

Blueprints for In-Service and Pre-Service Teacher Mobility

21st Century European Teachers



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European
Teachers



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Executive Summary

This document presents a set of **alternative mobility models** (“blueprints”) designed to strengthen **competency development for both in-service and pre-service teachers** within the *21st Century European Teachers (XXI-EU-TEACH)* framework. It is grounded in evidence gathered through **National Labs** in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Romania, and Spain, where in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, parents, teacher educators, and educational administrators shared lived experience of what enables—and prevents—meaningful mobility. Those national insights were further consolidated through partner exchanges to validate cross-context patterns and translate them into actionable programme responses.

Across countries, barriers to mobility are not isolated: they operate as **interlocking constraints** that shape who participates, under what conditions, and with what learning value. The report synthesises obstacles into three clusters: **(1) structural and institutional barriers** (e.g., limited recognition, uneven organisational readiness, substitute cover constraints, weak guidance, rigid attendance or programme requirements); **(2) financial and time constraints** (real costs exceeding grants, family-related costs, and mobility planning layered onto already high workloads); and **(3) personal and professional challenges** (care responsibilities, accessibility needs, linguistic insecurity, limited procedural knowledge, and reduced confidence when mobility feels risky or misaligned with practice).

At the same time, the evidence converges on high-leverage benefits that make mobility more than an “add-on”: it accelerates learning and makes professional growth more visible, practice-oriented, and transferable. Benefits cluster into **personal and cultural growth** (“mirrors and windows”), **professional development and networking**, and **inspiration and innovation** through the transfer of ideas and methods back home.

To respond, the report offers **11 blueprint models** spanning in-service and pre-service pathways (e.g., micro-mobility and shadowing, reciprocal host-inclusive exchange, co-teaching visits, sabbatical immersion, blended mobility, MOOC-integrated mobility, practicum-aligned placements, cohort mobility, co-education module mobility, and progressive virtual → micro → longer routes). Each blueprint is designed around a minimum shared architecture: **recognition and feasibility, equity supports, practice-orientation, and outputs and follow-up** so that mobility becomes manageable, meaningful, and equitable rather than an extra burden.

Introduction

Teacher mobility is positioned in this report as a **structured pathway for learning and competency development**, not a one-size-fits-all trip. The report situates mobility within the *21st Century European Teachers* project and responds directly to cross-national evidence on what blocks participation, what drives impact, and what institutional conditions are required to make mobility feasible and fair.

A key premise is that mobility participation rises when it is **feasible, meaningful, and normalised**—not dependent on personal sacrifice or informal goodwill. The report synthesises four enabling clusters that work best together: **(1) institutional and structural support** (leadership endorsement, protected time, administrative help, funding access, clear procedures, and recognition in study/work plans and career frameworks); **(2) programme design and models** (a diversified offer aligned with career stage, practicum requirements, and family/work realities); **(3) awareness, motivation, and cultural readiness** (early information, mentoring, alumni role models, collective formats, and purposeful preparation), and **(4) tools, partnerships, and resources** (strong school–university networks, Erasmus+/eTwinning pipelines, project-based collaboration, and language/digital support).

To operationalise these insights, this document defines **institutional readiness** as the organising standard for mobility design and delivery—ensuring that leadership, administration, finances, coverage planning, and recognition pathways are in place so that mobility supports competency development without widening inequities. The blueprint models are explicitly aligned with the project’s four emerging subject areas—**Technological empowerment, Sustainable learning, Entrepreneurship, and Playful learning**—and embed a common workflow that emphasises preparation, practice-embedded learning, reflection, and transfer back to home institutions.

Definitions (for the purpose of this document)

- ▶ **In-service teacher:** A qualified teacher employed by a school or educational institution.
- ▶ **Pre-service (student) teacher:** An initial teacher education (ITE) student undertaking coursework and/or practicum.
- ▶ **Mobility:** A structured international learning, teaching, training, placement, observation or collaboration activity (physical, virtual or blended) recognised by a sending/host institution.
- ▶ **Institutional readiness:** The organisational capacity (leadership endorsement, administrative support, financial processes, substitute/coverage planning, recognition pathways) necessary to plan and deliver mobility.

