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Shaping the Digital Turn in Higher Education – Bologna Digital & Hochschulforum Digitalisierung

BFUG Advisory Group Teaching and Learning – Paris, France, 9 May 2019

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How can we best **prepare** higher education institutions and its students **today** for the digital age of **tomorrow** and the challenges of an uncertain **future**?



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(Quelle: Biletto Editorial)



(Quelle: Alex Knight)

AGENDA



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- 1. What is Digitalisation?**
- 2. Bologna Digital**
- 3. Hochschulforum Digitalisierung**
 - A. Innovative Teaching in the Digital Age**
 - B. Skills for the Digital Age**
 - C. Strategies for Teaching and Learning**
- 4. Concluding Remarks**

A hand is shown holding a smartphone. The background is a blurred cityscape. Overlaid on the image is a network diagram consisting of white circles connected by thin white lines. A large, semi-transparent question mark is centered in the background. The text 'What is Digitalisation?' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

What is Digitalisation?

What is Digitalisation?



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“Digitalisation is [t]he transformation of all sectors of our economy, government and society based on the large-scale adoption of existing and emerging digital technologies.”

(Randall, Berlina, Teräs, & Rinne, 2018)

“Digitalisation of higher education is a transformative process that substantially influences all activities of higher education institutions. It permeates all processes, places, formats and objectives of teaching, learning, researching and working in higher education.

(Rampelt et al., 2018)

- Digitalisation means living, working and learning in the digital age, that already is a reality
- Digitalisation should not lead to the virtual repetition of analog (pedagogical) mistakes
- Digitalisation should not only include a technological perspective on teaching and learning, but can help us taking the individual (learner) even more into focus (pedagogies and methodologies)
- Digitalisation can be the innovation and cooperation driver higher education needs in many areas

A hand is shown holding a smartphone, with a digital network overlay consisting of white lines and circles. The background is a blurred cityscape. The text 'Bologna Digital' is centered on the screen.

Bologna Digital

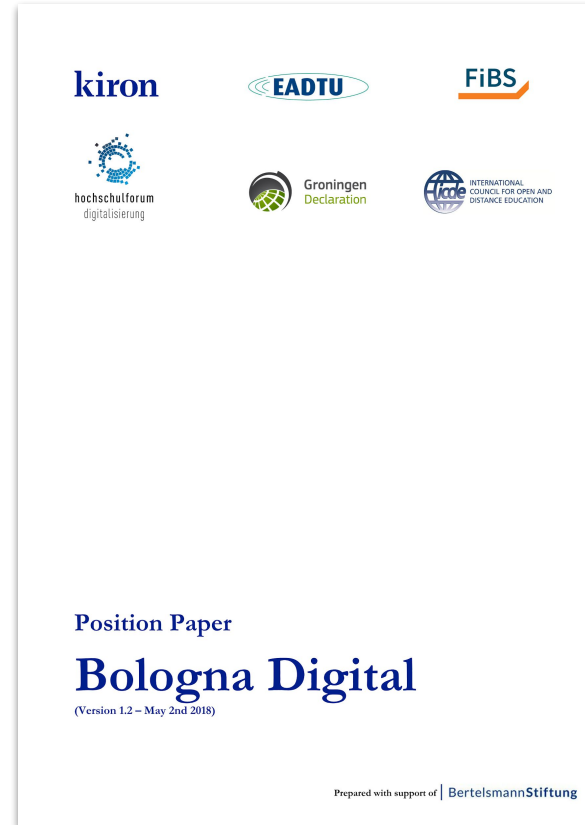
BOLOGNA DIGITAL – Background

Central argument

The full potential of digitalisation has not been reached on systemic level.

This is partly due to digitalisation being viewed as an additional challenge, rather than a means to meet existing challenges for higher education.

- Very informal collaboration between different stakeholders in preparation for the Paris Ministerial Conference in May 2018
- Formal endorsement through 6 European networks and organisations
- Positive feedback before and after the Paris conference, including the need to continue exchange on the topic with more stakeholders



