



European  
Commission

# Teachers in Europe

## Careers, Development and Well-being

### Eurydice Report



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**Luxembourg : Publications Office of the European Union, 2021**

PRINT	ISBN 978-92-9484-396-8	doi:10.2797/915152	EC-02-21-059-EN-C
PDF	ISBN 978-92-9484-395-1	doi:10.2797/997402	EC-02-21-059-EN-N

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# Teachers in Europe

Careers, Development and Well-being

Eurydice Report

This document is published by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA, Education and Youth Policy Analysis).

**Please cite this publication as:**

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2021. *Teachers in Europe: Careers, Development and Well-being*. Eurydice report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Text completed in March 2021.

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## FOREWORD

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Teachers are the front-line workers in education. Having motivated teachers is one of the essential prerequisites of a successful education system in which students from different backgrounds can flourish and reach their full potential. The transition from face-to-face to distance learning due to the global health crisis has further underlined the vital role of teachers in providing all students with equal and quality learning opportunities.

This crisis has shown the strengths of our education systems, but also weaknesses, and has taught us important lessons on how to adapt to the current context. The crisis required us to improve digital education and equip teachers with relevant and adequate skills. The crisis has also stressed the need to invest in joint efforts and further reinforce the amazing spirit of our education community across Europe. The more we cooperate, the more we can create new exciting opportunities. Among such opportunities are the Erasmus Teacher Academies and eTwinning, and teachers are essential for both initiatives. Erasmus Teacher Academies create communities of practice, notably on initial teacher education and continuous professional development, while eTwinning is a community in which teachers can learn how to adopt innovative teaching methods and support students while at home.

Our Communication on *achieving the European Education Area by 2025* puts teachers at the heart of education. We proposed concrete measures, such as a revised learning mobility framework enabling teachers to overcome obstacles and benefit from travelling abroad for learning purposes when COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted. The Commission also plans to develop a European guidance tool for the development of national career frameworks that support teachers' career progression.

This new report examines the key policy issues that have an impact on lower secondary teachers across Europe. The report connects qualitative Eurydice data on national policies and legislation with quantitative data from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) on practices and perceptions of teachers. The analysis illustrates how national policies and regulations can contribute to enhancing and supporting the teaching profession.

I am confident that this report will be a great help to education policy makers and other stakeholders at national and European level. I hope that it will inspire and support the EU Member States to exchange best practices, to learn from each other and to work towards a strong and effective European Education Area.

Mariya Gabriel

Commissioner responsible for  
Innovation, Research, Culture,  
Education and Youth

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## CODES AND ABBREVIATIONS

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### Country codes

<b>EU</b>	European Union	<b>CY</b>	Cyprus	<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>BE</b>	Belgium	<b>LV</b>	Latvia	<b>UK-ENG</b>	England
<b>BE fr</b>	Belgium – French Community	<b>LT</b>	Lithuania	<b>UK-WLS</b>	Wales
<b>BE de</b>	Belgium – German-speaking Community	<b>LU</b>	Luxembourg	<b>UK-NIR</b>	Northern Ireland
<b>BE nl</b>	Belgium – Flemish Community	<b>HU</b>	Hungary	<b>UK-SCT</b>	Scotland
<b>BG</b>	Bulgaria	<b>MT</b>	Malta	<b>EEA and candidate countries</b>	
<b>CZ</b>	Czechia	<b>NL</b>	Netherlands	<b>AL</b>	Albania
<b>DK</b>	Denmark	<b>AT</b>	Austria	<b>BA</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>DE</b>	Germany	<b>PL</b>	Poland	<b>CH</b>	Switzerland
<b>EE</b>	Estonia	<b>PT</b>	Portugal	<b>IS</b>	Iceland
<b>IE</b>	Ireland	<b>RO</b>	Romania	<b>LI</b>	Liechtenstein
<b>EL</b>	Greece	<b>SI</b>	Slovenia	<b>ME</b>	Montenegro
<b>ES</b>	Spain	<b>SK</b>	Slovakia	<b>MK</b>	North Macedonia
<b>FR</b>	France	<b>FI</b>	Finland	<b>NO</b>	Norway
<b>HR</b>	Croatia	<b>SE</b>	Sweden	<b>RS</b>	Serbia
<b>IT</b>	Italy			<b>TR</b>	Turkey

### Statistics

(:)	Data not available
(–)	Not applicable or zero

### Abbreviations and acronyms

#### International conventions

<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
<b>EQF</b>	European Qualification Framework
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institutions
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>ISCED</b>	International Standard Classification of Education (see the glossary)
<b>ITE</b>	Initial Teacher Education

#### National abbreviations in their language of origin

<b>AHS</b>	<i>Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule</i>	<b>AT</b>
<b>GCSE</b>	<i>General Certificate of Secondary Education</i>	<b>UK-ENG/WLS/NIR</b>
<b>HAVO</b>	<i>Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs</i>	<b>NL</b>
<b>NMS</b>	<i>Neue Mittelschule</i>	<b>AT</b>
<b>PGCE</b>	<i>Postgraduate Certificate in Education</i>	<b>UK-ENG/WLS/NIR</b>
<b>VMBO</b>	<i>Vorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs</i>	<b>NL</b>
<b>VWO</b>	<i>Vorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs</i>	<b>NL</b>
<b>ZŠ/G</b>	<i>Základní škola/Gymnázium</i>	<b>CZ</b>

## CHAPTER 5: TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY

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Developing the transnational mobility of teachers for professional development purposes has been a long-standing priority of the European Union. In 2009, the Council of the European Union's conclusions on the professional development of teachers and school leaders highlighted the need to gradually expand transnational mobility, notably for teachers, with a 'view to making periods of learning abroad – both within Europe and the wider world – the rule rather than the exception' (1). Strengthening the intensity and scale of the mobility of school staff is necessary to improve the quality of school education in the EU. This was an aim of the 2014-2020 Erasmus+ programme: the EU's programme for education, training, youth and sport (2). Despite the halt to transnational mobility programmes in Europe due to COVID-19, the May 2020 Council conclusions on 'European teachers and trainers for the future' emphasised that transnational mobility of students and practising teachers is a key element for the quality of education and training institutions (3).