Obstacles of in-service and pre-service teacher mobility

This section synthesises the **principal obstacles to teacher mobility** identified through National Labs conducted in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Romania, and Spain within the framework of the *21st Century European Teachers project*. These National Labs convened key stakeholder groups—including in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, parents, teacher educators, and educational administrators—to gather evidence-based insights drawn from lived experience across diverse educational systems. Building on these national perspectives, the synthesis is further informed by structured exchanges with project partners, which helped validate patterns across contexts and consolidate challenges and actionable responses into a shared European-level understanding.

Across the evidence base, obstacles to mobility do not appear as isolated issues but as interlocking constraints that shape who can participate, under what conditions, and with what learning value. Partners consistently converged on three broad clusters: **(1) structural and institutional barriers** (limited institutional recognition, uneven organisational readiness, substitute cover constraints, weak guidance, and rigid attendance or programme requirements), **(2) financial and time constraints** (real costs exceeding grants, lack of family-related support, and mobility planning layered onto already high workloads), and **(3) personal and professional challenges** (care responsibilities, accessibility needs, linguistic insecurity, limited procedural knowledge, and low confidence or motivation when mobility feels risky or poorly aligned with practice). Taken together, these obstacles can turn mobility into an “extra burden” rather than a supported pathway for competency development, and they can inadvertently widen inequities—making participation most feasible for those with stronger institutional backing, fewer caregiving constraints, and greater linguistic and financial capital.

Denmark

Structural/resource & organizational readiness. Mobility requires time, funding, and explicit organizational prioritization; when collaboration relies mainly on local goodwill and individual initiatives, participation becomes fragile and uneven. Finances are a concrete barrier for both teachers and students, compounded by limited, non-systematic support for applying for funds. Teacher education programmes are tightly packed and relatively rigid, and strict attendance requirements further constrain student teachers’ participation. Real uptake also depends on institutional readiness—schools and HEIs need leadership commitment, dedicated administrative support, clear contracts and expectations, and prior experience managing collaboration projects to engage effectively and sustainably.

Workload/sustainability & cultural/professional resistance. Without clear frameworks that integrate mobility into existing roles and schedules, activities risk adding to already high workloads, heightening stress and, in some cases, contributing to burnout or drop out—at a time when the sustainability of working life in the profession is already a concern. Danish teachers’ strong tradition of professional autonomy means that new structures, obligations, or mandatory elements can be perceived as control or mistrust, especially if mobility is not experienced as meaningful and practice oriented. Where relevance is unclear, resistance grows—further discouraging engagement from both in service and pre-service teachers.

Finland

Obstacles to teacher mobility—administrative/logistical & institutional support. A substantial administrative burden, combined with the timing of applications and payments, creates logistical hurdles that make planning and participation difficult. Schools struggle to secure substitute teachers during mobility periods, and uneven support

from headteachers or colleagues can dampen motivation and feasibility. Scheduling and workload pressures further limit opportunities for in-service teachers, while both teachers and student teachers pointed to a need for more structured, accessible information about available mobility options to navigate processes with confidence.

Obstacles to teacher mobility—personal/linguistic & pedagogical continuity. Personal factors—such as family responsibilities—often constrain the window for travel, and a lack of confidence in language skills can deter otherwise interested participants. Time away can create discontinuities in teaching and learning, raising concerns about classroom continuity and follow up. Many Finnish teachers report limited first-hand experience with mobility, not due to lack of interest but because these practical barriers persist—reinforcing a cycle in which low exposure and high perceived effort reduce participation among both teachers and student teachers.

Italy

Linguistic & curricular recognition (pre-service). Fear of working in a foreign language remains a significant barrier, resulting in many students choosing an Erasmus+ study period over a traineeship, even when the latter offers more direct professional experience. Secondly, funding schemes rarely cover real living costs abroad, discouraging some from participation. Curricular mobility disrupts the academic path, as fitting it into an already demanding calendar often results in missed exams, delays in local internship hours, and extended degree timelines. Neither a post-laurea traineeship abroad is recognized as teaching experience and earns no points towards the *concorso nazionale* - the competitive exam for access to permanent job positions (only experience gained within the Italian school system counts). Pre-service teachers are understandably reluctant to invest time and resources in something that won't improve their chances in a highly competitive national job market.