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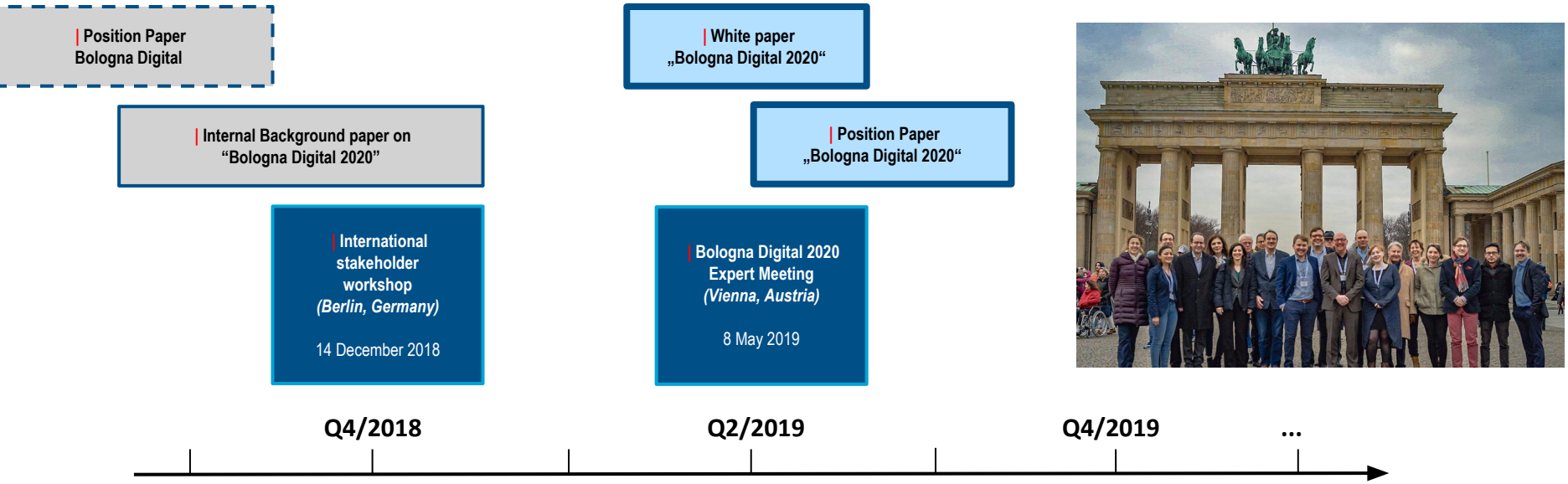
BOLOGNA DIGITAL 2020

1. Exchange of ideas, positions and best practices with **as many stakeholders as possible**, including ministries, EUA, EURASHE, ESU, EQAR, independent initiatives and others.
2. Agreement on common priorities (tbd.)
 - 1) Preparation and admission,
 - 2) Skills for the Digital Age,
 - 3) Virtual exchange and mobility,
 - 4) Recognition of (prior) student learning,
 - 5) Quality assurance,
 - 6) Strategies for teaching and learning.
3. Internal **Background Paper** with guiding questions for each topic
4. **White Paper** and **Position Paper** to follow in mid 2019



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→ **informal network of experts and stakeholders with a shared interest to work on the topic of digitalisation and develop recommendations that can be approached throughout the EHEA**



The image features a hand holding a smartphone in the lower-left corner. A large, semi-transparent yellow pentagon is centered over the phone. Overlaid on the entire scene is a white network diagram consisting of circles and connecting lines. The background is a blurred blue-toned image of a person's face.

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HOCHSCHULFORUM DIGITALISIERUNG

German Forum for Higher Education in the Digital Age



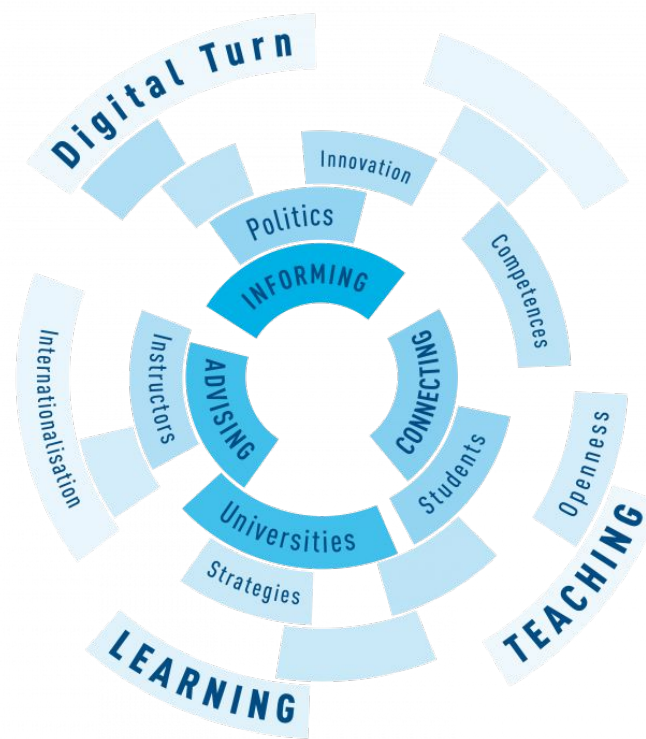
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Hochschulforum Digitalisierung (HFD) orchestrates the discourse on higher education in the digital age.

