

**LEARNING & TEACHING PAPER #15**

International partnerships  
Thematic Peer Group Report

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# DIGIHE

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# Introduction

This report summarises the findings of the EUA Thematic Peer Group “International partnerships” (hereafter referred to as “the group”, see also Annex) which explored digitally enhanced internationalisation of higher education in detail. The group discussed how digital technologies, and the accompanying dynamics and ecosystems, are influencing the international partnerships between universities as well as the institutional policies and activities, and also looked into the related challenges. Based on their findings is a set of recommendations.

Since many years, internationalisation has turned from a marginal to a key aspect of higher education institutions, and then also a subject of the higher education reform agenda<sup>1</sup>. To respond to this evolving role of Internationalisation of Higher Education (IoHE), in 2015, the European Parliament’s Committee on Culture and Education requested a study in order to determine the principal international trends and to establish a series of recommendations for the years to come. This study<sup>2</sup> proposed an update of the definition for IoHE: “the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society”. It also identified some key developments that form part of any current internationalisation policy, such as the growing importance of internationalisation horizontally throughout an institution as well as the emergence of areas of focus like internationalisation of the curriculum, transnational education and digital learning. Finally, one of the recommendations stated by that time was to “develop innovative models of digital and blended learning as an instrument to complement IoHE.”

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the trends already identified in the cited study, fostering especially the digital transformation of

internationalisation at many universities worldwide. But beyond the response to an emergency situation, there are other motivations to use digitally enhanced internationalisation, such as making it more inclusive as well as sustainable, which enhance the chances to keep and deepen some of these current developments in the future. However, to seize these opportunities and to contribute to the future of IoHE, some challenges have to be overcome.

## METHODOLOGY

The group was comprised of representatives from nine higher education institutions from all over Europe. With a majority of conventional brick-and-mortar universities and one fully-online institution, the group members kicked off their work from different starting points both related to digitalisation as well as internationalisation. The group came together in an online environment seven times between April and December 2021.

First of all, the group got to know each other, sharing, exchanging and learning from one another on digital delivery modes as well as on strategies and activities related to digitally enhanced internationalisation. Taking into consideration the variety of models and institutional settings, the group created its vision of the future of digitally enhanced internationalisation of higher education. In order to achieve this vision, challenges that the participating institutions were facing were identified and grouped under four main dimensions which represent the guiding principles for this report. Possible tools and mechanisms for solving the different challenges were identified and, finally, the group elaborated a list of recommendations to move towards digitally enhanced IoHE.

# Different formats and approaches for digitally enhanced international partnerships

The members of the group started their discussions with sharing examples of international partnerships in which they were engaged. Three types of partnerships related to teaching and learning were most frequent and important:

## Virtual mobilities

Some of the institutions of the group offer virtual mobility programmes in collaboration with partners in Europe and further afield. This can either be organised as part of a bilateral partnership or an alliance, and include a variety of formats, such as fully online, blended and hybrid mobility. Although this offer mainly targets students, some institutions offer virtual mobility experiences also for staff, such as during international staff training weeks.

## Global classrooms

Some institutions engage in global classroom initiatives that involve academics and students from different backgrounds, contexts or countries working and learning together using both synchronous and asynchronous formats. The main objective of these initiatives is to increase global competences and intercultural awareness while advancing the use of digital technologies for learning and teaching. Certain methods are popular among the participants, such as the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) methodology pioneered by [SUNY](#).

## Provision of joint online modules and programmes.

Although certain institutions offer joint programmes/degrees with other institutions, joint modules were generally found to be more practical and more straightforward to organise in terms of bureaucracy and validation procedures. Some institutions also use them for recruitment, by offering prospective students the chance to attend courses remotely as guests.

## 🔗 PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

E-learning makes internationalisation easier for everyone. The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) encourages [virtual student mobility](#) in the framework of specific alliances with other educational institutions like Deakin University from Australia, Universidad Cooperativa from Colombia or Talca University from Chile and as part of university network mobility programmes, such as the Interuniversity Exchange Programme (Programa de Intercambio Universitario) of the CINDA network. Since 2016, more than 2,000 students have benefited from these international exchanges at the UOC. Students can study one or more courses in the virtual classrooms of the destination university, which, if passed, are recognised in the student's academic record.