Transnational mobility of teachers is important for several reasons, as revealed by several studies on the impact of teachers' participation in EU-funded or national programmes involving a professional experience abroad. For those involved, the experience offers first-hand contact with a different education system, in which teaching approaches and organisation may differ (European Parliament, 2008). It is a unique opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own ways of teaching (Maiworm et al., 2010) and to exchange views about their experiences of national curricula, student assessment, use of pedagogical tools, autonomy, and working conditions with colleagues abroad (European Commission, 2012). Transnational mobility may also help teachers overcome scepticism towards other teaching methods or strategies, by providing them with a direct opportunity to observe the impact of these strategies on students. This experience may, in turn, motivate them to gain fresh skills and participate in continuing professional development (European Parliament, 2008). Finally, working visits by teachers to a country whose main language is not their mother tongue is likely to help them improve their language skills (Maiworm et al., 2010), which is of special importance to those teaching modern foreign languages.

Students may also benefit from transnational teacher mobility, as teachers are motivated to improve their teaching style and impart a more European or international dimension to learning at school (Education Exchanges Support Foundation, 2017). Increased teacher's openness to Europe resulting from mobility can be of particular importance to students unable to travel abroad on their own (European Parliament, 2008).

This chapter examines transnational mobility for professional purposes of teachers in lower secondary education (ISCED 2). Mobility is defined here as physical mobility for professional purposes to a country other than the country of residence, either during initial teacher education (ITE) or as a practising teacher. Private mobility – such as holiday travel abroad for non-professional purposes – is not taken into account here.

In this chapter, TALIS data is used for the findings on transnational teacher mobility for the year 2018, while for the school year 2019/20 Eurydice data is used. Both are evaluated in the light of the COVID-19 crisis, which has heavily affected travel in Europe since March 2020. Future mobility possibilities are not yet fully clear, and it remains uncertain whether mobility will one day be back to pre-COVID-19 levels again. Although the transnational mobility of teachers remains a policy priority at EU level, the

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(1) OJ C 119, 28.05.2009, p. 3.

(2) Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 52.

(3) Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020.

trends examined in this chapter might be affected in the coming years by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This chapter contains information on the overall mobility of lower secondary teachers and examines their participation during specific periods (as a student teacher or as a practising teacher). The results suggest that experiencing mobility as a student teacher is related with higher mobility as a practising teacher. This chapter examines the main reasons why teachers go abroad for professional purposes, and looks at the influence of the subject(s) taught on mobility rates. It reveals that mobility increased from 2013 to 2018 and shows that the main patterns observed in TALIS 2013 have continued. The chapter briefly describes the existing mobility schemes which are available at EU level or organised by national or regional authorities. Annex I.5 lists the centrally funded schemes supporting transnational mobility of teachers. The main findings are summarised at the end of this chapter.

The TALIS 2018 survey covers 27 European countries/regions, including 24 EU Member States/regions. However, two EU Member States – Lithuania and Austria – as well as Norway, did not respond to the questions on transnational mobility. As a result, the TALIS data used in this chapter covers 24 European countries/regions while the EU levels are calculated on the basis of 22 EU Member States/regions.

### **5.1. Mobility rates of lower secondary teachers**

Survey data provides useful information about transnational teacher mobility in Europe. The TALIS 2018 questionnaire included the following question on teacher mobility: 'Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education/training?' This section provides an overview of teachers' participation rates in 2018 and a comparison with TALIS 2013 data.

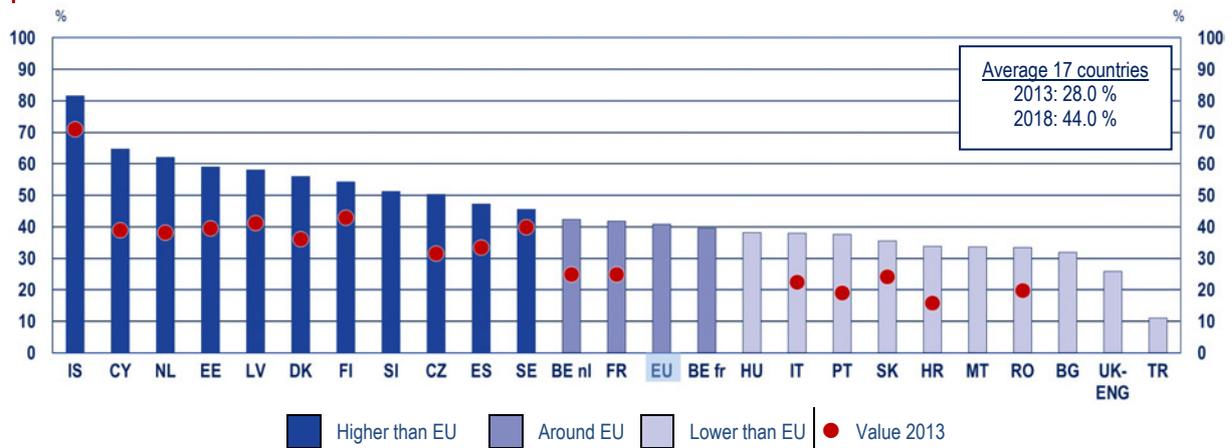
The Council conclusions on 'European teachers and trainers for the future' emphasised cross-border mobility as 'a powerful learning experience and a valuable opportunity in developing participants' social, intercultural, multilingual and interpersonal competences', both for students and practising teachers <sup>(4)</sup>. However, fewer than half the teachers in Europe have experienced transnational mobility. As shown in Figure 5.1, 40.9 % of teachers in the EU went abroad at least once as a student, as a teacher, or both. In almost two thirds of the participating countries/regions <sup>(5)</sup>, only a minority of teachers have been mobile. The proportion of mobile teachers is lowest in Turkey, where only 11.0 % of teachers have ever been abroad as a practising teacher or during ITE. The United Kingdom (England) is the country with the second-lowest rate of transnational mobility for teachers, with only a quarter having experienced transnational mobility.

Teacher mobility is above the EU level in the Nordic and Baltic countries, Czechia, Cyprus, Spain, the Netherlands and Slovenia. It is exceptionally high in Iceland, where over 80 % of teachers have gone abroad, as well as in Cyprus and the Netherlands, where almost two thirds have done so.

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<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 13.

<sup>(5)</sup> Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Bulgaria, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, the United Kingdom (England) and Turkey.

**Figure 5.1: Proportion of lower secondary education teachers who have been abroad, in 2018 and in 2013**

	IS	CY	NL	EE	LV	DK	FI	SI	CZ	ES	SE	BE nl	FR
2018	81.6	64.8	62.0	59.0	58.0	55.9	54.2	51.2	50.4	47.2	45.7	42.4	41.8
2013	71.0	38.9	38.2	39.5	41.2	36.0	42.9		31.5	33.4	39.9	24.9	24.9
	EU	BE fr	HU	IT	PT	SK	HR	MT	RO	BG	UK-ENG	TR	
2018	40.9	39.5	38.2	38.0	37.7	35.5	33.8	33.7	33.4	32.0	25.9	11.0	
2013				22.5	19.0	24.2	15.8		19.8				

Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Tables 5.1 and 5.4 in Annex II).

#### Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to questions 56 of TALIS 2018 and 48 of TALIS 2013: 'Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education/training?'

The lengths of the bars and the positions of the red circles show the proportion of teachers who answered 'yes' to at least one of the mobility situations (sub-questions a-e in 2018 and b-f in 2013 respectively). The data is arranged in descending order of teacher mobility rate in 2018. The intensity of the bar colour indicates statistically significant differences from the EU value in 2018.

EU level refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated to the TALIS survey in 2018, except Lithuania and Austria. It includes UK-ENG.

Comparison of the data from the TALIS 2013 and 2018 surveys reveals that teacher mobility has increased in all countries. In European countries, the proportion of teachers who had been abroad was 16.0 percentage points higher in 2018 than in 2013, rising from 28.0 % to 44.0 % (see Table 5.4). This comparison is based on the 17 countries/regions<sup>(6)</sup> that responded to the questions on transnational mobility in both rounds of the TALIS survey<sup>(7)</sup>, including one non-EU Member State (Iceland).

Teacher mobility increased in all the 17 countries that responded to the mobility questions in both 2013 and 2018 (see Table 5.4 in Annex II). Even in Iceland, which already had the highest mobility rate of teachers in 2013 (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015), teachers' transnational mobility increased by 10.6 percentage points. The greatest increase was in Cyprus, with a rise of 25.9 percentage points. The lowest increase was in Sweden, with only 5.8 percentage points more in 2018 compared to 2013.

<sup>(6)</sup> Belgium (Flemish Community), Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Finland, Slovakia, Sweden and Iceland.

<sup>(7)</sup> Regarding the validity of the comparison, readers should know that the questions on mobility were slightly different between 2013 and 2018. In 2013, the questions on mobility were introduced by a filtering question (Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education/training: yes/no) while in 2018 there was no filtering question. Despite this difference in the mobility questions between 2013 and 2018, and although the impact of this difference is unknown, it can nevertheless be assumed that the increase is not due solely to the changes in the questionnaire.

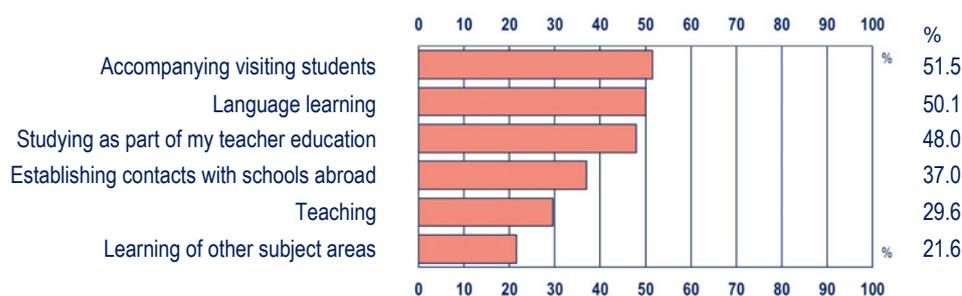
## 5.2. Purposes of transnational teacher mobility

This section explores the purposes for which student teachers and practicing teachers spent periods in another country. Figure 5.2 shows the proportions of transnationally mobile teachers by type of professional reason for going abroad. In the TALIS 2018 questionnaire, mobile teachers were asked to provide as many answers as seemed necessary.

‘Accompanying visiting students’, ‘language learning’ and ‘studying as part of my teacher education’ are the three most common reasons for going abroad, each reported by around half of the mobile teachers. ‘Accompanying visiting students’ was indicated by 51.5 % of mobile teachers in the EU. The proportion of teachers who indicated that they went abroad for this purpose is highest in Czechia, France and Portugal, and exceeds the EU level by twenty percentage points or more (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

Learning languages is also one of the most common motivations, with 50.1 % of mobile teachers in the EU stating that they went abroad for this reason. The same was also reportedly the case for almost three quarters of mobile teachers in Spain and Italy (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

**Figure 5.2: Proportion of mobile teachers in lower secondary education by professional reasons for going abroad, EU level, 2018**



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

### Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to question 57 of TALIS 2018: 'Were the following activities professional purposes of your visits abroad?'

Mobile teachers are those who ticked 'yes' to at least one of the sub-questions (a-e) of question 56.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated to the TALIS survey in 2018, except Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Bulgaria, Lithuania and Austria. It includes UK-ENG.

Studying abroad as part of teacher education was mentioned by 48.0 % of mobile teachers in the EU. These proportions exceed the EU level by at least 10 percentage points in Estonia, Spain, Italy and Cyprus (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

Establishing contacts with schools abroad is a preparatory phase in organising cooperation between schools or visits by students to a school abroad. Visiting schools abroad generally involves teachers and students in a medium-term project, in which the visit is a small part of a longer period of physical or virtual student mobility, often using digital technologies. At EU level, 37.0 % of mobile teachers said they went abroad to establish contacts with schools, while over half the mobile teachers in Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Finland gave this as a reason for doing having gone abroad (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

Only 29.6 % of mobile teachers in the EU gave 'teaching abroad' as a reason for mobility. 'Teaching abroad' was most commonly given as the reason for mobility in Romania (indicated by 56.6 % of mobile teachers). Moreover, Romania is the only country where mobility for the purpose of teaching abroad came second behind 'establishing contact with schools abroad' (63.4 % of teachers). The mobility pattern for Romania is thus highly unique.

Finally, travelling abroad to learn about other subjects is the least common reason for mobility, with only 21.6 % of mobile teachers in the EU reporting that they went abroad for this purpose. In Turkey, which has the lowest teacher mobility rate in Europe (see Figure 5.1), learning about other subjects is the first reason for going abroad, with 69.4 % of mobile teachers giving this as a reason for doing so.

As highlighted by several studies on the impact of European programmes, professional development opportunities abroad are highly beneficial for the improvement of school staff competences (Education Exchanges Support Foundation, 2017; Maiwrom et al., 2010). Unfortunately, apart from language learning and learning other subjects, the TALIS 2018 data does not explore forms of mobility that focus on professional development such as training courses, seminars/conferences or job-shadowing. This might explain why a substantial share of mobile teachers (43.9 %) reported that the main reason for at least one of their professional trips abroad did not match any of the options in the TALIS 2018 questionnaire (see Table 5.7 in Annex II).