Linguistic/professional & administrative/lack of support (in-service). At the individual level, limited English language proficiency is the most reported obstacle. Furthermore, an absence presents a significant practical difficulty, especially for women, who make up the majority of the teaching workforce in Italy and disproportionately carry caregiving responsibilities. At the institutional level, many schools don't actively support teachers' international mobility, leaving teachers to research opportunities and manage applications independently. Approval from the school principal is not guaranteed, as teachers' absences require finding substitutes, which can also disrupt learning continuity for pupils. Direct experience of professional mobility remains uncommon among teachers, which further limits peer-to-peer support and the normalization of mobility as a professional practice. As a result, mobility is frequently perceived as an extra rather than an integral part of professional development.

Romania

Financial/administrative & institutional/systemic. Participants highlighted that current grant amounts often fail to cover the real costs of mobility—accommodation, travel, and living expenses—especially for teachers from rural or low-income backgrounds. Complex, bureaucratic applications deter potential candidates, compounded by difficulties securing institutional support letters and formal approvals from school inspectorates (ISJ). Schools reported a lack of substitute teachers to cover classes during mobility periods, creating resistance from principals, while unclear or inconsistent recognition of mobility within teacher career progression (grade didactice) further weakens incentives. Systemically, many schools—particularly small or rural—lack the capacity to apply for and manage Erasmus+ projects; dissemination of opportunities at school level is uneven; participation skews urban; there is no dedicated national strategy for teacher mobility; and rigid timetables make scheduling mobilities difficult for both in-service and student teachers.

Linguistic/cultural & attitudinal. Insufficient foreign language proficiency—most acute in rural areas and vocational schools—limits both in-service and pre-service teachers' readiness to apply and engage meaningfully abroad. Fear of cultural and professional isolation, combined with limited pre-departure linguistic and intercultural preparation, further discourages participation. At the attitudinal level, low awareness of available programmes and benefits

means mobility is often seen as an additional burden rather than a professional learning opportunity. The absence of visible role models and peer networks normalising mobility contributes to this perception, reducing motivation among teachers and student teachers alike and perpetuating unequal access and participation.

Spain

Workload/administrative & institutional/systemic (in-service). Teachers face significant workload and time constraints, with heavy administrative burdens and few institutional mechanisms to reduce teaching loads during mobility periods. Institutional and systemic support is inconsistent: mobility is not reliably recognised within career progression frameworks, and support from school leadership and education authorities varies widely. Access to funding is inequitable, with financial barriers falling hardest on public schools and less resourced regions, while guidance on navigating European mobility programmes remains limited. Digital and technological disparities also persist—unequal access to infrastructure and training, together with rapid technological change (including AI), fuels insecurity and resistance. Finally, language related barriers—insufficient foreign language competence or confidence and limited multilingual preparation linked to mobility—further suppress participation.

Curricular integration/practice & socio economic/linguistic (pre-service). For student teachers, mobility is weakly embedded in initial teacher education: programmes rarely integrate it structurally, and recognition of international learning outcomes is inconsistent. Socio economic constraints remain decisive—available funding seldom covers real costs and disadvantages students from lower income backgrounds. Information and guidance are fragmented, with limited mentoring across preparation and placement phases, leaving candidates uncertain about options and requirements. Crucially, mobility is not always well connected to school practice—experiences may be misaligned with classroom-based learning or co teaching models—reducing perceived relevance and impact. Language related challenges, including anxiety about meeting linguistic demands in international contexts, further deter participation.

In a nutshell, the national labs point to the following cross cutting takeaways for pre- and in-service teachers: prioritise transparent recognition of mobility in career progression; expand targeted funding that covers real costs; simplify administrative pathways; strengthen language and intercultural preparation; ensure organisational readiness (leadership commitment, administrative support, and substitute cover); and embed mobility in curricula and work plans so participation is manageable, meaningful, and equitable.

21st Century European Partners

Despite the clear benefits of teacher and student teacher mobility, participation is constrained by **three interlocking sets of obstacles**. **Structural and institutional barriers** include limited practical support and low awareness of opportunities or their value, as well as weak formal recognition within schools and universities. Practical impediments—sustainability considerations, transport and connections, and complex logistics—compound the challenge, alongside staffing realities: difficulty replacing teachers during absences, the need to recruit and brief substitutes, and attendance requirements that bind pre-service teachers to campus.