## 🔗 PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

Leuphana University of Lüneburg has an interesting [Global Classroom](#) project implemented together with the Arizona State University. It has brought together students from different disciplines and enabled them to develop new competencies for transformations to enhance sustainability. The project was designed to present a global perspective on urban sustainability anchored in local context.

'[Challenges Online](#), programme is from the University of Exeter. It ran in 2020 and 2021 as a substitute to the in-person Grand Challenges programme held annually. Challenges Online was a project week in which students worked in interdisciplinary groups with other like-minded students to design innovative solutions to real-world sustainability problems.

# A vision of the future of digitally enhanced internationalisation of higher education

Generally, the participants of the group had many aspirations and great expectations for further developing digitally enhanced internationalisation in their institutions. They were enthusiastic about the advantages that it could bring, both to learning and teaching as well as to research and innovation. They clearly identified digitally enhanced internationalisation as a means to develop world-class, inclusive, and sustainable universities offering a seamless global study experience with the appropriate content to students both locally and around the world.

In order to explore what this would require and how digitally enhanced internationalisation can help achieve it, the group set a scaffold of the ideal internationalised HE institution. Elements and approaches described below are partly already in place or at least emerging at many institutions. Fully realising the vision requires more strategic attention, mainstreaming and upscaling, and more systematic development, with tangible benefits for staff and students.

For the participants of the group the internationalised HE institution will be **inclusive**, offering opportunities to learners both locally and across the globe to access top-quality higher education. Digitalisation will play a critical role. Having access to technology will allow students, irrespective of their location, to take part in courses from institutions all over the world, without the financial burden that living abroad can entail. Virtual mobility opportunities will be particularly beneficial for students, but also for academics who cannot travel due to economic reasons, or personal or professional situations. Digitally enhanced IoHE will also make sure that the internationalised university is a **sustainable** one, while acknowledging the importance of retaining physical mobility, collaboration and the need for in-person interaction.

In the eyes of the group, the use of digital technologies in internationalising higher education institutions will contribute to a **seamless learning and teaching experience for all** those involved. Universities will collaborate to share virtual resources and to develop

joint online or hybrid degrees, programmes, modules, projects and other initiatives, which will be recognised across institutions. Through initiatives such as partnership agreements between universities or within an alliance of universities, digitally enhanced international partnerships will facilitate the recognition of study periods and academic programmes, offering students completely new ways of conceiving and navigating through their studies. Students will also improve other transversal skills and competences such as digital or intercultural skills.

The internationalised HE institution will further be **versatile and flexible**, in large part thanks to the many opportunities offered by digitally enhanced learning and teaching modes. Lecturers and students from across the globe will be able to engage with one another through online, hybrid and blended instruction, using both synchronous and asynchronous methods.

**Joint learning and teaching projects** dedicated to **digital skills** within virtual consortia and alliances will help equip the teaching staff with necessary technical and pedagogical skills and support them in digital forms of instruction.

Digitally enhanced IoHE can also play a critical role in the **sharing of good practises and resources**, and the provision of a forum for academics and managers from around the globe to collaborate and exchange ideas.

Lastly, the internationalised HE institution will facilitate the development of [global competence](#), described by the OECD as a multi-dimensional construct that requires a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values successfully applied to global issues or intercultural situations. Global competence will help train students to become **open-minded and globally engaged citizens**. Where appropriate and to the extent possible, the curriculum will have a global focus and teaching staff will be equipped with the skills to make their material and pedagogy relevant to a global classroom.

# How to overcome key challenges of digitally enhanced IoHE

On the way to making this vision of digitally enhanced IoHE reality, four main challenges were identified by the group:

- international partnerships in a digital age
- culture and mindset
- digital skills and competencies and
- regulatory and technical issues.

Needless to say, these challenges are not isolated from one another, with many overlapping issues being observed by the group participants under each category.

The group also extensively discussed how to overcome these challenges. This resulted in recommendations addressed to the main actors involved in internationalisation and digital transformation of higher education institutions, including universities, and national and European authorities.

