When I was approached by the editors with the request to develop a Foreword to this book, *E-Learning as a Socio-Cultural System: A Multidimensional Analysis,*” I must admit, I was hesitant.

As a fierce proponent of e-learning in my own country and beyond, serving as an expert in a number of panels, the purpose of which is to promote e-learning, as a researcher and a member of a number of national and international associations that devote their activities to promoting and supporting e-learning, at first I was hesitant to accept this task. It seemed to me that we, supporters of Information Communication Technologies (ICT)-assisted teaching and learning (e-learning, according to authors’ conceptualization) have many obstacles, challenges, and sometimes even resistance to face, and that we do not really need to question whether ICT-assisted teaching and learning is something worth supporting.

However, analysis of the introductory remarks and the contributions from all over the world (USA, Italy, India, Argentina, Finland, Russia, Great Britain, Lithuania, Germany, Latvia, Greece, Norway) convinced me.

As a professor in higher education, I have encountered the wonderful support and sometimes the indifference of managers, surprising enthusiasm and sometimes condescending contempt of colleagues, surprising competence and sometimes astonishing incompetence of students, unlimited devotion and sometimes unexplainable lack of readiness to discuss things of programmers, unconditional support and sometimes incredible reluctance to provide support of policymakers for ICT-assisted teaching and learning. However, it seems to me that once colleagues and students, managers and policymakers see the benefits that are obvious to me and anyone who gets involved in the process, the camp of supporters will increase.

The materials, both the analysis of the situation and the most recent empirical findings from all over the world, show that ICT-assisted teaching and learning may not always be perceived as such by either students or teachers, or managers, that IT professionals still work in isolation, and that systems still need to be developed.

The rapid developments of technologies sometimes create a smokescreen above other issues, and some elements are being fostered with more energy than others. Under the smokescreen of the ever-increasing assortment of ICT opportunities for teaching and learning, we indeed sometimes forget that teaching and learning are the most intrinsic, most humane actions, the actions that make us human beings. Under the smokescreen of ever-increasing capacities of ICT, we sometimes forget that dialogue and support, exchange of ideas and their critique provide the basis for sustainable and responsible development, and that a real supporter is the one who sees both advantages and disadvantages and proceeds after these have been weighed.
The chapters provide a comprehensive analysis of both classical texts and the most recent studies; the empirical studies are based on rigorous methodologies, and the results are presented in an academically courteous yet challenging manner.

Reading the texts, I myself started wondering whether sometimes too much emphasis is placed on technologies, infrastructure, and investments, for it prevents us from discussing why we really need technologies, infrastructure, and investment in the educational arena. It would seem to me this was the very purpose of the book: to make supporters like me wonder and reformulate and vocalize arguments and to encourage beginners and bystanders to join the process without the fear of being lost in a whirlpool of technological innovations.

This is a book about people and their learning and the ways to enhance learning in higher education by introducing technologies. This is a book that is bravely asking questions and inviting researchers, teachers, and policymakers to discuss them without losing sight of what really matters: learning and the people who learn.

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January 2014

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