

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

A reflection on the DIGI-HE project:

“What is left of digitally enhanced learning and teaching in post-Covid?”

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Eurostudent, 9 April 2025 - online

The rise of the education mission & EUA's responses

2012 – Massive Open Online courses MOOCs

- “vulgarisation” of digital ed
- L&T becomes more “visible” & important

- Partial revision of common perceptions
- Low esteem for online/digital provision
 - Primacy of the research mission

2015-2017 EUA developing measures for learning & teaching

- [EUA Principles & Guidelines \(Effect project\)](#)
- L&T Thematic Peer Learning Groups (2017)
- Annual Learning and Teaching Forum (since 2017)
- [Position on learning & teaching](#) (2018)

Education mission generally more important

- Bologna Process 2018-20 – AG Learning & Teaching
- European Universities Initiative

Digital ed?

January 2020-April 2022

<https://eua.eu/101-projects/772-digi-he.html>

How to advance institutional approaches towards digitally enhanced learning?

1. Data on institutional strategies & practices

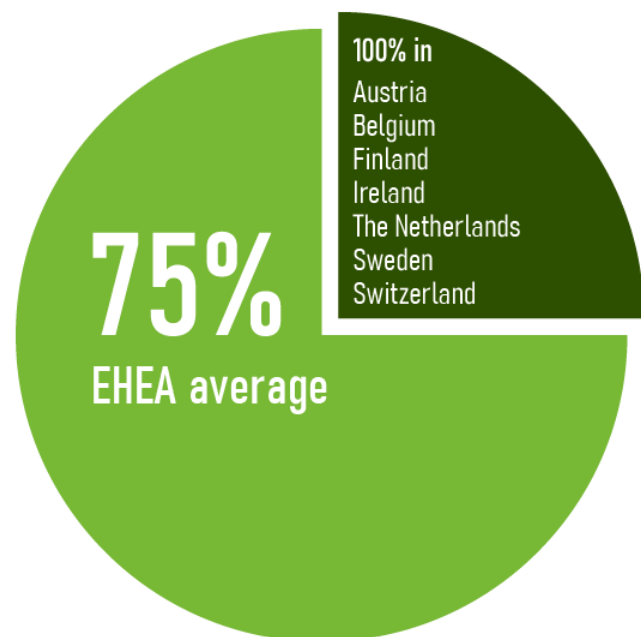
- 2021 Survey report
- Comparative data to a 2014 survey
- Survey launch & data collection Q2 2020
- “Please report the pre-Covid situation”
- from 368 HEI in 48 countries

2. Institutional reflection & assessment as a starting point for enhancement & transformation

1. Report on Self-assessment instruments institutional strategies in digital learning
2. Webinar series
3. MOOC on self-assessment
4. Thematic peer learning groups

Main results

Blended learning



Mainstreamed & more strategic compared to 2014

- 57% use digitally enhanced learning across the institution
- Institutional strategies – 88% (2014: 63%)
- Support & coordination centralised & shared at central and faculty levels
- Increase in internal QA (51% compared to 23% in 2014)

Overall, quite positive perceptions (impact of quality, transformation of L&T, student learning)

Widening access & LLL as strategic development priority (81%)

- 50% - short, non-degree courses - mainly blended, but also online & in presence
- MOOCS – no growth, but stronger emphasis on inclusion & outreach

Insufficient resources

- many services are in place - but not sufficient for the entire institution
- Digital library access 90% - need for enhancement: 65%

Differences – mainly between institutions regarding the degree of mainstreaming

How to transform & innovate learning & teaching?

Why?

