



POWERHEAD

Empowering Higher Education in Adopting Digital Learning



1. The project

- Title: Empowering Higher Education in Adopting Digital Learning
- Time schedule: December 2020 – November 2022
- Partners:
 - Department of Education and Training, Belgium/Flemish Community
 - Linked third party Flemish Education Council (VLOR)
 - Department of Higher Education, Innovation and Science, Latvia
- Experts:
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1. The project

- Original objective of the project (call in 2019)
 - Design guidelines for a policy on digital learning in HE at two levels:
 - national policy
 - higher education institutions
 - Why? Digital learning in an ad-hoc, haphazard way.
- Impact of the COVID-19 context
 - Rapid implementation of digital education on large scale
 - But... even today: still many questions.
 - Given this context...
 - ...what do institutions need from the government to develop a digitalisation policy?
 - ...how can institutions further shape their digitalisation policy?



1. The project

2 crosscutting work packages:

- WP1: General management and coordination of the project
- WP2: Monitoring and evaluation

WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7
Setting the stage	Needs analysis	Broadening the expertise	Guidelines on digital learning in HE	Dissemination of results

All project outcomes: <https://www.vlor.be/outcomes>



2. Needs analysis: goal

WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7
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- **Goal:** Make an inventory of the needs of HE
- From the perspective of 'change management':

What is needed to conduct a well thought-out digitalisation policy and to continue the digital transition?



2. Needs analysis: model

- Model for the needs analysis: model of Laurillard (2015)
 - 'Drivers': steering elements that determine how educators prioritise their activities.
 - 'Enablers': facilities that educators need to respond effectively to the 'drivers'.

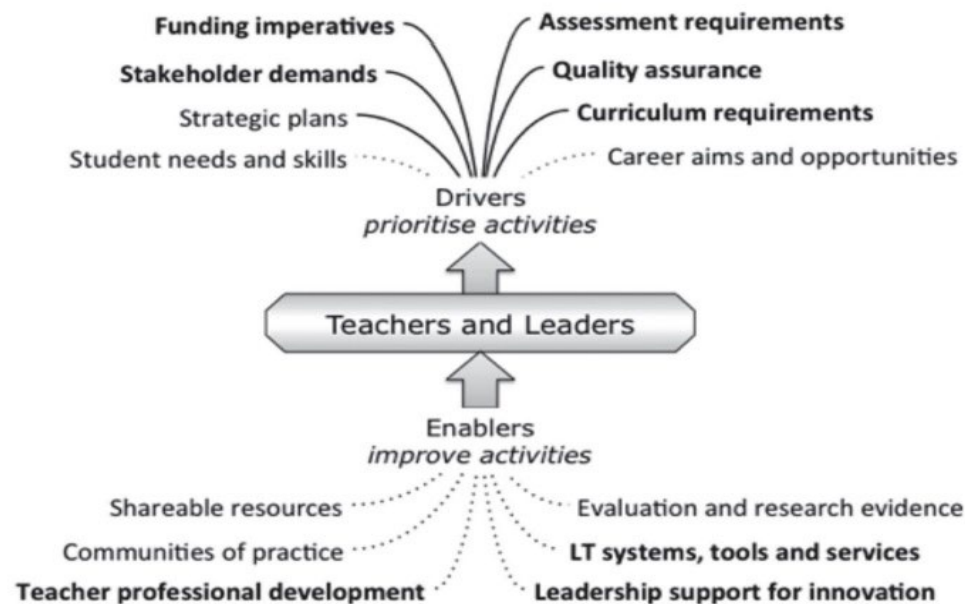


Fig. 1. the drivers of professional activity in the HE system balanced against the enablers for innovation in learning technology (bold indicates the more powerful ones).