## 4.1 THE KEY CHALLENGES

### Challenge #1 - International partnerships in a digital age

Besides the some of the challenges experienced in any international university collaboration, digitally enhanced international partnerships entail additional specific challenges and potential shortcomings that can cause difficulties in collaboration. As in traditional collaboration, and maybe even to a greater extent, one of the main difficulties is developing trust between partners. The pandemic did away with international conferences and other academic events, which were great fora for making new contacts. Therefore, the key challenge is to maintain existing partnerships built on trust, but also to create new opportunities to meet colleagues and institutions to collaborate with.

Another challenging aspect is the demanding nature of creating joint courses, programmes and degrees in terms of time and decision-making. Often, institutions lack a clear plan for digitally enhanced internationalisation: it may not be considered in the overarching institutional strategy, and there might be no standard procedures and regulations. Academic staff's bottom-up initiatives to deliver digitally enhanced international joint courses, programmes and degrees usually also require support on matters such as skills development for teachers, technological infrastructure and, of course, financial means. Provision of some guidance provided at faculty level or centrally, has been found beneficial.

According to the group participants, the most challenging issue regarding collaboration during the pandemic has been establishing partnerships to develop shared learning materials and digital learning environment solutions. Fostering international partnerships and generating learning materials in another language are often found to be time-consuming and burdensome, taking also into consideration that academics often engage in international teaching activities without reducing their regular teaching responsibilities.

#### 🔗 PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

Tampere University has successful [bilateral projects](#) in teaching and learning with Brunel University London. Those who teach similar courses/ subjects in these universities, pair up and come up with innovative new ways of cooperation. The best ideas receive some seed funding from both universities. This requires only low budget but produces effective outcomes.

As synchronous elements still play a pivotal role in the current digital teaching and learning, another challenge that has been identified relates to the collaboration across several time zones. A move towards more asynchronous online teaching is key to facilitating international collaboration with institutions from different parts of the globe.

Differences between tuition fees among the collaborating institutions can represent a challenge when setting up joint or mobility programmes. In addition, adding new international offers to the already existing programme offer can generate internal competition for students. Likewise, it can lead to interinstitutional competition, as in the case of cooperation between institutions with different levels of digital education provision—one relatively advanced, the other less developed. This can result in “imbalanced partnerships” causing, among other things, unidirectional mobility of students, and a widening of the “digital gap” between the institutions, potentially also between countries.

The group was quite confident that most of these challenges can be overcome or at least mitigated through better planning and coordination, and allocation of sufficient resources. As a starting point, it would be important to develop institutional strategic approaches, including an assessment of the institution’s digital infrastructure and environment, in close collaboration with the involved faculty and staff.

As there is currently a real opportunity to further explore and enhance digitally enhanced international cooperation, improve its quality and make it more attractive, this should be prioritised by national and European funding schemes.

### Challenge #2 - Culture and mindset

Many of the participants of the group expressed the view that motivating university leadership and staff to move from emergency remote teaching towards more sustainable and qualitative approaches is challenging, and even more so when digitally enhanced learning and teaching concerns internationalisation.

#### ➔ PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

University of Foggia has started a new project on faculty Development named TILD - Teaching and Learning Development. The project promotes a new culture of teaching to include the digital means and methodologies available today.

The outbreak of the pandemic and the closing of universities all over the world has shaken the foundations of higher education. Especially regarding digital transformation, many developments have been triggered and accelerated, leading most institutions to adopt emergency remote teaching<sup>3</sup>, not always fulfilling standards of high-quality online learning. This strengthens the perception that digital modes of learning and teaching are second best in comparison with in-person modes in certain countries and universities. The whole change process initiated through the health emergency situation **requires a major change in institutional cultures and mindset** of academics and also administrative staff.

Designing online courses that cater for an international or global classroom, as well as fostering sustainable approaches to blended, hybrid and virtual mobility involves yet another and completely different mindset, which requires time and training for all those involved. In this regard, as mentioned above, the group identified the critical need for developing and enhancing institutional level strategies, which should also comprise innovative teaching and learning models.

### Challenge #3 - Digital skills and competencies

Due to the different nature of digital teaching and learning, there is an important need for more intensive training on how to provide pedagogically sound courses online. There was strong agreement that the challenges that occur generally in face-to-face learning settings tend to be even more prominent and amplified in an online and hybrid setting.

