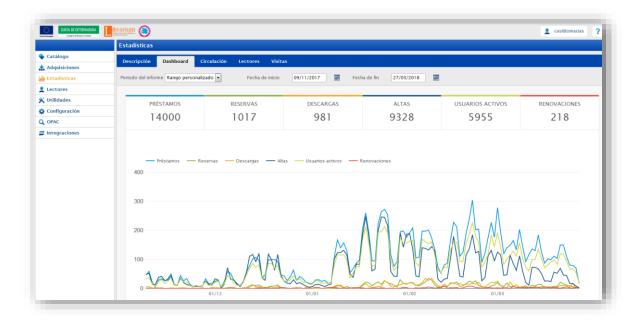
In addition, we underline the fact that the teaching body is given the possibility to both tailor the use of some specified resources to the students 'needs and also make the information suitable for the occasion, which consequently turns the platform into a really useful and powerful tool for the intended development of reading, writing and access-to-the-information plans that must be implemented throughout all schools.

This broad range of possibilities opens up a new approach to the world of books and reading in a variety of formats and environments.

#### 3. Adjustment of the results obtained and reported to the initial goals set.

In the four-month-and-a-half lapse that *Librarium* has been operating, there are some facts and figures in relation to web visits and loans that are worth being mentioned. Figures are the following: 75.000 visits and 14.000 loans gives evidence of such situation/circumstance as can be seen through the screenshots resulting from the management tool information center.





Considering the given situation and the short period of time in operation, it is still early to assess the full attainment of established aims. Additionally, further functioning information from similar platforms would be needed as to establish benchmarks for later review and comparative studies.

Nevertheless, resulting data in terms of daily loans, over 100 to be precise, web visits and enquiries answered via email and telephone, alongside the 54 reading clubs created, show indeed a high degree of utilization up to the present day. Therefore, and in view of the current situation, we sincerely hope this trend will continue and consolidate while Librarium is becoming acquainted and profitable in all educational settings.

### 4. Contribution to the settlement of problems and deficiencies detected in the autonomous/regional scope of intervention.

From the standardized diagnostic tests carried out in the latest years, particularly PISA, significant results have been obtained and enough evidence has been collected. In this sense, we must stand out that literacy competence levels prove to be substantially low as compared to the national average. Despite this fact, a clear improvement can be felt from 2012 to 2015. Literacy competence level in 2012 was established in 457 ranking points and was increased up to 475 in 2015, which entails an increase of 18 ranking points.

Another factor to take into consideration is the fact that schools may find difficult to store and make available eBooks for students. This, therefore, may bring about some impossibility to use digital resources in any form other than free downloading from the net or acquisition through a specific device.

Thus, it may be stated that Librarium emerges as a tool designed to address such problems insofar as it promotes either reading for learning or for entertainment in digital format, which will ultimately benefit students 'reading and comprehension skills. Hence, it may be expected some improvement regarding external evaluations and what is even more important,

competences subject to assessment. On the contrary, the wide choice of titles available, 9.000, together with proven versatility in the access through a broad variety of devices will certainly prompt positive effects.

COMPETENCIA EN CIENCIA		COMPRENSIÓN LECTORA				+ – + × EN MATEMÁTICAS		
	2012	2015		2012	2015		2012	2015
Cast. y León	519	519	Cast. y León	505	522	Navarra	517	518
Madrid	517	516	Madrid	511	520	Cast. y León	509	506
Galicia	512	512	Navarra	509	514	La Rioja	503	505
Navarra	514	512	Galicia	499	509	Madrid	504	503
Aragón	504	508	Aragón	493	506	Aragón	496	500
Cataluña	492	504	Cantabria	485	501	Cataluña	493	500
Asturias	517	501	Cataluña	501	500	Cantabria	491	495
La Rioja	510	498	CLa Mancha	-	499	Galicia	489	494
CLa Mancha	-	497	C. Valenciana	-	499	Asturias	500	492
Cantabria	501	496	Asturias	504	498	País Vasco	505	492
C. Valenciana	-	494	España	488	496	OCDE	494	492
España	496	493	OCDE	496	493	CLa Mancha	-	486
OCDE	501	493	La Rioja	490	491	España	484	486
Baleares	483	485	País Vasco	498	491	C. Valenciana	-	485
Murcia	479	484	Murcia	462	486	Baleares	475	476
País Vasco	506	483	Baleares	476	485	Extremadura	461	473
Canarias	-	475	Canarias	-	483	Murcia	462	470
Extremadura	483	474	Andalucía	477	479	Andalucía	472	466
Andalucía	486	473	Extremadura	457	475	Canarias		452

#### 5. High degree of coverage on the targeted population

*Librarium* mainly caters for the Extremadura school community: student and teaching bodies, families and the entire school community in levels prior to university. Usage requires a user identification on the educational platform Rayuela. 124.456 users with granted access have been accounted for, among whom 9.440 have borrowed at least one book,

As regards devices allocation, the first number of gadgets has been restricted to schools belonging to the Extremadura School libraries Network (REBEX) made up at that very moment of 243 public schools with roughly 53.267 students as potential users.