The comparison with TALIS data 2013 (see European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015) reveals that the pattern of purposes for teachers' transnational mobility remained steady over time. The ranking from the most to the least common reasons why teachers go abroad for professional purposes is very similar in 2013 and 2018, despite the increase in teacher mobility in all countries (see Figure 5.1).

### 5.3. Influence of the subject taught

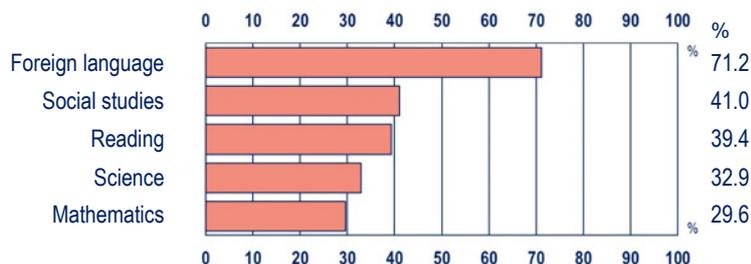
The transnational mobility of teachers may depend on the nature of the subject(s) taught. This section provides the mobility rates of teachers across five main subjects: foreign languages, social studies, reading, science and mathematics.

In the EU, about 70 % of modern foreign language teachers have been abroad (see Figure 5.3). They are the most mobile compared to teachers of the other four main subjects represented in Figure 5.3. Modern foreign language teachers are the most mobile in all countries except in Iceland, where the exceptionally high mobility rate of teachers (see Figure 5.1) is reflected to a similar extent in all subjects (see Table 5.6 in Annex II). Modern foreign language teachers obviously need to train and practice the language they teach. Therefore, for foreign language teachers more than for those of other subjects, transnational mobility seems to be a professional need. The purposes of periods spent abroad by foreign language teachers differ to some extent from those of teachers of other subjects. The most common reason for a professional trip abroad that foreign language teachers expressed was 'language learning' (see Table 5.2 in Annex II). This was cited almost twice as much as by teachers of other subjects (76.3 against 38.1 %). 'Studying as part of teacher education', the second most cited reason for foreign language teachers' mobility, was also substantially higher than for teachers of other subjects (66.8 against 39.4 %). Finally, 'accompanying visiting students' is only the third most cited reason by foreign language teachers for their trips abroad, while for teachers of other subjects it is the most common reason.

On the other hand, almost 30 % of modern foreign language teachers surveyed in the EU have never been abroad for professional purposes (see Figure 5.3), which may have a bearing on the quality of foreign language teaching. In Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, more than half of foreign language teachers have never been abroad for professional purposes (see Table 5.6 in Annex II).

After language teachers, the next most mobile groups of teachers by subject are teachers of social studies followed by teachers of reading, writing and literature. About 40 % of these two groups have been abroad for professional purposes.

**Figure 5.3: Proportion of teachers in lower secondary education who have been abroad for professional purposes by subject taught, EU level, 2018**



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 5.6 in Annex II).

#### **Explanatory notes**

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to questions 15 and 56 of TALIS 2018: 'Do you teach the following subject categories in the current school year?' and 'Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education or training?'.  
The lengths of the bars show the proportion of teachers who reported teaching one or more than one subject (answer options a-e) and answered 'yes' to at least one of the mobility questions (sub-questions a-e).

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated to the TALIS survey in 2018, except Lithuania and Austria. It includes UK-ENG.

Teachers of science and of mathematics are the least transnationally mobile groups in the EU compared with the main subjects analysed here. Respectively, only 32.9 % and 29.6 % reported that they had been abroad for professional purposes.

In the EU, teachers of all the other subjects examined are less mobile compared to foreign language teachers. This was already the case in 2013 (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015). However, while mobility represents an obvious benefit for language teachers, teachers of other subjects can also gain from a professional trip abroad. For instance, in addition to linguistic skills, professional trips abroad have been found to improve openness to change as well as intercultural and didactical competences (Education Exchanges Support Foundation, 2017).

#### **5.4. Periods of transnational mobility during teachers' careers**

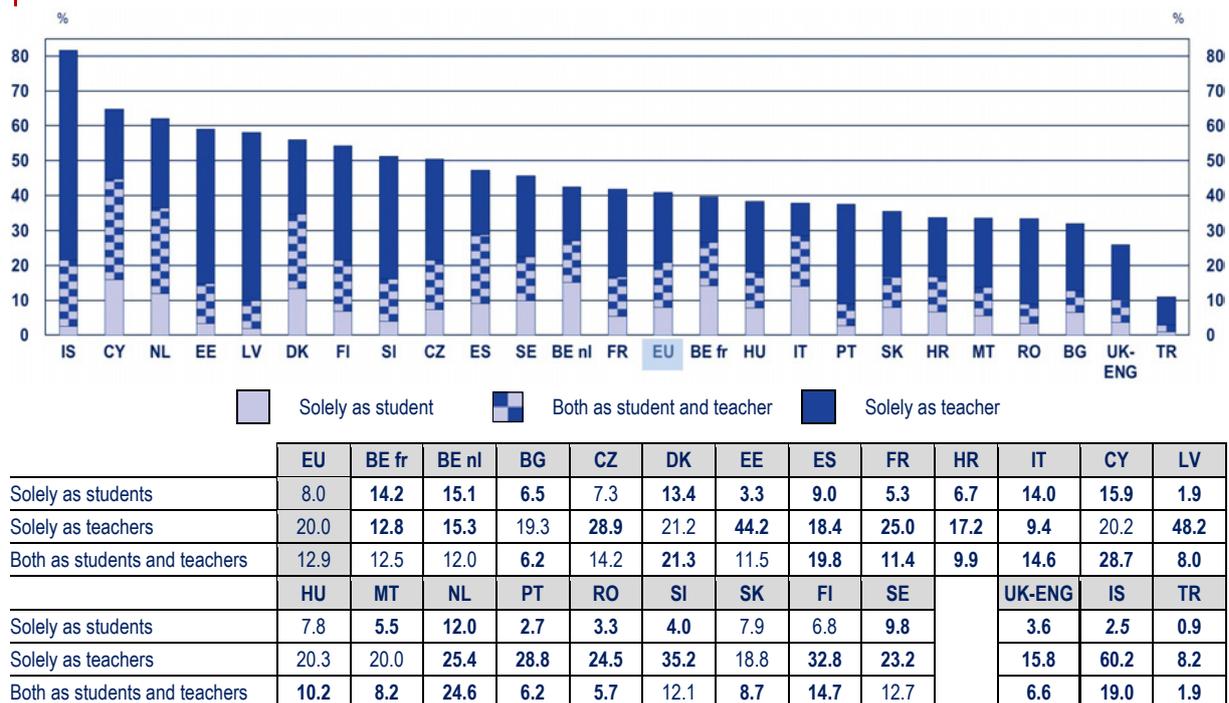
The TALIS 2018 survey asked respondents to specify whether their transnational mobility experience took place during their ITE studies and/or as in-service teachers. As underlined by the Council conclusions, the mobility of both students and practising teachers should be encouraged, and the obstacles to their participation should be removed. Student teacher mobility is hampered by 'the weak international dimension of initial teacher education programmes and challenges related to the recognition of mobility periods abroad and learning outcomes' <sup>(8)</sup>. Furthermore, the additional costs of studying abroad are often identified as a main barrier to student learning mobility (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020b). In addition, there are also issues related to the portability of domestic grants and loans when students study abroad (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019c). Finding replacements for teachers who go abroad has been identified as one of the main obstacles to transnational mobility faced by schools, due to the lack of means for hiring substitute teachers (European Parliament, 2008; European Commission, 2012). Family responsibilities are also reported to be a recurrent obstacle, especially for long-term periods abroad (European Commission, 2013b). On top of all this, both prospective and practising teachers need to have already gained sufficient language skills to be able to spend a period abroad for professional purposes.