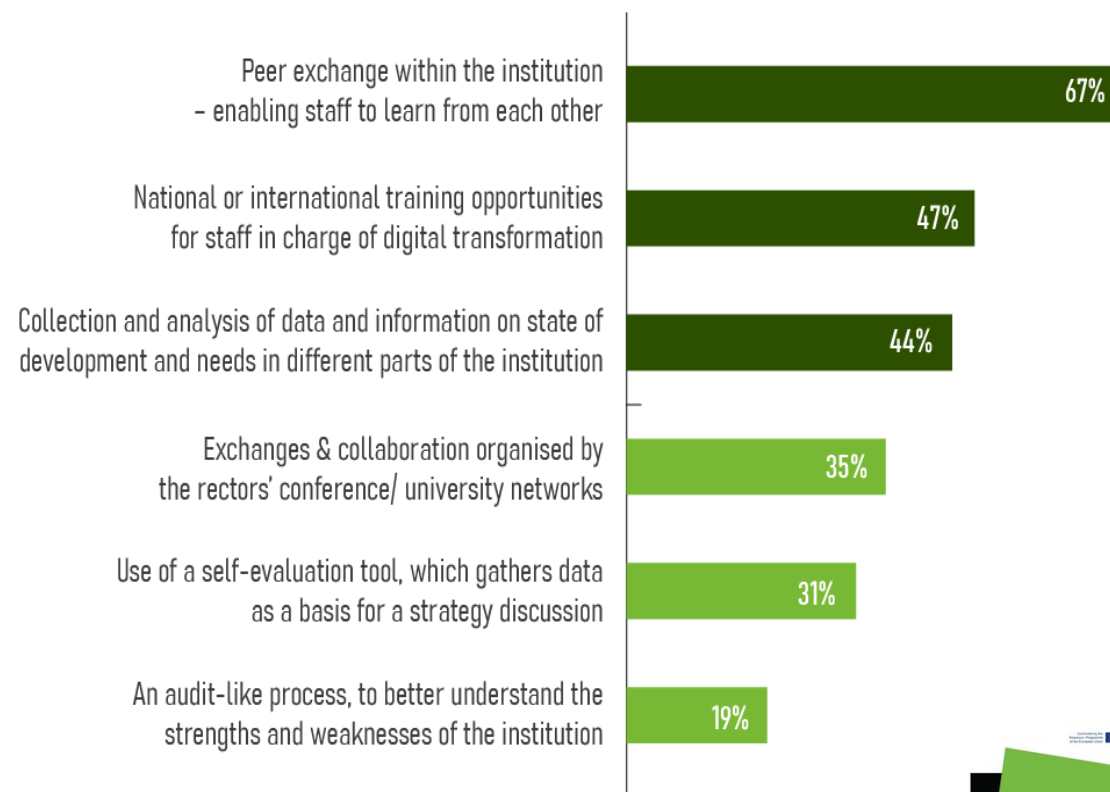
- Rationales: response to change, better quality, lowers costs, environmental aspects
- Evidence for better L&T

Lessons learnt

- top-down innovation – likely to fail
- innovation bottom-up: staff & students
- provide scope for experimentation
- mainstreaming, as part of strategy
- peer acknowledgement
- leadership support
- planning & allocation of resources
- institutional self-assessment – yes, but ...

Higher expectations: Become a learning organisation - future-proof, sustainable

Most useful measures for improving digitally enhanced learning and teaching



2022/3 - Post Covid Scenarios: Choices to be made

Scenario

Level of use & integration of **digitally enhanced learning & teaching (DELT)**

Resulting implications

Reasons & motives

1 - Back to the past

- **all teaching back on campus**
- DELT “exception” (add-on, project)
- digital skills of student & staff?
- delaying learning innovation

- system-level rules
- C19 crisis is over
- get things straight again
- internal & external pressure
- reputation - real “on campus” university

2 - As you like it

- **decision by individual departments/ staff**
- Infrastructure, resource management, HR rules?
- bad for students (diverse approaches, lack of physical premises for online attendance on campus)
- No transformation