### 6. Considerations on equality and non-discrimination cross-cutting criteria, social responsibility and environmental sustainability.

The possibility of using Librarium resources from any geographical location in Extremadura with online access granted, enables any student, irrespective of their place of residence, to enjoy the same opportunities to make adequate use of ebooks and audiobooks available. This flexibility encourages and favors equality in education.

In the same way, the electronic devices delivered are supervised within the school library range so that students may have full access to their use. This circumstance undeniably reinforces the function of compensation for social and economic inequalities

Finally, *Librarium* promotes the respect for the author's rights on the part of the school community since the deployment of legal resources makes irregular conduct unnecessary and, as a natural consequence, discourages from the commission of offences against privacy and violation of property rights. All the foregoing without the subsequent prejudice to the

responsibility to be taken on the use of information technologies in compliance with the current regulations.

#### 7. Emphasizing synergies with other policies and tools for political intervention

The technological equipment allocation intended to enhance and strengthen reading and access to information together with the Librarium platform serve as support for the school libraries development policies pursued by the Consejería de Educación y Empleo (Regional Board of Education). In this respect, there is a decisive commitment to arranging reading, learning and information facilities supplied with digital and printed resources easily accessible from any school room or environment.

In due course, some eleven years ago, the educational authorities deliberately pushed The Extremadura School Libraries Network (REBEX), currently composed of 272 schools, through which the new model of library is being fostered. This new ever-changing model in continuous transformation is gradually evolving from the traditional paper-based resource to a different one regularly adding digital materials further favored by Librarium availability and the evenly spread equipments.

The ultimate goal, in accordance with the educational policy concerns of our administration is, consequently, to channel our efforts into achieving maximum performance of the educational process as well as the acquisition of students 'key competences.

#### Program cost:

INTERVENTION	COST (euros)	FEDER SUBSIDY (80%) (euros)
Purchase of publications (e-books and audiobooks) for Librarium in 2017	217.564	174.051
Purchase of devices to stimulate digital reading (tablets and e-books readers) in 2017	393.300	314.640

The Librarium web platform has been subsidized under the Programme "Education Community 2.0. Equipment and Services for Digital Teaching", with an amount coming to 123.420 euros for two years. The FEDER aid in this case would be 98,736 euros.

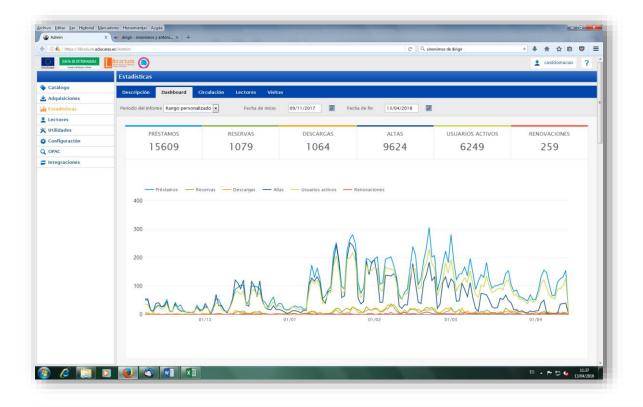
#### Impact of the program:

The program is aimed at the entire educational community of Extremadura. Everyone who has an identification in the educational platform Rayuela can use Librarium. On the part of the student body, it amounts to 124.456 people hitherto.

Since its official launch and regarding data usage, there are some interesting facts related to the programme that should be noticed:

- Librarium has yielded 75.125 visits
- Some 15.609 library loans have been processed under request
- 1.064 publications have been freely downloaded (Publishing Fund from the Consejería de Educación y Empleo)

- 9.624 people have been posted and registered as users operating within the platform
- The number of active users amounts to 6.249 (those who have borrowed some publication in the last month)



Data previously specified can be checked on the next screenshots.

Construction of the sector of	RAMAAN Librarium a		
	Estadísticas		
Catálogo	Descripción Dashboard Circulación Lectores Visitas		
Adquisiciones			
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Lectores			
Utilidades	N° DE VISITAS Total en periodo reportado		
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Likewise, the distribution of technological equipment during the year 2017 has been focused on strengthening the 243 public educational centers assigned to the School Libraries Network of Extremadura last year. In these centers, 86,524 students were enrolled.