<sup>(8)</sup> Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, pp. 13-19.

As barriers to the mobility of students and practising teachers vary and require different measures, this section looks into the mobility situation of each. It also analyses the relationship between mobility as a student and mobility as a teacher.

International mobility as part of initial teacher education is important in order to ‘broaden the access to the diversity of quality teaching approaches to meet the needs of pupils’, as emphasised in the recent Communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025<sup>(9)</sup>. However, transnational mobility of prospective teachers during their studies is not widespread. In 2018, in the EU, about one fifth of teachers (20.9 %) reported going abroad during their studies (see Figure 5.4). Moreover, the mobility of student teachers varies substantially between different countries. In Cyprus, almost half of teachers spent time abroad during their studies, and in Denmark and the Netherlands, slightly over a third of teachers participated in an international mobility experience as students. In contrast, only around 10 % or less of teachers in Latvia, Portugal, Romania, the United Kingdom (England) and Turkey went abroad during their studies. From 2013 to 2018, student teacher mobility increased by 13.0 percentage points across the countries with available data (see Table 5.4). The increase ranges from +27.6 percentage points in Cyprus to approximately +5 percentage points in Latvia, Portugal and Romania.

**Figure 5.4: Proportion of lower secondary education teachers who have been abroad at different periods (during ITE and/or as practising teachers), 2018**



Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 5.3 in Annex II).

### Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to question 56 of TALIS 2018: 'Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education/training?'

The lengths of each of the three colours in the bars show the proportion of teachers who answered: for light blue 'yes' to sub-question a and no to sub-questions b-e, for dark blue 'no' to sub-question a and 'yes' to any of the sub-questions b-e, and for the chequered part 'yes' to sub-question a and 'yes' to any of the sub-questions b-e. Data is arranged in descending order of total teacher mobility rate in 2018. The use of bold in the table indicates statistically significant differences from the EU value.

EU level refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated to the TALIS survey in 2018, except Lithuania and Austria. It includes UK-ENG.

<sup>(9)</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'on achieving the European Education Area by 2025'. 30.09.2020 COM(2020) 625 final, p. 10.

In the EU, approximately one third of practising teachers (32.9 %) have been abroad for professional purposes (see Figure 5.4). There are some variations across countries. In Iceland, where teachers are the most mobile in all of Europe (see Figure 5.1), 79.2 % went abroad during their career. Around half of the teachers in Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Finland experienced a trip abroad while they were in service. The lowest rates of teachers' transnational mobility during their career, below the EU level, are in Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Malta, Slovakia, the United Kingdom (England) and Turkey. The mobility of in-service teachers increased by 11.2 percentage points (see Table 5.4 in Annex II). It increased the most in the Netherlands (+21.1 percentage points), whereas the slowest developments were observed in Italy (+5.1) and Sweden (+4.7).

From Figure 5.4 it is clear that in all countries, a proportion of teachers were mobile both during their studies and as a practising teacher. In the EU, 12.9 % of teachers went abroad as both student and teachers.

In order to explore which characteristics contribute to teacher mobility, logistic regression analyses were performed on TALIS 2018 data. The model aimed to predict the probability of being a mobile (versus non-mobile) practising teacher. Two independent (or 'explanatory') variables were included: having been mobile during ITE, and teaching the subject 'foreign languages'. The results (see Table 5.5 in Annex II) show a statistically significant and positive relationship between mobility during ITE and mobility later in a teacher's career. This relationship holds for foreign language teachers and for teachers of other subjects alike. Teachers who were mobile during their ITE tend to be more mobile as practising teachers, both at EU level, and in all 24 European countries included in the analysis. Reinforcing student teacher mobility is therefore important not only due to the added value this experience brings to young people but also because mobility as a student is associated with being mobile later as a teacher.

When controlled for mobility during ITE, foreign language teachers tend to be more mobile in all European countries, except Cyprus and Iceland.

## **5.5. Transnational mobility funding programmes**

This section looks at funding schemes that promote the transnational mobility of teachers. First, it discusses the countries that support transnational mobility with national schemes. Then, it provides information on the proportion of mobile teachers who have been abroad with the support of an EU or a national programme.

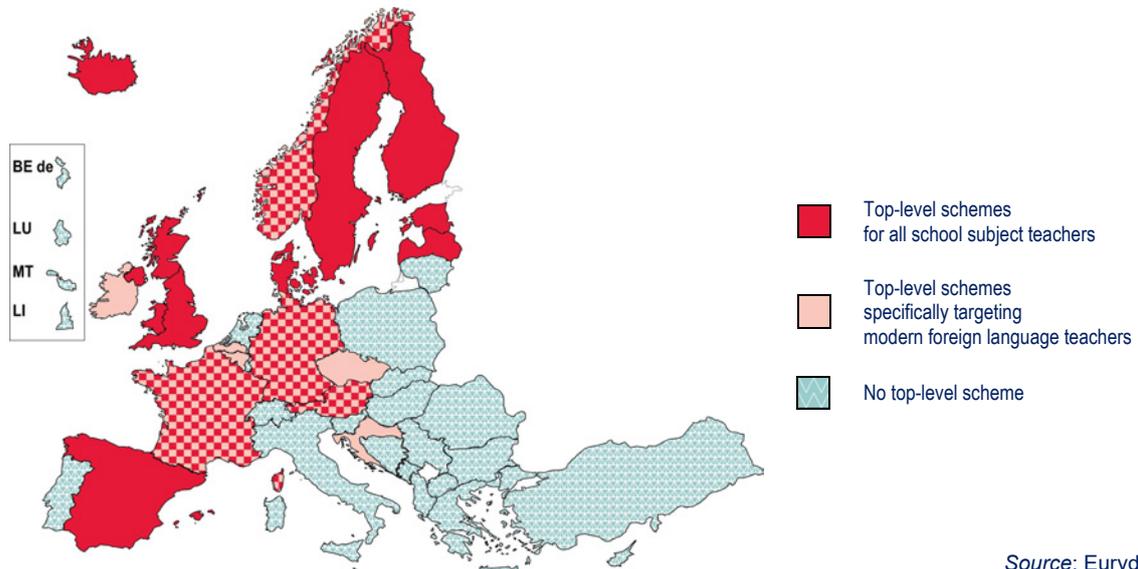
### **5.5.1. Organisation of national funding schemes**