Financial and time constraints are decisive. The direct costs of travel and accommodation—and the additional expense of bringing children where affordable housing is scarce—can be prohibitive, making direct financial support essential. Even when funding exists, mobility demands extra planning within already heavy workloads, stretching time and resources: in-service teachers juggle busy schedules, and student teachers often cannot miss timetabled classes. Finally, **personal and professional challenges**—family and caregiving responsibilities, disabilities, language barriers, limited knowledge of mobility procedures, fear of leaving established routines, and low confidence or

motivation—can deter otherwise willing participants. Recognising these barriers is a prerequisite for designing fair, feasible programmes that widen access and make international mobility a realistic, rewarding option for all educators.

Mobility is powerful, but unless institutions fund, recognise, and simplify it—while accommodating family, language, and workload realities—the educators who could benefit most will remain least able to participate.

3.1. Structural and institutional barriers

Participants highlighted a set of **practical, institutional, and operational obstacles** that restrict both in-service and pre-service teacher mobility. These include insufficient support for day-to-day practicalities and planning, limited awareness of opportunities and the value of international mobility, and limited recognition of mobility within school and university processes. Financial barriers persist—limited funds for travel and accommodation and lack of funding to bring family members—while transport and connection constraints, together with sustainability concerns, complicate feasible and ethical travel choices. Continuity in teaching and learning is also a challenge: difficulty replacing in-service teachers, including hiring and instructing substitutes, and pre-service teachers’ requirements to be present for studies.

Key Challenges:

- ▶ **Practical and planning gaps:** Lack of support for practical issues and the logistics required for effective planning.
- ▶ **Awareness and value:** Limited awareness about opportunities and the professional value of international mobility.
- ▶ **Institutional recognition:** Mobility is not adequately recognized within schools or universities.
- ▶ **Funding constraints:** Limited funds for travel and accommodation, and lack of funding to bring family members.
- ▶ **Feasibility and continuity:** Sustainability concerns, transport/connection limitations, difficulty replacing in-service teachers (including hiring/instructing substitutes), and pre-service requirements to be present.

Practical Solutions:

- ▶ **Strengthen practical support** by providing clear guidance and hands on help for logistics, planning, and everyday issues.
- ▶ **Increase visibility and understanding** of mobility opportunities and their benefits through targeted communication and outreach.
- ▶ **Embed formal recognition** of mobility within school and university procedures (e.g., acknowledgment in internal processes and evaluation).

- ▶ **Expand and tailor funding** to cover travel, accommodation, and support for accompanying family members where relevant.
- ▶ **Improve feasibility and continuity** through proactive cover planning for in service teachers, streamlined substitute arrangements, flexible attendance solutions for pre-service teachers, and travel plans mindful of sustainability and connections.

3.2. Financial and time constraints

Participants emphasized that mobility is constrained by a combination of **financial burden and limited time availability**. Costs are heightened by expensive arrangements to bring children and the lack of affordable housing, underscoring that teachers need financial support to participate. On the time side, a heavy teaching workload, busy schedules for in service teachers, and the fact that student teachers cannot miss classes create significant pressure. Additionally, mobility requires extra time and effort for planning, and the distribution of time and resources within institutions often leaves little capacity for the extra coordination mobility entails.

Key challenges:

- ▶ **High participation costs:** Expensive to bring children and limited affordable housing, resulting in significant out of pocket expenses.
- ▶ **Insufficient financial support:** Teachers need more direct financial backing to make mobility feasible.
- ▶ **Limited time due to workload:** Heavy teaching loads and busy in-service schedules reduce availability for mobility.
- ▶ **Additional planning demands:** Mobility requires extra time and effort for planning on top of regular duties.
- ▶ **Rigid academic schedules:** Student teachers cannot miss classes, restricting flexibility and participation.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Targeted financial support:** Provide grants/stipends that explicitly cover dependents' costs and offer housing top ups to offset expensive destinations.
- ▶ **Affordable accommodation pathways:** Negotiate institutional rates or access to student housing/residences to reduce lodging expenses.
- ▶ **Protected time and workload relief:** Offer release time, cover arrangements, or "mobility windows" to address heavy workloads and busy schedules.
- ▶ **Structured planning support:** Allocate dedicated planning time and administrative assistance (checklists, timelines) to manage the extra coordination required.
- ▶ **Flexible academic arrangements:** For pre-service teachers, enable make up sessions or alternative assessments; for in-service teachers, align mobility with lower intensity teaching periods.