As an innovation driver, it informs, advises and connects stakeholders from higher education institutions, politics, business and society.

Founded in 2014, HFD is a joint initiative by Stifterverband, CHE Centre for Higher Education and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK).

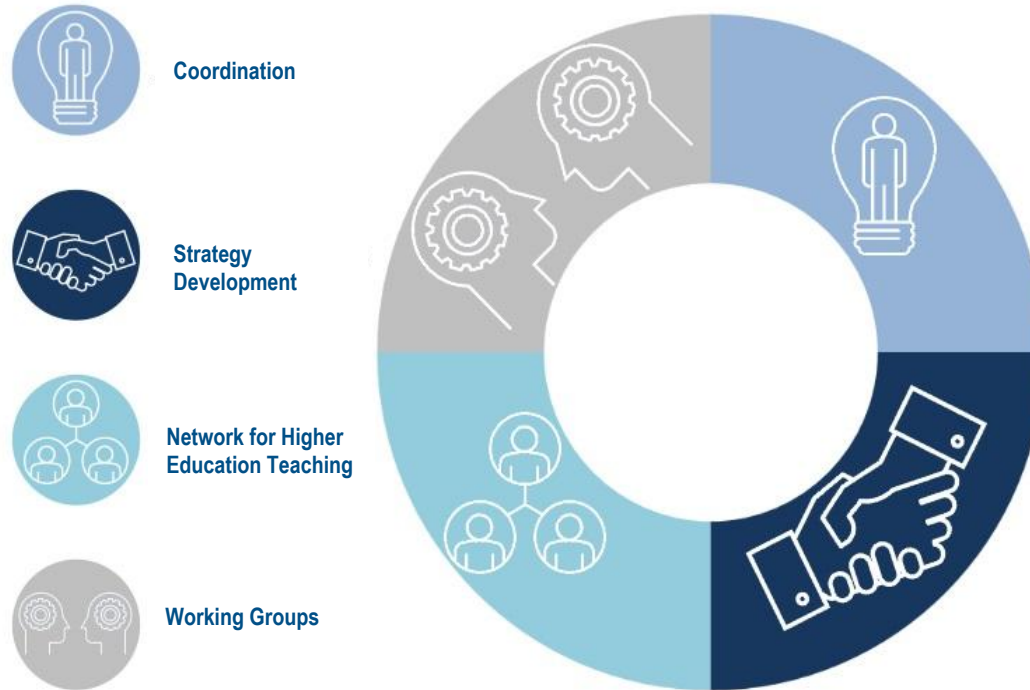
It is financed by Germany's Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).



CORE ACTIVITIES OF HOCHSCHULFORUM DIGITALISIERUNG (HFD)



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The background features a hand holding a stylus over a tablet. A network of white lines and circles is overlaid on the scene, with a large, semi-transparent yellow and orange polygon in the center. The text is centered within this polygon.

Innovative Teaching in the Digital Age

APPRECIATION OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND NETWORKING OF TEACHERS



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There are many innovators amongst higher ed teachers, but they are not visible enough

→ innovative teachers need networking and exchange opportunities as well as appreciation and visibility within their own institutions

There is a high demand amongst teachers for further education and qualification that is not adequately met

→ teachers need (blended) qualification opportunities and support from their institutions

Teaching is not relevant enough for career pathways in higher education

→ teachers need clear career perspectives shaped through their own innovation in teaching (and relevant skill frameworks)



EXAMPLE: APPRECIATION OF (DIGITAL) INNOVATION AT HEIs: PEER CERTIFICATION OF INFORMALLY ACQUIRED COMPETENCIES



| Online platform for recognition of all activities
in the field of innovative teaching

| Sharpening of individual qualification and competence
profiles

| Target group: Teachers and employees
of didactic and support facilities

| Peer evaluation of submitted activities

| Start: February 2019

The image features a hand holding a smartphone in the lower-left corner. Overlaid on the scene is a complex digital graphic. A translucent yellow pentagon is centered, with a network diagram of white circles and lines extending from its vertices. The background is a blurred blue-toned image of a person's face. The text 'Skills for the Digital Age' is prominently displayed in the center of the pentagon.