Teachers' mobility is promoted and sponsored at EU level, and may also be supported by funding schemes at national level. Figure 5.5 shows countries with funding schemes for transnational teacher mobility organised by top-level authorities. The objective of these schemes is to support teachers wishing to spend some time abroad for professional development purposes. Mobility schemes that aim primarily at promoting national culture and language abroad, and through which teachers are employed abroad in a national school of their country of origin, are not included in this analysis.

Funding schemes for transnational mobility exist in a minority of European countries, mainly in Western and Northern Europe. The funding schemes may apply to all teachers, irrespective of the subject they teach, or they may target foreign language teachers specifically. Twelve countries have national schemes available for all lower secondary teachers, irrespective of the subject they teach (see Figure 5.5). In Germany, France, Austria and Norway, other national schemes specifically target modern foreign language teachers. In Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Czechia, Ireland

and Croatia, this is currently the only type of scheme that exists. Some countries without a central scheme nevertheless have regional mobility schemes.

**Figure 5.5: Funding schemes organised by top-level authorities to support the transnational mobility of teachers in lower secondary education, 2019/20**



Source: Eurydice.

#### Explanatory note

See the definition of '**transnational mobility**' in the Glossary. Teachers moving abroad to work in a school under the authority of their own country are not considered here. International funding schemes, such as the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, are not included. For a list of the centrally funded schemes promoting transnational mobility of lower secondary teachers, see Annex I.5.

A number of countries have made bilateral agreements to support transnational teacher mobility <sup>(10)</sup>. Transnational mobility schemes have different aims and objectives, such as to improve language skills, develop or augment teaching skills, or promote cultural awareness. They may take place in the context of continuing professional development activities, language assistance or exchange programmes, and may consist of study visits, training courses, job-shadowing, participation in conferences or periods of teaching. The length of mobility periods supported by national schemes also varies. In a number of national schemes, teachers go abroad for a short period of time, usually one or two weeks.

For instance, in **Belgium (French and Flemish Communities)**, German teachers may take part in a one-week training course in Germany. In the Flemish Community of Belgium, French teachers may take part in a two-week training course in France, while in the French Community of Belgium, Dutch teachers may undertake a four-day training course in the Netherlands.

In **Spain**, the Professional Visits (*Estancias Profesionales*) scheme supports primary and secondary teachers, irrespective of the subject they teach, in spending two weeks abroad for observation in schools.

In **France**, teachers may take part in language, pedagogic and cultural development activities abroad for two weeks.

In **Finland**, Swedish teachers can participate in teacher exchanges and courses focusing on teaching methods in other Nordic countries for one or two weeks.

In **Sweden**, the Atlas Conference scheme aims to facilitate teachers' participation in conferences abroad for a period of a few days.

In **Norway**, French teachers have the opportunity to attend further education courses or individual programmes (job-shadowing) in France for two up to 21 days.

Teachers from the **United Kingdom** can visit schools in several countries for around a week in order to compare their learning practices via the Connecting Classrooms programme.

<sup>(10)</sup> Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Czechia, Ireland, France, Croatia, Austria, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

Some countries also organise mobility schemes involving a longer-term period abroad.

For instance, in **France**, teachers can take part in different exchange programmes allowing them to exchange posts with a teacher in another country for a full school year. These include a cooperation programme with seven European countries, exchanges with North America (especially through the Codofil programme) and worldwide exchanges (through the Jules Verne programme).

Teachers in **Austria** may spend a school year abroad on a language assistance scheme.

Teachers from the **United Kingdom** may spend a semester in the USA where they engage in continuing professional development (CPD) courses and exchange expertise and best practices.

Eight Nordic and Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway) are involved in the Nordplus programme which supports their involvement in a variety of educational cooperation activities. Nordplus has several sub-programmes aimed at different target groups and fields of education. The Nordplus Junior programme funds, among other things, mobility activities in the form of teacher exchanges and preparatory visits. Lithuania, although a member of the Nordplus programme, was not involved in teacher mobility in 2019/20.

Some countries also organise specific programmes for foreign language teachers working in another country as a way to promote the learning of their national language abroad. For instance, the German initiative 'Schools: Partners for the Future' (*Schulen: Partner der Zukunft*) enables teachers of German who work abroad to participate in continuing professional development activities and job-shadowing programmes in Germany itself.

The three Communities of Belgium, with three different languages of schooling (French, Dutch and German), signed an agreement in March 2015 to promote opportunities for teachers of each Community to teach in one of the two other Communities for a period of at least one year. Although not transnational per se, this trans-community initiative is also worth mentioning. The objective is to provide courses with native speakers as teachers, especially in schools where content and language integrated learning (CLIL) <sup>(11)</sup> is offered. However, only a few teachers from the Flemish Community took up this opportunity between 2015 and 2019/20.

### 5.5.2. Use of mobility programmes

After having presented existing nationally funded schemes for transnational mobility, it is interesting to observe the proportion of mobile teachers who report that they have taken part in these schemes and/or in an EU programme. Teacher mobility has been supported by EU programmes for education, through the Comenius programme and more recently through Key Action 1 of the Erasmus+ programme for 2014-2020. The main aim of supporting mobility projects in 2014-2020 for school staff was to develop staff competences by offering professional development opportunities abroad in the form of structured courses, job-shadowing or teaching <sup>(12)</sup>.

In the TALIS 2018 questionnaire, mobile teachers were asked two questions on this topic, namely whether they went abroad for professional purposes 'as a teacher in an EU programme (e.g. Erasmus+ programme/Comenius)' and/or 'as a teacher in a regional or national programme'. For this reason, there is no information on the participation of trainee teachers in such programmes during their ITE.