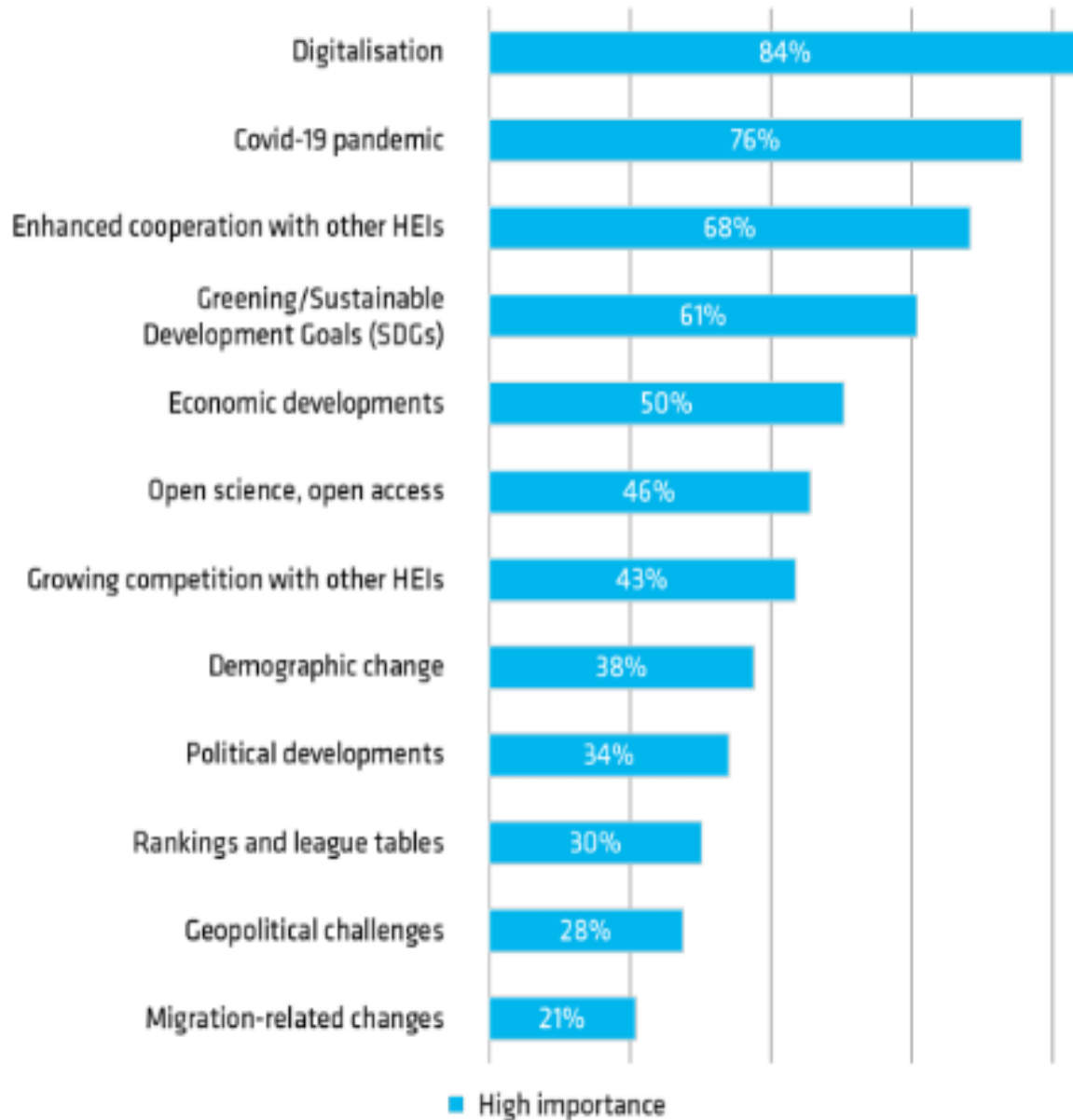
- institution-wide approach difficult
- Governance system
- irreconcilable views within the institution.
- uncertainty about the “right” approach