#### ➔ PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

The Izmir University of Economics has international elements included in a training programme for synchronous and asynchronous teaching. The programme is a 7-week certification course for all faculty. By the end of 2021-22 academic year all full-time faculty members will be certified.

The University of Deusto launched a virtual International Staff Week programme in 2021 where partner universities from all over the world participated in debates and discussions focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

During the pandemic, academics were forced to obtain in a relatively short period of time a certain level of digital skills. However, institutions have since struggled to move out of the emergency mode and develop a sustainable strategy for providing academic staff with training in digital and pedagogical skills. Furthermore, academics’ digital skills, despite the experiences during the pandemic, are hardly considered in terms of

career development, and therefore not prioritised by leadership and staff. The lack of recognition of digital skills and the non-provision of adequate training further adds to the rising digital fatigue.

Teaching virtually in international settings requires an additional set of skills, including digital, pedagogical, language and intercultural skills.

In terms of digital skills, this is not just about the academics' ability to use digital technology, but also relates to the specific role that digital technology plays in their teaching and their scientific field. This appears to be critical, as the lack of digital skills among academic staff can negatively affect international collaborative teaching and partnerships.

#### ➤ PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

University of Lausanne has a complete offer of webinars and online labs which allows teachers to learn about the use of digital technology in their teaching practice.

A new project on digital skills for the period 2021-2024 has started. It will offer many resources to teachers and students in the development of their digital skills. They worked with digital skills frameworks, such as [SAMR](#) and [DigComp](#).

While during the pandemic, hybrid learning has been emphasised as a promising way to serve students on and off campus, this was perceived by the group to be pedagogically and organisationally difficult if done without previous training and planning. There is a high risk of overloading academic staff with multiple activities, such as taking care of course contents, technology and communication, linking the learner community in the classroom with learners off campus. Teaching staff underlined the particularly challenging nature of communicating with students via online learning modes, expressing their worries that this can lead to a less efficient learning experience. This is even more difficult in the context of international hybrid/virtual classrooms where different national and academic cultures, languages and time zones come into play.

Not only academic staff but students, too, have had to update their digital skills. Even though students are often claimed to be "digital natives", the skills for following studies online go beyond interactions through social media networks, and specific guidance to motivate and integrate students in the new learning environment is needed. In international and

especially virtual settings, it is a challenge to identify which digital skills are lacking among students from various countries, where even the basic social media networking skills can be rather different. Study programmes should take this into consideration and prioritise the development of digital skills of students.

#### Challenge #4 - Regulatory and technical issues

##### ➤ PRACTICE FROM THE GROUP

Adami Mickiewicz University from Poznań, together with its partners from the EPICUR European University Alliance, has managed to create a [Virtual Inter-University Campus](#) which is a central online gateway for supporting flexible online, physical and hybrid mobilities for members of the universities of the alliance.

The participants of the group expressed their worries about regulatory issues affecting their institutions when engaging in bilateral international partnerships as well as in European or international alliances. Rigid requirements from national accreditation agencies, ministries or other authorities have made it complicated for universities based in different countries to engage in this type of collaboration. Especially national level rules and regulations that differ from country-to-country challenge international collaboration. An example for a major challenge is the assessment of students based in different countries participating in the same digitally enhanced international course. National regulations may require examinations to take place only in physical presence on campus, and may entail other specific requirements, complicating enrolment of learners from different countries.

Furthermore, in individual universities and in some systems, enrolment procedures are long and complicated, which may deter international students who wish to take just a small number of courses rather than an entire semester or academic year. Protecting students' and staff's data is another mounting concern, making it difficult to use certain digital tools and platforms in countries, which do not comply with the data protection regulations. It was found that at European level, there is still work to do to advance towards an agreement on virtual mobilities and their recognition in the Erasmus+ programme.



Moreover, technological problems are still an obstacle and cause frustration in international partnerships for digitally enhanced learning and teaching. Problems include poor connectivity speed for international teaching, lack of interoperability of learning management systems (LMS), and in some cases the refusal by partner countries to allow particular learning platforms. These problems also exacerbated the “digital gap”, with less digitally developed institutions being in a more difficult position to engage in international partnerships for digitally enhanced learning and teaching.