- Further concretisation: 5 major themes
 1. Students
 2. Course & Curriculum Design
 3. Vision, Policy, and Quality Assurance
 4. Funding and Infrastructure
 5. Stakeholders



2. Needs analysis: method

- Focus groups were conducted in Flanders and Latvia separately
 - Transnationally compared: common needs
 - Confirmed and further enriched during PLA
- Total of 10 focus groups, 62 participants

Flanders	Latvia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Educators/support staff • Government/policy makers • Responsibles of HEI and directors • Employers and social partners • 1 additional focus group: labour market perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Educators • Policy makers • Industry/ business representatives

Which common needs were identified?



2. Needs analysis: 'Students' theme

Need for...

- Acquisition of digital competencies
 - Students are digital natives = myth
 - Basic skills, but also high-level digital competencies
- Development of self-regulation skills, in early stages of study
- Monitoring of well-being and mental health
- Flexible and adaptive use of digital environments
 - Digitalisation can make HE more inclusive
 - Needs of different groups of students
- Digital inclusion: digital resources for all students
- Communication, involvement, student participation

2. Needs analysis: 'Course & curriculum design'

Subtheme: Curriculum design & assessment

- Well-considered redesign of curricula in the long term
 - *practical-didactical* decisions during 'emergency remote learning' during pandemic, now time for reflection
 - Not purely digital, not just transfer to a digital channel
- Pedagogical-didactical principles
- Towards a flexible and modular curriculum (design)
- Study modules on digital skills: in different fields
- Student assessment in the digital environment
 - Several benefits and drawbacks of online assessment
 - Variety of assessment methods

2. Needs analysis: 'Course & curriculum design'

Subtheme: Support & professionalisation

- Sharing/exchange/mutual learning between educators
 - Teams vs. the individual educator
 - Knowledge sharing should be facilitated
- Support, time and recognition for educators
 - Transition to digital education requires time and energy
 - Policy must valorise educators' efforts
- Need for targeted professionalisation of educators
 - Not just technical
 - Efficiently organized to cover different needs



2. Needs analysis: 'Vision, policy, and QA'

Subtheme: Vision and policy

- Vision, change management, and leadership
 - Long-term vision needed at HEI level: determine goals
 - Leadership and change management
- Commitment, involvement, implementation at all levels
 - 'HEI are not made by visions but by people'
 - Support for the vision needed at different levels
 - Psychological acceptance of change
- A coordinating framework at national level
 - Digitalisation as policy priority
 - Support for HEI's, e.g., SURF (The Netherlands)



2. Needs analysis: 'Vision, policy, QA'

Subtheme: 'Vision and policy'

- Internationalisation and digitalisation
 - Offer programmes and reach students on the global market
 - International cooperation and mobility
- Cooperation/exchange/common understanding in HE
 - Lack of openness at all levels: educators, programmes, HEI

Subtheme: 'Quality assurance'

- During pandemic: focus on continuing education
- Digitalisation should be part of regular QA systems
- No need for new QA frameworks

2. Needs analysis: 'Funding & infrastructure'



Subtheme: Funding

- Specifically allocated funding and investments, at the European and the national level
- Continuous basic funding for HE
- Enough staff and well-being of staff

Subtheme: Infrastructure

- Digital tools: determines the 'quality of service'
- Infrastructure as a whole: spatial design of buildings/rooms, scheduling, etc.
- Sharing of educational resources (e.g., materials/software)
- Administrative processes and systems



2. Needs analysis: 'Stakeholders'

- Involvement of industry representatives in the development of study programmes
- Local governments
E.g. providing place to study for vulnerable students
- Developers of educational hardware/software
 - HEI become dependent on developers, given current funding
 - Cooperation needed between HEI and HEI/developers
- Privacy, data security, and other regulatory/legal aspects



3. What's next?

WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7
Setting the stage	Needs analysis	Broadening the expertise	Guidelines on digital learning	Dissemination of results

- Guidelines on digital learning (and teaching)
 - For HEI and for national governments
 - Prepared in Latvia and Flanders separately, afterwards transnationally compared
- **Dissemination conference:** October 17 2022, Brussels



Thank you!

Questions?

Any comments on our needs analysis?
Any suggestions to take away towards our guidelines?

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<https://www.vlor.be/powerhead-project>