3 - Future now

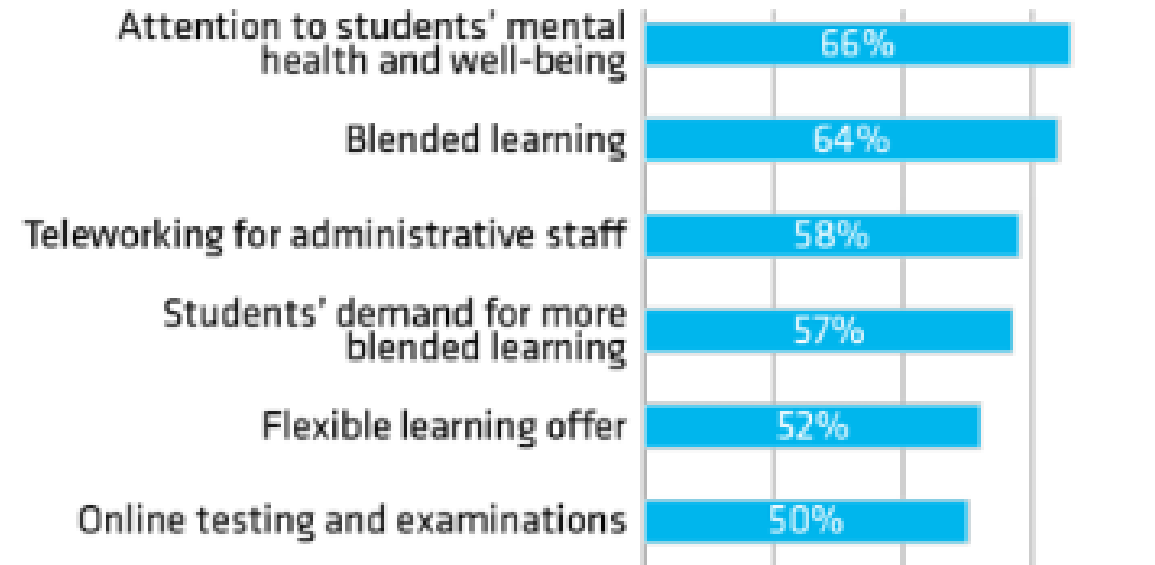
- **integration via institution-wide plan**
- incl. infrastructure & resources
- Scope for organisation at department level
- Participatory approach to ensure buy-in of staff and students
- Communicate & collaborate
- Experiment & mainstream
- Regular review & adjustment

- profile and (international) reputation
- sustainability, innovation
- best use of limited resources,
- pressure from staff & students,
- inspiration & support by national regulation &

Change drivers over the past 5 years



Changes to stay due to Covid 19



Trends 2024

- Read the Trends report: <https://www.eua.eu/publications/reports/trends-2024.html>
- Download the dataset: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13768235>

From 2021 „Moving forward“ to 2025 „What is left“

Back to campus – digital transformation continues

- Enhanced emphasis on non-degree education (microcredentials)
- less flexibility in degree studies?
- Internationalisation / interinstitutional collaboration
 - Massive growth in virtual exchanges (E+ funding)
 - Alliances – strong pressure for trans-institutional collaboration
- new digital pressure: artificial intelligence
- Sustainability/greening?
- Strong emphasis on Third Mission
- Significantly improved digital capacity, compared to 2019

Call for contributions: Survey on sustainability and greening at higher education institutions

27 Mar 2025

[Open until 23 May](#)



[Agenda for 2030](#) (2021)

Challenges

- tech dependency: capacities (fit for purpose, reliability), costs (technological lock-in), regulation, interoperability
- reform of academic career assessment
- geopolitical tensions: Ukraine war – changing transatlantic relations
- new policy priorities (Competitiveness compass, defence)
- decreasing funding



Thank you for your attention

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DIGI HE Project & reports & activities

<https://eua.eu/101-projects/772-digi-he.html>

EUA learning and teaching

<https://www.eua.eu/our-work/topics/learning-teaching.html>

