Peer-Learning Activity 2 – Innovative
Towards an innovative EHEA by 2030

During the 2020 Rome Ministerial Conference, ministers for higher education set a vision of building an inclusive, innovative and interconnected European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that is able to underpin a sustainable, cohesive and peaceful Europe, by 2030. To support this process, the BWSE FOR2030 project is conducting three peer-learning activities (PLAs) with the aim to bring together higher education ministries, higher education institutions, students and other relevant stakeholders. The PLAs follow the three related goals outlined in the Rome Communiqué: an 1) inclusive, 2) innovative and 3) inter-connected EHEA.

The purpose of the PLAs is to:
- focus on mutual learning and exchange of practices;
- identify potential solutions for existing barriers to innovation in European higher education;
- gather tangible recommendations to support innovative processes in the Bologna Process in the long term.

The first PLA, entitled "Towards an inclusive EHEA by 2030", took place in February 2023. The second PLA, which will be hosted by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia in Zagreb, Croatia, from 20-21 April 2023, is based on the keyword innovative.

Innovation in and through higher education

The Rome Communiqué states (pp. 4 and 6) that the EHEA member states commit to building an inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA by 2030, able to underpin a sustainable, cohesive and peaceful Europe. The innovative EHEA will introduce new and better aligned learning, teaching and assessment methods and practices, closely linked to research.

Swift updating of knowledge, skills and competences are required to respond to the challenges of the contemporary world and to develop the opportunities that the new decade will bring. Higher education institutions must continue to diversify their learning offer and innovate in terms of content and mode of delivery in order to respond to **growing needs for innovative and critical thinking, emotional intelligence, leadership, teamwork** and **problem solving abilities, as well as enterprising attitudes.**

Flexible and open learning paths, part of the original inspiration for the Bologna Process, are important aspects of student-centred learning and are in increasing demand in our societies. In addition to full degree programmes, many higher education institutions offer or plan to offer smaller units of learning, which enable learners to develop or **update their cultural, professional, and transversal skills and competencies** at various stages in their lives. Innovation in higher education is also visible through smaller, flexible units, including those leading to **micro-credentials**. Higher education institutions have to further implement **student-centred learning and teaching**. The recommendations comprise increased support for all learners, and for teaching and non-teaching staff. Academic staff, including junior academics, require stable employment and career opportunities, parity of esteem for teaching and research, attractive working conditions, access to up-to-date staff development, and recognition of their achievements.

Higher education institutions are required to **use digital technologies** for learning, teaching and assessment, as well as for academic communication and research, and to invest in the development of

digital skills and competencies. The Communiqué expresses EHEA member states' commitment to develop **open science** and education to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and openly licensed materials that can be easily shared among higher education stakeholders, who can adapt and repurpose them for their needs.

PLA programme

The aim of the PLA is to exchange examples of good practice based on existing knowledge, including that generated through other EU projects as well as demand-driven programmes and projects. The PLA will facilitate a practice driven process to 'translate' existing ambitions and policy into sustainable ideas for implementation.

The PLA will facilitate the translation of an innovative EHEA from theory into practice, and support the interpretation of experiences and challenges into strategy and policy. The interactive PLA sessions will be based on knowledge development and the acquisition of skills related to:

- Frameworks and concepts: language, terminology and analysis frameworks associated with innovation in higher education in policy and practice;
- Experience and expertise: exchange of knowledge based on both experience and research;
- Collaboration and creation: collaborative processes to jointly formulate draft policy recommendations.

As the PLA focuses on innovation, the intended learning outcomes for this activity are:

- **Peer-exchange and learning**: Participants will be asked to share their experience from their country and institution as well as which obstacles they are facing in defining and implementing innovative knowledge and skills into practice. The common insights into the obstacles will give a clearer idea on how to overcome them.
- **Policy and practice**: Participants will have gained insights and an understanding of innovative approaches in theory and practice. The Ministry of Science and Education of Croatia will provide some positive examples and practices from Croatia and reflect on challenges and achievements.
- **Ideas for specific contexts**: Participants will have formulated concrete ideas for follow-up steps related to innovation in higher education in their context. This will take place through interactive sessions that focus on critical self-reflection, constructive dialogue and exploring spheres of influence within one's own context.

Programme (as of 14 April 2023)

The event will take place at the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia, Donje Svetice 38, 10 000 Zagreb, Multimedial Hall.