Skills for the Digital Age

SKILLS FOR THE DIGITAL AGE



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→ We need a process towards “Curricula 4.0”

As a curriculum 4.0, we understand a curriculum that takes up the process of digital transformation in a targeted manner, both at the level of content and the skills and competences to be imparted. (...) We [view] digital change in the context of curriculum development holistically as a technical, didactic and content challenge.”

- Data Literacy, Information & Media Literacy, etc.
- Differentiation between an interdisciplinary set of basic skills and subject-specific skills
- Values and responsibilities (transformative skills)



PLATFORMS FOR SKILLS FOR THE DIGITAL AGE: A (EUROPEAN) HIGHER EDUCATION PLATFORM FOR LIFELONG LEARNING?



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Germany: Feasibility Study for an (Inter-)National Digital Platform for Higher Education Teaching

| **Variant A:** Nationwide networked portal as single access point for all existing platforms and topics

| **Variant B:** Topic-specific portal (e. g. on AI)

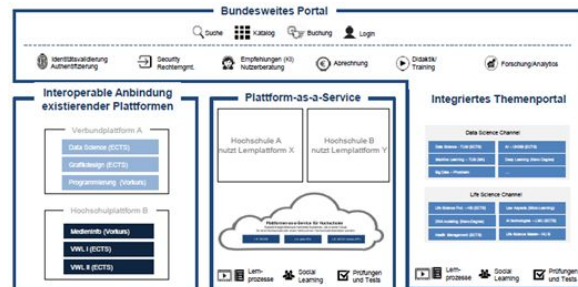
| **Combined Variant C:** Open, interoperable education platform with a nationwide portal and topic-specific channels for HE and lifelong learning.

Europe: Higher Education Hub – Creating an Online Platform for Higher Education

| **An EU-wide online platform** will be created to support Higher Education institutions (HEIs) in using digital technologies

| The online platform will be a **single access point** to existing online platforms and improve dissemination of best practice to all HEIs.

| **Pilots** currently starting within the **Erasmus+ programme** (e. g. [OpenU](#) with [Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne](#))



The background of the image shows a hand holding a smartphone. Overlaid on this is a network diagram consisting of white circles connected by thin white lines. A large, semi-transparent yellow pentagon is centered over the text. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and purples, with a soft bokeh effect in the background.

Strategies for Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age



“[...] the vast majority of institutions confirmed interest and increased demand for more flexible provision of degree and non-degree education. Responses suggest a process of gradual change in the years to come towards more flexible education and digitally-supported learning.”

(Gaebel & Zhang, 2018, p. 32)

“Institutions tend to see digitally-enhanced learning as a strategic element in developing and innovating learning and teaching. Blended learning is very common, whereas the increase in online provision and online degree courses depends primarily on the mission of the institution and the type of learners it addresses.”

(Gaebel & Zhang, 2018, p. 53)

“Institutions seem to embrace more strategic and innovative uses of digital learning. This should provide an opportunity to share experiences and good practices regarding the impact on teaching approaches and curricula, as well as on staff, students, and the organisational structures dedicated to learning and teaching.”

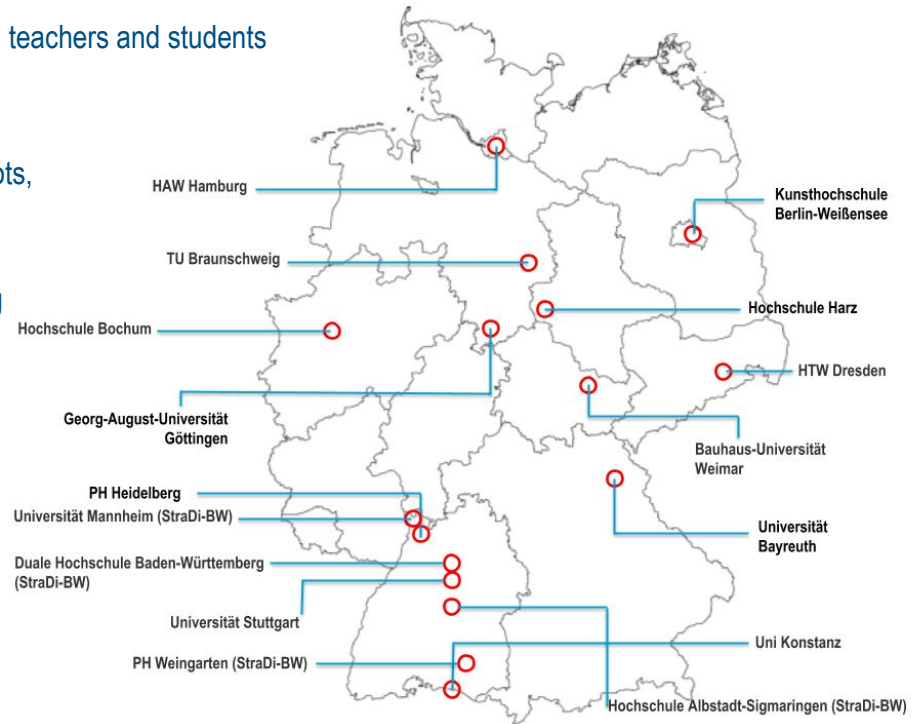
(Gaebel & Zhang, 2018, p. 61)