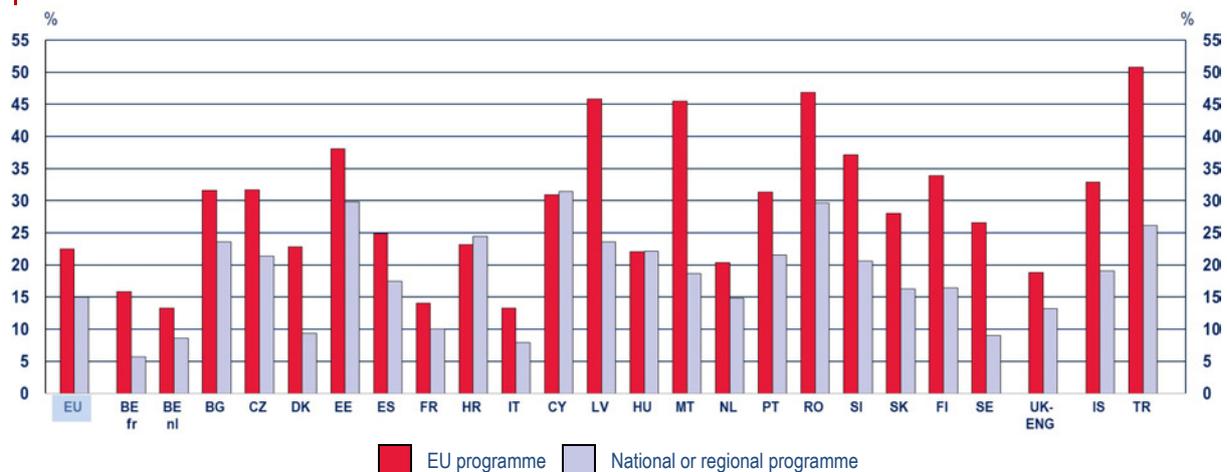
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<sup>(11)</sup> CLIL refers to types of provision in which a language different to the language of schooling is used to teach certain curriculum subjects other than languages themselves (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017a).

<sup>(12)</sup> See the Erasmus+ programme guide 2020 at [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2020\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2020_en)

Figure 5.6 shows that EU programmes are the main funding scheme used. The share of mobile teachers who went abroad for professional purposes through an EU programme is 22.5 %, compared to 15.0 % in the case of national or regional programmes. In a few countries, this trend was even more marked, with at least twice as many teachers or more going abroad with EU funding than with national or regional funding. This was the case in Belgium (French Community), Denmark, Malta, Finland and Sweden. In contrast, in Croatia, Cyprus and Hungary, the impact of both funding sources was roughly the same. Previous TALIS data (2013) already highlighted that a bigger proportion of mobile teachers went abroad with the support of an EU programme compared to the support of a national programme.

**Figure 5.6: Proportion of mobile teachers in lower secondary education who have gone abroad for professional purposes with the support of a mobility programme, 2018**



%	EU	BE fr	BE nl	BG	CZ	DK	EE	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV
EU programme	22.5	15.8	13.3	31.6	31.7	22.8	38.1	24.9	14.0	23.1	13.3	30.9	45.8
National or regional programme	15.0	5.7	8.6	23.6	21.4	9.3	29.8	17.4	10.0	24.4	7.9	31.5	23.6
	HU	MT	NL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK-ENG	IS	TR	
EU programme	22.0	45.5	20.4	31.4	46.9	37.2	28.0	33.9	26.6	18.8	32.9	50.8	
National or regional programme	22.2	18.6	14.8	21.5	29.7	20.6	16.3	16.4	9.0	13.2	19.1	26.2	

Source: Eurydice, on the basis of TALIS 2018 (see Table 5.8 in Annex II).

### Explanatory notes

The Figure is based on teachers' answers to question 56 of TALIS 2018: 'Have you ever been abroad for professional purposes in your career as a teacher or during your teacher education/training?', option (b) 'as a teacher in an EU programme' and (c) 'as a teacher in a regional or national programme'. Teachers may have used both types of programmes.

Mobile teachers are those who ticked 'yes' to at least one of the sub-questions (a-e) of question 56.

The use of bold in the table indicates statistically significant differences from the EU value.

EU refers to all the European Union countries/regions that participated to the TALIS survey in 2018, except Lithuania and Austria. It includes UK-ENG.

Some observations can be made from considering both transnational teacher mobility rates (see Figure 5.1) and the existence or absence of national funding schemes for mobility (see Figure 5.5). Statistical analysis of teachers' reported participation in transnational mobility in TALIS 2018 suggests that the national schemes enabling periods spent abroad for professional purpose may be an important supporting factor. In those countries where there are no national mobility schemes, 29.4% of teachers have been mobile (see Table 5.1 in Annex II). Participation is higher by slightly over 10 percentage points in those countries that have a national mobility scheme (41.1 %). However, EU funding schemes remain the most important financial supporting means to access transnational mobility schemes.

## 5.6. Conclusions

There is agreement at European level that transnational mobility contributes to the development of a wide range of competences among teachers and should be encouraged. However, only a minority of teachers in Europe have been abroad for professional purposes. In 2018, 40.9 % of teachers in the EU had been mobile at least once as a student, as a teacher, or both. Teacher mobility is above the EU level in the Nordic and Baltic countries, Czechia, Cyprus, Spain, the Netherlands and Slovenia. From 2013 to 2018, teacher transnational mobility has increased in all 17 European countries for which data is available. It is worth mentioning that any trends in teacher mobility in the coming years will have to be analysed in the light of the disruption that COVID-19 has caused to transnational mobility programmes and travel in Europe.

As was already the case in 2013, ‘accompanying visiting students’, ‘language learning’ and ‘studying, as part of my teacher education’ are the three most common reasons for going abroad, each reported by around half of mobile teachers in 2018. Only 21.6 % stated that they travelled abroad to learn other subjects. Unfortunately, TALIS 2018 data does not explore other forms of mobility that also focus on the professional development dimension, such as training courses, seminars/conferences or job-shadowing.

The transnational mobility of teachers varies according to the subject taught. As in 2013, modern foreign language teachers are the most transnationally mobile, compared to teachers of four other main subjects. In 2018, about 70 % of foreign language teachers had been abroad during ITE and/or as a teacher. However, this means that almost 30 % of modern foreign language teachers surveyed in the EU have never been on a transnational mobility programme, which could have negative implications for the quality of foreign language teaching. Compared to foreign language teachers, the transnational mobility of other subject teachers is substantially lower, ranging from about 40 % for reading and social studies teachers, to no more than 30 % for mathematics teachers. Iceland is a marked exception to this pattern, where all subject teachers reported levels of mobility above 70 %.