Day 1 – Thursday, 20/04/2023	
09.00 - 09.30	Welcome and Registration
09.30 – 09.45	Opening Introduction of the BWSE FOR2030 project, PLA programme and participants. - **Dijana Mandić**, Director General for Higher Education, Ministry of Science and Education of Croatia - **Helene Peterbauer**, European University Association (EUA) - **Katrina Sproģe**, European Students' Union (ESU) Facilitated by Ana Jerković, Ministry of Science and Education Croatia

09.45 – 10.00	**Tour de Table** The participants will be kindly asked to briefly (max. 1 minute) share their own personal and professional experiences with innovation.
10.00 – 11.00	**Keynote Speech** - **Pauline Ravinet**, Policy Officer, DG EAC, European Commission about how innovation is addressed in the [European Strategy for Universities](#) - **Lidija Tepeš Golubić**, Zagreb University of Applied Sciences, **European Network of Innovative Higher Education Institutions – ENIHEI** on the [Recommendations on Innovation in European Higher Education](#) Q&A
11.00 – 11.30	**Coffee Break**
11.30 – 12.30	**Innovation in Higher Education – the Digital Era and New Skills** Croatian examples and new perspectives on the usage of IT in higher education: - **Predrag Pale, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb –** Innovation and ICT in Higher Education, Member of the educational technology research group at the University of Zagreb whose interests are related to using ICT in education. - **Tihomir Markulin, CARNET – Projects e-Universities and BrAIn** - Croatian academic and research network – CARNET implements the e-Universities and BrAIn projects with the aim of digital transformation of higher education in Croatia as well as implementation of artificial intelligence into the higher education system. - **Berta Paz Lourido, Director of European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education, President of ApSU Association, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain and Alvaro Ribeiro, European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education -** Service-Learning (SL) as an Innovative Pedagogy Q&A
12.30 – 13.30	**Lunch break**
13.30 – 14.30	**Innovation of the Bologna Process and how to Foster Innovation** In this session, participants will be asked to share information about and experience with policies for innovative education formats that are in place in their country/context, followed by a discussion about the challenges and opportunities to implement innovation in the higher education system across the EHEA. The focus will be particularly on: - AI / digitalization in Higher Education - Flexible Learning Paths

	– Open science Facilitated by Helene Peterbauer, European University Association (EUA)
14.30–15.00	Transfer to site visit
15.00–16.00	**Site visit – Company Rimac Automobili (part of Bugatti Rimac within the Rimac Group)** Rimac Automobili is a technology powerhouse manufacturing electric hypercars and providing full technology solutions to global automotive manufacturers. Along with the visit to the premises, we will hear the concept behind this successful business and vision on how to connect education, science, technology and innovation. The company employs numerous engineers who acquired their knowledge at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture of Zagreb and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology of Osijek, who developed study programs and a long-term cooperation with the company as a result of smart specialization and innovative approach to teaching and learning.
16.00–16.15	Closing of Day 1
16.15–16.45	Transfer to Bus Station
Free time	
19.00	**Visit to the Museum of Illusions, Ilica 72** The Museum of Illusions was founded by two Croatians and their company Metamorfoza in 2015, with the goal of edutainment, offering visitors a mix of education and entertainment, interactive and photogenic exhibits and rooms of illusion. It has expanded rapidly, operating at 35 locations around the world, including Toronto, New York, Dubai, Chicago, Athens, Vienna, Paris, Madrid, Istanbul etc. It has become the largest chain of private museums in the world. Combining education and entertainment proved to be a success for students, adventurers and young people by challenging their mind, logic and creative thinking as well as attracting them to culture.

Day 2 – Friday, 21/04/2023	
09.00 – 09.30	Welcome Coffee
09.40 – 10.15	**Building links between business, research and academia** – Prof Nikola Godinović phD, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture (FESB), University of Split – International Cooperation of FESB and CERN – the European Organization for Nuclear Research. As a result of the cooperation between FESB with CERN, more than 1,100 scientific papers have been published, many

	doctorates were obtained, and the Faculty started designing chips for the new generation of detectors in CERN. - **Prof Danijel Topić, Vice-Dean for Teaching, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology (FERIT), University of Osijek -** FERIT: Innovative Study Programs based on the needs of industry Q&A Facilitated by Ana Jerković, Ministry of Science and Education Croatia
10.15 – 11.15	**Think Tank – Bringing innovative education to the next level** A brainstorm activity to develop ideas for policy improvement and development at the institutional, national and EHEA level, with the aim to encourage and support innovation in higher education. Faciliated by Katrīna Sproģe (ESU) and Helene Peterbauer (EUA)
11.15 – 11.45	Coffee break
11.45 – 12.45	**Towards shared recommendations** In this session, participants will build upon the input from the previous Think Tank exercise to work towards a shared vision for the policy recommendations. Facilitated by Helene Peterbauer (EUA)
12.45 – 13.00	Wrap-up and Final Reflections
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.00	*BWSE FOR2030 project consortium meeting (upon separate invitation)*