All these were not considered to be insurmountable problems. Nevertheless, in combination with the other challenges, and the absence of conducive institutional, national and European regularity and support frameworks, they can impede the further development of digitally enhanced internationalisation, despite some promising developments throughout the past decade, and in particular during the two years of the pandemic.

## 4.2. SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to overcome the key challenges regarding digitally enhanced IoHE, and move towards the vision, the participants of the group came up with the following recommendations.

### For Universities

#### **Policies, strategies and incentives**

**#1** Develop a clear plan for digitally enhanced internationalisation with an accompanying roadmap and timeline as a part of the institutional strategy.

**#2** Ensure a good level of awareness among all academics and students on how to get involved in digitally enhanced international partnerships, developing clear procedures for identifying where they can find the necessary guidance and support on skills, regulations, technology, etc.

**#3** Formally include teaching skills and experience in a virtual international environment within career pathways and tenure tracks. Encourage and reward participation in staff development schemes.

**#4** Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated to academic and administrative staff to develop digitally enhanced joint initiatives with international partners.

**#5** Enable a small-scale, bottom-up approach for first-time international collaborations between teaching staff, such as global classroom projects, to be scaled up if successful.

**#6** Continuously maintain and invest in existing partnerships, where trust and effective working methods have already been established.

#### **Skills for digitally enhanced IoHE**

**#7** Prioritise the development of digital and intercultural skills of students and include them in curricula and study programmes.

**#8** Ensure that staff development schemes include digital skills for teaching in a virtual international environment, such as pedagogical skills, including hybrid / hyflex teaching, but also intercultural and language aspects. Develop a policy for formal recognition of digital skills for learning.

**#9** Create mutual learning opportunities between digitally skilled and unskilled, internationally experienced and unexperienced teaching staff and students.

**#10** Encourage staff to share good practices for digitally enhanced IoHE within the institution as well as with other institutions both nationally and internationally.

#### **Technical and regulatory issues**

**#11** Ensure common knowledge and understanding of the institution’s digitally enhanced procedures and terms among the faculty and staff.

**#12** Involve IT services in discussions on digitally enhanced IoHE at the very beginning of partnership activity.

**#13** Choose only digital technologies and platforms that ensure adequate data protection of users’ data by complying with the GDPR and the equivalent legal national frameworks.

**#14** Work preferably with digital technologies and platforms that allow interoperability.

**#15** Ensure that data protection and privacy issues are commonly understood by the different partners and taken into account.

## For national and European institutions

### Policies, strategies and incentives

**#16** Fully recognise and award virtual mobilities at national and European level, among others through the Erasmus+ programme.

**#17** Recognise and incentivise digitally enhanced international partnerships as an additional complementary way of collaboration, and ensure their eligibility in funding schemes.

**#18** Support projects that explore the innovative aspects of digitally enhanced international partnerships (learning quality, access & inclusion, sustainability) and sharing among European universities and their international partners.

### Skills for digitally enhanced IoHE

**#19** Establish common guidelines defining the minimum technical, pedagogical, language and intercultural skills required for academic staff to successfully deliver digitally enhanced learning and teaching in an international environment.

**#20** Support the development of a community of practice between institutions, where the members can exchange good practices, particularly with institutions experienced in online education.

### Technical and regulatory issues

**#21** Promote both a European and national regulatory frameworks for a clear understanding of what quality online and blended education represents.

**#22** Standardise procedures and regulations, such as for data protection, to help further digitally enhanced IoHE.

### For the EdTech industry

Even though the group's influence is less direct, the last recommendation goes to the EdTech industry.

**#23** In order to support higher education institutions in their way forward to a digitally enhanced internationalisation, consult experts from HEIs when shaping procedures and practices for the functioning of ed-tech platforms. This could be done through a council, an expert group, an advisory group or a similar structure.

