

# Input to the European Teacher Agenda

Strengthening  
International  
Learning Mobility  
for Teachers and  
Teacher  
Educators



european  
federation for  
intercultural  
learning aisbl



**ATEE**

Association for Teacher Education in Europe

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The Teacher Agenda proposed by the European Commission sees internationalisation of schools as a way to make the teaching profession more attractive. **The internationalisation of schools depends not only on mobility opportunities for teachers and pupils, but also on the international openness and quality of teacher education.**

EFIL and ATEE have worked together since 2020 to look at how teachers can improve their competences for internationalisation, particularly, in relation to supporting effectively long-term pupil mobility. This cooperation brings together EFIL's experience of pupil mobility and ATEE's European network and expertise in initial and continuing teacher education, with a focus on internationalisation and global education.

This year, ATEE celebrated its 50th anniversary with a conference on 'Crossing Borders in Teacher Education.' The conference also included some sessions on mobility programmes for teachers. These discussions enabled EFIL and ATEE to gather **perspectives from experienced teacher educators working in different education systems** and combine them with their joint knowledge of both mobility of school students and international opportunities in teacher education. The discussions also demonstrated **the value of mobility for teacher educators** themselves. First-hand experience of other education systems enables them to compare approaches, reflect on their own practice, develop an international workplace curriculum and introduce an international perspective into the programmes they deliver.

Teacher education (TE) should be understood broadly as encompassing the initial preparation of teachers, continuing professional development and learning throughout their careers, as well as the education and professional development of teacher educators. This broad perspective acknowledges **teacher education as a lifelong process** that supports teachers and teacher educators in responding to changing educational, social and global contexts.

**Teacher education should be recognised as a strategic component of the Teacher Agenda,** rather than solely as a preparatory stage. Its quality influences whether future teachers are able to respond to diversity, support pupil mobility and integrate international learning into everyday school practice, while also fostering a lifelong learning approach to professional development.

**EFIL and ATEE recommend that:**

- **learning mobility opportunities for future teachers should be provided to all in initial teacher education for four main reasons:**
  - Like compulsory school for students, initial teacher education is where all teachers can be found.
  - By starting with an international perspective at the early stage of their careers, teachers can develop their intercultural competence and embed internationalisation across their teaching practice in a consistent and sustainable way.

- By experiencing a learning mobility, teachers learn to manage the vulnerability which is part of their profession and develop the key skill of resilience, questioning and tolerance of ambiguity.
- This is the best period for their career to be mobile, as they are likely not to have personal and professional responsibilities.
- Learning mobility should also be fostered in **Continuous Professional Development** for both teachers and teacher educators, with a particular focus on boosting motivation, updating professional knowledge and strengthening intercultural competence at different stages of their careers,
- Short mobility formats 1-2 weeks can make **learning mobility accessible to a wider range of teachers and teacher educators**. The new Erasmus+ action BIPs - blended intensive programmes - are a good initiative in this sense. Other Erasmus+ actions, including Actions 1.3.1 and 1.7.1, could also provide valuable opportunities to support short-term mobility and professional development in teacher education.
- Participation in learning mobility should be recognised in **career progression** and, where appropriate, salary frameworks. It should also support the recognition of teachers' competences and qualifications when they seek to work in another country.
- The funding available for teacher education allows for **partnerships between formal education institutions** (universities, teacher training colleges, schools) and **civil society organisations expert in learning mobility and internationalisation**.

Efforts to identify mobility windows for longer teacher mobility have proved to be difficult due to the differences between national and regional school calendars. These practical difficulties demonstrate **the need for stronger coordination** between education authorities, schools and teacher education institutions across countries. We therefore recommend that EU and national policies initially prioritise **accessible short-term learning mobility programmes for teachers and teacher educators**, while continuing to explore conditions for longer mobility.