



Discover HEInnovate: Transforming Higher Education Institutions Webinar

Summary Note



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European
Commission



This Summary Note presents the key messages from the [HEInnovate](#) Information Session, organised on April 10, 2025.

The webinar was presented by representatives of PPMI and the European Commission (DG EAC):

- **Ieva Grumbinaite** – Research Manager, PPMI (Part of Verian Group)
- **Flávia Colus** – Senior Researcher, PPMI (Part of Verian Group)
- **Loredana Lombardi** – Policy Officer, European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC, Unit C.1 – Innovation and EIT)

The presenters provided an overview of the HEInnovate initiative, and focused on three main topics:

- A presentation on the **importance of HEInnovate** and how it fits into European **political priorities**
- An introduction to the tool and its **eight dimensions**
- An introduction to **HEInnovate resources**

There was also an open space for discussions and questions from participants, in which several questions were addressed and future expectations around HEInnovate were discussed.

On 10 April 2025, the HEInnovate Information Session brought together participants from across Europe and beyond to explore how higher education institutions can strengthen their entrepreneurial and innovative capacities. The session opened with a welcome message from Flávia Colus (PPMI), who briefly introduced the objectives of the webinar.

Loredana Lombardi (DG EAC) then placed the HEInnovate initiative within the broader context of EU political priorities. She emphasised the strategic relevance of HEInnovate as a tool to help institutions align more closely with European goals around innovation, entrepreneurship, and institutional transformation.

Following this, Flávia Colus introduced the HEInnovate tool in greater depth. She explained that HEInnovate is a free, online self-assessment platform created by the European Commission in collaboration with the OECD. It is designed to support higher education institutions in identifying their strengths and areas for improvement across eight dimensions of entrepreneurship and innovation. Users of the tool respond to 38 statements using a five-point scale, reflecting the extent to which each statement applies to their institution. The tool facilitates individual or group use and is particularly powerful when integrated into a broader process of institutional reflection and action planning. Importantly, Flávia highlighted that HEInnovate is not intended as a benchmarking instrument and does not support comparison between institutions—rather, it enables internal and longitudinal assessment.

A Mentimeter poll was conducted to assess participants' familiarity with the tool. The responses showed a relatively balanced audience: about half had previously used the tool, while the other half were new users.

Flávia then provided a comprehensive overview of the eight dimensions of HEInnovate:

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Organisational Capacity: People, Resources, Incentives and Rewards
3. Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning
4. Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
5. Digital Transformation and Capability
6. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Networks
7. The Internationalised Institution
8. Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI

Another Mentimeter activity followed, asking participants which of the eight dimensions posed the greatest challenge to their institutions. The responses indicated that 'Leadership and Governance', 'Organisational Capacity', and 'Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI' were the most frequently cited areas for improvement, emphasising common struggles with institutional support structures and the ability to track different indicators of success.

The discussion then shifted to the resources that support the use of HEInnovate. Ieva Grumbinaitė (PPMI) introduced the variety of materials available on the HEInnovate website. These include [guidance notes](#) that clarify each assessment question, [country review](#) reports from the OECD, and [training materials](#) such as manuals, templates, and workshop guides. In addition, users can consult case studies showcasing good practices from higher education institutions related to the HEInnovate dimensions, as well as testimonials from institutions that have used HEInnovate to inform real-world change.

leva drew particular attention to the HEInnovate [Action Cards](#). The cards provide targeted recommendations for action based on 7 different institutional profiles derived from the self-assessment results. Each profile is linked to a specific set of action cards that suggest next steps and strategic improvements, organised by the eight dimensions. Users who complete the self-assessment as registered members are automatically assigned a profile along with the results of their assessment; those who complete it anonymously can manually find their profiles by calculating the scores of each dimension and consulting the Action Cards guide.

A final Mentimeter question asked participants what they expected to gain from using HEInnovate. Most respondents indicated they were seeking a structured framework to guide discussions around innovation and entrepreneurship at their institution.

The session then moved into an open discussion and Q&A, during which Flávia and Ileva addressed a range of questions from participants. These included technical issues such as how to correct institutional names in the tool, how group assessments function, and how to access resources in different languages. Participants also raised broader questions about embedding equality, inclusion, and sustainability within the HEInnovate framework. Flávia clarified that while these are not stand-alone dimensions, they are integrated across the tool's statements in a transversal way.

One participant asked how to mitigate the subjectivity of the self-assessment process. Flávia emphasised the importance of conducting group assessments, involving diverse stakeholders such as students, faculty, and external partners. This collective approach not only enhances the accuracy of results but also fosters meaningful institutional dialogue.

Looking ahead, Flávia outlined upcoming developments for HEInnovate. A major change is the recent appointment of a new expert group, which will support the continuous development of the tool to ensure continued relevance. There are also plans to update existing resources—particularly the Action Cards—to make them more user-friendly, interactive, and suited for both in-person and online formats.

A significant goal moving forward is to strengthen the link between HEInnovate and the [Community for Educational Innovation](#). This community of practice brings together policymakers, practitioners and members of the business sector to promote innovation in education at all levels. It provides a space for participants to share experiences, find support, and participate in webinars, study visits, and training activities.

As the session drew to a close, presenters encouraged participants to stay involved by signing up for the newsletter, submitting good practice case studies and testimonials, and reaching out to the HEInnovate team (info@heinnovate.eu) with any ideas or questions. The next major event is a "Train-the-Trainer" session planned for June 2025, which will equip motivated individuals from institutions with the skills and resources needed to lead HEInnovate-based workshops and assessments at their own institutions.

In conclusion, the HEInnovate Information Session provided a space for participants to learn about the tool, exchange experiences, and prepare for future engagement. The [session slides](#) and the full [Mentimeter results](#) are available for download.