# Conclusions

Exploring international university partnerships in general, and digitally enhanced IoHE in particular, requires a comprehensive consideration of the many factors – internal and external- that drive and influence these collaborations. Digitally enhanced IoHE goes beyond signing cooperation agreements and designating tasks to international offices. As identified in this report, it requires meeting several new challenges in relation to regulatory frameworks, skills acquisition, policy and methodology updates – all conditioned by the shift brought with digital technologies. In this report, the group sets a vision of the future of digitally enhanced IoHE and accordingly,

proposes a set of recommendations addressed to the institutional, national and European levels. A look at the sum of these recommendations suggests that digitally enhancing IoHE is not a task to be separately resolved by institutional units. It requires institutional approaches for strategy development and planning, but also a cooperative culture within institutions. This kind of prevailing culture will enable and encourage staff and students to engage successfully in digitally enhanced international cooperation. The recommendations also call for better recognition by and support from regulatory and funding bodies.

## EUA LEARNING & TEACHING THEMATIC PEER GROUPS

As part of its work on learning and teaching, EUA engages with leadership and professional staff overseeing or implementing learning and teaching activities at the institutional level. Coordinating the work of a set of Thematic Peer Groups is a key aspect of EUA's work in connecting with university communities. The groups consist of university representatives selected through a call for participation; the core of their remit is to:

- discuss and explore practices and lessons learnt in organising and implementing learning and teaching in European universities;
- contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching by identifying key recommendations on the selected theme.

The 2021 Thematic Peer Groups were organised as part of the [DIGI-HE project](#) with a focus on digitally enhanced learning and teaching (DELT). The Thematic Peer Groups, active from March 2021 until February 2022, facilitated discussion among group members through their continued engagement in peer-learning exercises and exchange of experience. Similarly, the group members contributed their expertise to develop EUA's input in policy debates, such as the Bologna Process.

Each group was chaired by a member representative from one university and supported by two coordinators – one from within the EUA Secretariat and another from within the DIGI-HE Consortium. The groups met in several online meetings organised throughout 2021 and despite challenges presented by the virtual setting, were successful in identifying the major issues related to all three themes – strategy and organisational culture, curriculum and assessment, and international partnerships.

Each group discussed the key challenges related to its respective theme, explored ways to overcome challenges through innovative practices and approaches, and drew conclusions as regards institutional policies and processes that would support the enhancement of learning and teaching. In addition, the groups served as platform for members to put forward and discuss other issues relevant to the theme. Members of the groups also presented the outcomes at the 2022 European Learning & Teaching Forum, with the objective of obtaining feedback on the groups' conclusions and recommendations.

### **Composition of the Thematic Peer Group ‘International partnerships’**

(starting with the group chair, then proceeding by alphabetical order of the country name):

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  - Nadja Gmelch, Open Knowledge Projects at the UOC (co-chair)
- **Medical University, Plovdiv (Bulgaria)**
  - Dilyana Vicheva, Vice-Rector of international relations and project activity
- **Tampere University (Finland)**
  - Sanna Kivimäki, Project director, Development Programme for Education and Learning
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  - Julia Webersik, Director of Teaching Service
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- **University of Foggia (Italy)**
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- **Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań (Poland)**
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- **University of Deusto (Spain)**
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- **Coordinators:** Alison Morrisroe/ Gohar Hovhannisyan, European University Association (EUA) and Pieta Sikström, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

# Endnotes

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- 1 De Wit H., Deca L. (2020) *Internationalization of Higher Education, Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Decade*. In: Curaj A., Deca L., Pricopie R. (eds) *European Higher Education Area: Challenges for a New Decade*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56316-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56316-5_1) (accessed 12/01/22).
- 2 De Wit H. et al, 2015, *Internationalisation of Higher Education*, Brussels, European Parliament [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL\\_STU\(2015\)540370\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL_STU(2015)540370_EN.pdf) (accessed 12/01/22).
- 3 Hodges Ch., Moore S., et al, 2020, *The Difference Between Emergency Remote Teaching and Online Learning* <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning> (accessed 12/01/22).

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the voice of European universities is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact their activities.

The Association provides unique expertise in higher education and research as well as a forum for exchange of ideas and good practice among universities. The results of EUA's work are made available to members and stakeholders through conferences, seminars, websites and publications.

This paper, prepared within the framework of the EUA-led DIGI-HE project is one of a series of reports specifically focused on learning and teaching. It is designed to gather the knowledge and experiences of experts on the topic from across Europe. EUA's activities in learning and teaching aim at enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education provision, underline the importance of learning and teaching as a core mission and advocate for learning and teaching activities to be geared towards student learning and success.