The TALIS survey (2018) considers the transnational mobility of teachers during two specific periods: mobility during initial teacher education and mobility as a practising teacher. Travelling abroad when studying or when working as a teacher is described as a ‘powerful learning experience’<sup>(13)</sup>, which may have benefits for teachers’ linguistic, intercultural or didactical competences. However, transnational mobility is not very widespread among student teachers. In 2018, about one fifth of teachers (20.9 %) in the EU reported they went abroad during their studies, with substantial variations across countries. As far as in-service teachers are concerned, approximately one-third (32.9 %) of teachers in the EU reported having had a transnational mobility experience, again with variations across countries. Transnational mobility of in-service teachers is below the EU level in Belgium (French and Flemish Communities), Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Malta, Slovakia, the United Kingdom (England) and Turkey. There is a need to remove barriers to teacher transnational mobility, as stated in the recent Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future. As highlighted by other reports, the main obstacles for student teacher mobility include financial and recognition issues (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019c and 2020b). For practising teachers, obstacles include family responsibilities and difficulties in arranging substitute teachers (European Commission, 2012). Moreover, lack of language skills is a cross-cutting issue<sup>(14)</sup>. However, reinforcing student teacher mobility may also improve the transnational mobility of practising teachers. Indeed, data shows that student teachers who had the chance to spend a study period in another country are more likely to seize opportunities for going abroad for professional purposes later in life.

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<sup>(13)</sup> OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 13.

<sup>(14)</sup> Council conclusions of 26 May 2020 on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 11.

National funding schemes to support teachers who wish to spend some time abroad for professional development purposes exist in fewer than half of European countries, and mainly in Western and Northern Europe. These funding schemes may apply to all teachers, irrespective of the subject they teach, or they may target foreign language teachers specifically. The data seems to indicate that participation in transnational mobility is higher in countries where top-level authorities organise top-level schemes to support teachers' professional stays abroad. However, EU programmes remain the main funding scheme.

## ANNEXES

**Annex I.5: Name(s), target population, destination countries and mobility duration of centrally funded schemes promoting transnational mobility of lower secondary teachers, 2019/20 (Data to Figure 5.5)**

	Name	Target population	Destination countries	Duration of mobility
<b>BE fr</b>	Seminar for teachers in the Netherlands	Dutch teachers	The Netherlands	4 days
<b>BE fr</b>	Seminar for teachers in Germany	German teachers	Germany	1 week
<b>BE nl</b>	Francoform	French teachers	France	2 weeks
<b>BE nl</b>	Seminar for Flemish teachers in Germany	German teachers	Germany	1 week
<b>CZ</b>	International pedagogical workshops for German teachers based on the Czech-Bavarian/Czech-Saxony work programmes	German teachers	Germany – Bavaria/Saxony	1-2 weeks
<b>CZ</b>	Didactic internships for French teachers	French teachers	Belgium – Wallonia	3 weeks
<b>DE</b>	CPD courses for French language teachers in Belgium	French teachers	Belgium	1 week
<b>DE</b>	Work shadowing of teachers in Spain	All teachers who speak Spanish	Spain	2 to 3 weeks
<b>DE</b>	Schools: Partners for the Future	German language teachers from abroad	Germany	3 weeks
<b>DK, EE, LV, FI, SE, IS, NO</b>	Sub-programmes Nordplus Junior	All teachers	Nordic and Baltic countries	From 5 working days up to 1 year
<b>IE</b>	French/Irish Professional Teacher visit	French teachers	France	1-2 weeks
<b>IE</b>	German teacher exchange scheme	German teachers	Germany	1 semester
<b>ES</b>	Professional visit	All teachers	14 European countries <sup>(1)</sup>	2 weeks
<b>FR</b>	CIEP professional stays	Foreign language teachers	7 European countries <sup>(2)</sup>	1-2 weeks
<b>FR</b>	Jules Verne program	All teachers	No predetermined list	1-3 years
<b>FR</b>	Stages de perfectionnement linguistique, pédagogique et culturel	All teachers	9 European countries	2 weeks
<b>FR</b>	Codofil	All teachers	USA	1 year
<b>HR</b>	Bilateral cooperation	French, German and history teachers	France, Germany, Israel	(:)
<b>AT</b>	Language Assistance Programme	All teachers	12 countries <sup>(3)</sup>	6-8 months
<b>AT</b>	Visiting Programme for Austrian Teachers to France and Spain	French and Spanish teachers	France, Spain	1-2 weeks
<b>AT</b>	Visiting Programme for Austrian teachers at Austrian Schools abroad	All teachers		1-2 weeks
<b>AT</b>	Visiting Programme for Austrian Teachers at Bilingual Schools	German teachers		1-2 weeks
<b>FI</b>	Pohjola-Norden grants for teacher-exchange and courses in Nordic countries	All teachers	Nordic countries	1-2 weeks
<b>SE</b>	Atlas conference	All teachers	All countries	(:)
<b>UK</b>	Connecting Classrooms	All teachers	more than 30 participating countries overseas	Around a week
<b>UK</b>	Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Programme for International Teachers	All teachers	United States	A semester
<b>NO</b>	TROLL Scholarships	French teachers	France	2-21 days

<sup>(1)</sup> Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Norway.

<sup>(2)</sup> Germany, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Austria, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

<sup>(3)</sup> The Language Assistance Programme currently exists between Austria and Belgium, Croatia, France, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Russia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

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## Annex II: Statistical tables

Open the Excel file [Statistical Annex](#)

### Chapter 5: Transnational Mobility

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# Teachers in Europe

## Careers, Development and Well-being

This report analyses key aspects of the professional life of lower secondary teachers (ISCED 2) across Europe. It is based on qualitative Eurydice data from national policies and legislation, and quantitative data from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) on practices and perceptions of teachers and school heads.

Connecting these two data sources, the analysis aims to illustrate how national policies and regulations may contribute to making the teaching profession more attractive. It examines ways teachers receive their initial education, and policies that may influence the take up of continuing professional development. Among other issues, the report investigates working conditions, career prospects and teachers' well-being at work. It also explores to what extent teacher evaluation is used to provide formative feedback, and ways to encourage teachers to travel abroad for learning and working. The challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the shift to distance teaching and learning, are briefly addressed.

The report covers all 27 EU Member States, as well as the United Kingdom, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. The reference years are 2018-2020.

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