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DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN HE: FROM THE EUROPEAN VISION TO THE UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

RESEARCH REPORT

The last research report of the IO1 Digital Technologies in HE: from the European vision to the university governance **focuses on the main results of the six case studies**. Involved Universities are:

- ✓ ITALY: eCampus University (case study presented by FONDAZIONE LINK CAMPUS UNIVERSITY);
- ✓ ITALY: Roma Tre University (case study presented by CRES-IELPO Research Center of the Department of Education);
- ✓ SPAIN: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (case study presented by Fundació per a la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya);
- ✓ IRELAND: University College Cork - Adult Continuing Education;
- ✓ GREECE: University of Patras;
- ✓ FINLAND: Laurea University of Applied Sciences.



The **objective of the research** planned in IO1 was to **understand the organizational processes in promoting digital innovation in universities** to examine: guidelines; best practices; standards and constraints, with the intent of intercepting valuable suggestions for policymakers, decision makers and academic bodies in order to build a European Higher Education Area for e-learning, based on faculty professional development and European quality assurance standards.

Each case study research report has presented a standard structure:

- ✓ an introduction;
- ✓ a reconstruction of the national political framework related to digital innovation in HE;
- ✓ a focus on university micro-policies by documentary analysis;
- ✓ a qualitative analysis of the focus group and interviews results;
- ✓ a quantitative analysis of the survey online aimed at students.

The complete report will soon be available for download on the project website.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

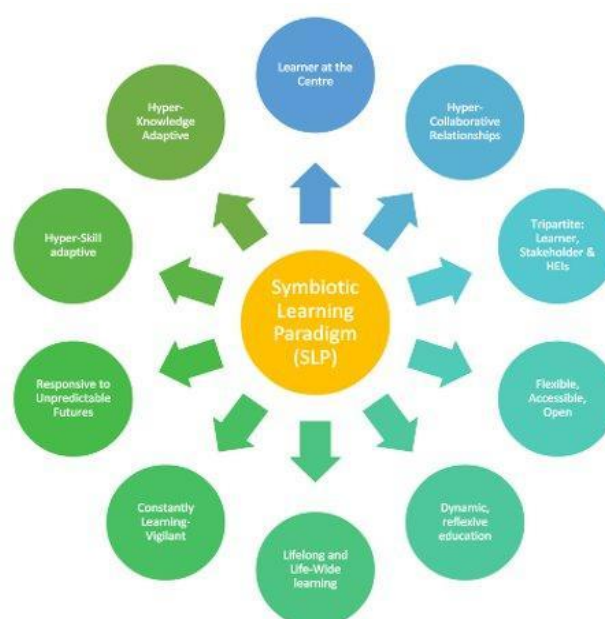
SYMBIOTIC LEARNING PARADIGM (SLP)

Teacher Competences, Methods & Approaches in Higher Education

Under the guidance of University College Cork, the ECOLHE project partners are now involved in the 4th step of the ECOLHE project "Symbiotic Learning Paradigm (SLP): Teacher Competences, Methods & Approaches in Higher Education".

The aim of this research activity is the **development and testing of co-designing curricula** for 21st Century teaching in higher education paying particular attention to digital competences and professional development.

The co-design activities will be concluded with a **comparative report aimed to outline the most important issues in teaching professional development for higher education** and evaluate the potential role of SLP in this.



Symbiotic Learning Paradigm (SLP) is a learning model developed by ACE-UCC in response to the Irish Government Human Capital Initiative ©

SLP is about **imagining and achieving possibilities and thinking outside of conventional constraints in the design, delivery, and objectives of learning**. The challenge for ECOLHE is about a cultural shift that allows institutions, teachers, and learners to embrace a significantly different paradigm.

The co-design method is essential as it allows you to capture the essence of SLP as well as contributing to the evolution of meaning and practice.

NEXT STEPS

THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA IN FRONT OF THE DIGITAL CHALLENGE

In the years to come, **implementation and integration of new technologies and environments will be an essential part of HEIs operation in all levels of their operation.**

Teachers, students, tutors and administrative staff will have to deal and operate in a different way than in the past, enhancing IT tools to perform their scope. Even though IT technologies are commonly used from all HEIs today, there is no specific guide regarding how this new teaching environment will take place. EU tries to set the basis for the digitalization of HEI throughout member countries, by the means of continues research work and several publications, creating a common framework for all member countries.

That is not an easy task, regarding that the majority of HEIs only recently and during COVID-19 pandemic were forced to use IT tools in an extensive scale in order to perform their task in teaching, administrative and quality assurance field. But, years before the pandemic, **EU has made the first steps to digital transformation with several publications**, including among others, “Modernization of HE” in 2012; recommendations of the European Union’s High-Level Group on the Modernization of Higher Education which highlight the integration of digital technologies and pedagogies as an integral element of higher education institutions’ strategies for teaching and learning in 2014; European Quality assurance standards in 2015.

Digital challenge in HE area is indeed a complex task but offers a lot of opportunities such as for example, **blended learning, adopting new teaching and research methods, expansion of studies in an international level and developing a digital administration for HEI.** Some of the strengths of digitalization are the flexibility in working and learning environment, the greater interaction between several projects and administrative bureaucracy reduction. But IT implementation will have to face some challenges such as the lack of didactic skills in digital environments, the resist of the teaching staff to change their traditional teaching methods, the lack of a clear and well organized digital transformation framework and the absence of standards for digital interaction between the different universities.

To overcome some of the IT related drawbacks, it is a necessity **to follow an organized approach**, on the direction to consolidate the education methods and the technical tools; qualify teachers, students and administrative staff IT level; organize training in these tools which should be easy to learn, use and grasp. A quality assurance program should be formed and after the whole process is finalized, the conclusions should lead in a renewed investment evaluation for the digitalization progress.

PROJECT EVENTS

ECOLHE CONFERENCE 2023

The Final Project Conference and the beginning of Evolution

8 June 2023, Protaras, Cyprus

Open invitation to researchers for contributions (free registration)

Proceedings will be published with ISBN.

Main topics

- ✓ Digital Technologies in HE: from the European vision to the university governance;
- ✓ Online teaching in HE;
- ✓ Engagement tools for HE online learning environment;
- ✓ Symbiotic Learning Paradigm (SLP): Teacher Competences, Methods & Approaches in HE;
- ✓ LLL through ICT in HE;
- ✓ Teaching digital skills in HE;
- ✓ Recognition and validation of teaching competences in HE for teachers' professional development;
- ✓ The HE institutions of the future;
- ✓ Evolution of HE into Education 4.0 - Policy recommendations.

For contributions send at first a title and abstract of maximum 200 words to info@eaecnet.com. Indicate in email subject "ECOLHE Conference".

More information soon at www.eaecnet.com.

For more information, follow us on [ECOLHE Facebook](#) and visit [ECOLHE project website](#).
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