3.3. Personal and Professional Challenges

Participants noted that mobility decisions are shaped by a combination of **family obligations** (young children, caregiving for relatives), **disabilities**, and **language barriers**, compounded by a **lack of knowledge about mobility processes**. Personal factors such as fear of leaving comfort zones and limited motivation or confidence to participate further discourage engagement. Together, these personal and professional challenges create hesitation and reduce readiness to embark on mobility experiences, even when opportunities are available.

Key challenges:

- ▶ **Family and caregiving responsibilities:** Young children and care for relatives can limit availability and flexibility.
- ▶ **Accessibility needs related to disabilities:** Requirements for accommodations can make participation feel uncertain or risky.
- ▶ **Language barriers:** Limited linguistic confidence or proficiency can deter teachers and student teachers.
- ▶ **Knowledge gaps about mobility processes:** Unclear steps, documents, or requirements hinder initiation and follow through.
- ▶ **Motivation, confidence, and comfort zones:** Fear of change and low perceived self-efficacy reduce willingness to participate.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Family aware planning:** Offer family friendly scheduling and flexible timelines to accommodate caregiving responsibilities.
- ▶ **Accessibility first arrangements:** Provide clear information about available accommodations and ensure accessible settings and materials.
- ▶ **Language support:** Facilitate language preparation and access to resources that build everyday communication confidence.
- ▶ **Clear, step by step guidance:** Share simple process overviews, checklists, and named contacts to demystify mobility procedures.
- ▶ **Confidence building and peer support:** Use mentoring, low stakes information sessions, and gradual participation pathways to address fear of leaving comfort zones.

Benefits of in-service and pre-service teacher mobility

This section synthesises the **key benefits of teacher mobility** identified through National Labs conducted in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Romania, and Spain within the framework of the *21st Century European Teachers project*. Drawing on evidence gathered from in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, teacher educators, parents, and educational administrators, the section captures the perceived and demonstrated added value of mobility across diverse national and institutional contexts. Building on these national perspectives, the synthesis is further strengthened by partner exchanges across the consortium, which helped consolidate a shared understanding of how mobility contributes to competency development, professional identity formation, and institutional improvement.

Across the evidence base, benefits are consistently described not as “added value at the margins” but as **high-leverage outcomes that accelerate learning** and make professional growth more visible, practice-oriented, and transferable. Partners converged on three mutually reinforcing clusters. First, mobility drives **personal and cultural growth** by creating “mirrors and windows”: educators step outside familiar routines to gain intercultural awareness, empathy, and a clearer sense of professional purpose—outcomes closely linked to inclusive practice and European citizenship. Second, mobility strengthens **professional development and networking** through authentic exposure to diverse classrooms and education systems, sharpening pedagogical repertoire (including inclusive and digital/AI-related competences), improving language confidence, and building durable professional communities that enable peer learning and future collaboration. Third, mobility fuels **inspiration and innovation** by translating international insight into local action—participants return with adaptable methods, ideas, and partnerships that support school improvement, institutional internationalisation, and sustained motivation for continuous professional development. Together, these benefits position mobility as a practical pathway for developing the competencies of the 21st-century European teacher.

Denmark

Mobility was framed as a **reflective learning space**—a set of “mirrors and windows” that helps participants see both their own practice (mirror) and alternative ways of teaching and learning (window). In this sense, mobility supports more than competence acquisition: it creates time and distance for **professional reflection**, prompting participants to question assumptions, articulate values, and refine how they understand their role. As a result, mobility can contribute to **professional clarification and identity development**, strengthening teachers’ sense of purpose and coherence in their practice—not only what they can do, but also who they are becoming as educators.