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE



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- Peer-to-peer strategy counselling organized by HFD for 6 German HEIs/year
- 3-4 peer experts counsel selected HEI, including leadership, teachers and students
- Exchange of good practices is key for many HEIs
- High demand: > 80 HEIs from all “Länder” applied for 12 spots, one state even developed its own additional programme
- Very different states of digitalisation in teaching and learning
But: all claim they need a more strategic approach
- Strategies can have very different levels and shapes
- Different priorities, e.g.
 - Support Structures for Innovative Teaching,
 - Internationalisation through Digitalisation,
 - Campus Management,
 - Lifelong Learning, ...





Learnings

- HEIs need strategic approaches towards teaching and learning in the Digital Age
BUT: There is no one-size-fits-all solution for all HEIs
- HEIs must clearly define their **own profile** and their own understanding and priorities for digitalisation
- Digitalisation must always **serve the broader goals and especially the students of the HEI**
- HEIs especially benefit from the **expertise and good practices** that **other (similar) HEIs** share with them
- **Peer-to-Peer programmes** for HEIs appear to work quite well, but require the strong commitment of the HEI leadership and the participation of **all status groups**



A hand holding a pen is visible on the left side of the image, positioned as if writing on a document. The document is a light-colored, slightly tilted rectangular shape. Overlaid on the document and the background is a network diagram consisting of white circles connected by thin white lines. The background is a blurred image of a person's face, with a blue and purple color palette. The text "Concluding remarks" is centered on the document in a bold, dark blue font.

Concluding remarks



1. Skills and curricula: The digital age requires new but also very “traditional” skills & competencies.

We cannot use the methods, skills and competencies of yesterday to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Teachers and students both need the support of HEIs to develop skills such as data, information and media literacy and to overcome insecurities. Also ethics and values becomes more important in the responsible use of digital media and technologies.

2. Teaching methods: Teaching innovation does often already exist, but needs more appreciation and visibility.

On-campus innovation in teaching should be much more appreciated by HEIs including clear benefits for their professional development. Teachers should also be better supported to network and exchange on their teaching innovations.

3. Teaching methods: Blended learning is the better online learning.

Fully online learning has only shown to be effective for very specific target groups (→ social dimension!), often such that already have completed on-campus higher education degrees. Whenever possible, blended learning formats should shape higher education in the digital age. Digitalisation shall and will not replace (on-campus) human interaction for most learners.



4. Programme and course provision: Lifelong learning will shape the changing provision of study programmes, courses and modules. HEIs need to be ready for this.

In the future, HEIs will still offer full undergraduate and graduate study programs, but increasingly also work with individual courses, modules and short learning programmes that target students of all ages according to their individual needs along their educational and professional biography. HEIs will have to compete with a growing private sector and business interests.

5. Networks and Cooperation: Digital transformation means new opportunities to share and collaborate.

Digital transformation will not lead to the death of traditional HEIs. But the future university will be a networked university, that strongly collaborates and cooperates with other HEIs and also stakeholders outside the HE system. Openness and sharing will guide teaching and learning. All higher education systems in the EHEA should develop networks and platforms to support this.

6. Strategy development: There is no universal “future university”. But HEIs need a strategic approach towards finding out which direction they want to go, at best with support and guidance from peers.

In the future, HEIs will need to sharpen their profiles even more than today. They will need to make clear strategic decisions in order to make best use of digital solutions that benefit their students, their individual profile and their overall goals. A peer-based strategy development process that takes all stakeholders into account can be a suitable option for HEIs.

A hand is shown holding a smartphone. The background is a blurred cityscape. Overlaid on the image is a network diagram consisting of white circles connected by thin white lines. A large, semi-transparent yellow and pinkish-purple polygon is centered over the phone. The word "Contact" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

Contact

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