A second core benefit relates to **deep learning through authentic exposure** and the strengthening of professional communities. Longer stays were seen as particularly valuable because they allow participants to get “**under the surface**” and access the “**engine room**” of real practice—authentic, sometimes imperfect teaching and school life—where the richest learning often happens. This exposure also **encourages participants to reflect** on how their own practice is presented and understood by others. Finally, the lab highlighted that **collective mobilities** (travelling in small groups) amplify impact through **shared reflection, stronger professional communities, and sustained relationships** across cohorts and roles—especially when there is deliberate collaboration between in-service teachers, student teachers, and lecturers before, during, and after the mobility experience.

Finland

Mobility was described as a particularly **strong catalyst for pre-service teachers' personal and professional growth**, combining **cultural enrichment** with increased maturity and a clearer sense of themselves as emerging professionals. By experiencing different school cultures and teaching practices, student teachers broaden and **deepen their pedagogical knowledge** in ways that are difficult to achieve through coursework alone. Participants also noted a clear motivational effect: returning from mobility often brings renewed engagement, alongside a **stronger ability to motivate pupils** by integrating international perspectives into classroom learning.

For in-service teachers, mobility was seen as strengthening the human and pedagogical dimensions of teaching through **enhanced cultural competence, empathy, and tolerance** gained from exposure to other cultures. It also supports **self-awareness as educators**, prompting reflection on strengths and areas for growth, while reinforcing pedagogical expertise through observation of **varied teaching methods abroad**. Across both groups, the lab highlighted shared benefits including increased motivation for **continuous professional development and lifelong learning**, improved **linguistic skills**, higher **confidence in teaching** and openness to new approaches, stronger openness to European cultures and values, and enhanced innovation and communication skills that can feed back into everyday practice.

Italy

Mobility was framed as especially valuable for pre-service teachers because it accelerates both **personal and professional growth** while strengthening key transversal competencies. Participants highlighted the development of **intercultural, relational, and emotional competencies**, alongside **language skills**, as a core benefit that builds self-reliance and professional confidence. By learning about different education systems and practices, student teachers broaden their professional and career horizons and, crucially, can **strengthen the link between theory and practice** by testing and interpreting what they study in an authentic international context.

For in-service teachers, mobility was seen as a catalyst for renewed expertise, reflection, and collaboration. Participants emphasized improvements in **language skills, professional confidence, and intercultural and communication competencies**, as well as a broader pedagogical repertoire gained through direct experience of diverse teaching methods and innovative approaches. Mobility also supports stronger inclusive education awareness, enhancing teachers' ability to manage classroom diversity and inclusivity, while creating space to **reflect critically on one's own practices** and deepen self-awareness. In addition, exchanges among peers foster mutual learning, build contacts for future transnational collaboration, and increase motivation and openness to innovation, contributing positively to institutional innovation and internationalisation and sustaining engagement in ongoing professional development.

Romania

Mobility was highlighted as a **strong driver of professional development**, enabling teachers and student teachers to acquire new pedagogical methods and innovative teaching strategies, and to learn from different curricular approaches, assessment methods, and school management practices. Participants also stressed the added value of observing more technologically advanced systems, which can accelerate the development of digital and media literacy competencies, and of accessing specialized training abroad that strengthens subject-matter expertise. These experiences broaden professional horizons and translate into concrete improvements in teaching and learning practices.

Beyond pedagogy, mobility was **seen as generating significant personal, linguistic, and systemic benefits**. Participants pointed to improved foreign language competence (especially English), increased intercultural awareness, flexibility, and adaptability, and stronger self-confidence and professional self-efficacy, alongside a

broader professional network across European countries. At the institutional level, mobility supports the transfer of good practices back to the home school—often with positive effects on colleagues and students—while enhancing school reputation, motivating students, and strengthening schools' capacity to develop future European projects. For **student teachers**, early exposure to diverse pedagogical cultures was linked to a more reflective practitioner identity, greater adaptability and openness to reform, and a competitive advantage in the job market.

Spain

Mobility was described as **a powerful lever for in-service teachers' professional growth and renewal**. Participants highlighted clear gains in professional competences, including the development of innovative pedagogical approaches (such as co-teaching, playful learning, and inclusive practices) and the strengthening of digital and AI-related teaching competences. These experiences were linked to improved teaching quality, greater innovation capacity, and enhanced adaptability in diverse and complex learning environments. Importantly, mobility was also seen as a mechanism for the transfer of European good practices into national and local contexts, while reinforcing the European dimension of teaching through increased awareness of shared European values and education priorities and a stronger European professional identity.

For student teachers, mobility was framed as **an early catalyst for professional identity formation and for bridging theory and practice**. Exposure to diverse education systems and school cultures helps build vocational clarity and confidence, particularly through practical engagement in inclusive, multilingual, and innovative classrooms and first-hand experience with co-teaching and collaborative pedagogies. Participants also stressed employability benefits: mobility supports the development of transversal skills (intercultural competence, autonomy, adaptability), strengthens language and intercultural competences through immersive multilingual environments, and adds value in both national and European recruitment contexts. Finally, it nurtures European citizenship and a mobility culture, strengthening a sense of belonging to a shared European education space.

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Mobility offers teachers and student teachers both **a window and a mirror**: a window into diverse classrooms, communities, and cultures, and a mirror that deepens self-knowledge and reframes one's own cultural background. By stepping outside familiar bubbles, participants expand cultural knowledge, meet new people and practices, and gain the perspective taking skills that underpin inclusive pedagogy. This eye-opening exposure builds confidence and intercultural awareness while cultivating the curiosity, humility, and reflexivity needed to serve increasingly diverse learners across Europe.

Professionally, mobility acts as a catalyst for **development, networks, and innovation**. Through observation of different teaching styles and school systems, participants build professional awareness and intercultural competencies and engage in multi stakeholder exchange that accelerates learning in a short time. International networking strengthens cooperation between European countries, supports the exchange of practical methods, and fosters critical reflection on teaching practices—recognising and valuing teachers' efforts. Crucially, mobility inspires concrete change at home: educators return with ideas, projects, and partnerships, visit more schools, embed EU values, and adapt what works to local contexts. In this way, **mobility not only broadens horizons but also makes good teachers even better**, turning insight into action and sustained improvement.

Mobility gives educators the perspective, competencies, and partnerships to translate international insight into local innovation—broadening minds, strengthening practice, and advancing shared European values.

4.1. Personal and Cultural Growth

Participants emphasized that mobility offers **mirrors and windows to the world**: it builds **cultural knowledge** while fostering **increased self-knowledge**. The experience is an to go out of your bubble, inviting **new perspectives on your own cultural background** (mirror) through **meeting other cultures and people** in authentic settings. Together, these elements reinforce the personal and cultural dimensions of professional development, enriching teachers' identities and practices.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Windows and mirrors:** Exposure to other contexts alongside reflective insight into one's own culture and practice.
- ▶ **Expanded cultural knowledge:** Deeper understanding of norms, customs, values, and everyday life in different settings.
- ▶ **Greater self-knowledge:** Clearer sense of personal beliefs, assumptions, and professional stance.
- ▶ **Breaking the bubble:** Openness to difference, heightened curiosity, and readiness to engage beyond familiar routines.
- ▶ **Authentic intercultural encounters:** Meaningful interactions through meeting other cultures and people.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Design for "mirrors and windows":** Include structured reflection (journals, debriefs) paired with observation and immersion.
- ▶ **Curate cultural learning moments:** Organize sessions that foreground local practices, histories, and everyday routines.
- ▶ **Facilitate authentic meetings:** Plan peer shadowing, school visits, and community interactions to engage with people, not just places.
- ▶ **Create bubble breaking opportunities:** Build in local immersion days and activities that nudge participants beyond familiar comfort zones.
- ▶ **Prompt self-insight:** Use guided prompts and feedback loops to capture growth in self-knowledge and evolving perspectives.

4.2. Professional Development and Networking

Participants emphasized that mobility strengthens **professional development** and deepens **professional awareness**, while driving an **increase in cultural competencies** that are directly applicable to classroom practice. Recognising the additional effort involved, **compensation for teachers' efforts** is seen as vital to sustain engagement. Mobility also expands **international networking** and supports **increasing cooperation between European countries**, creating space for multi stakeholder discussions and exchange of ideas. Through direct exposure and comparison, participants gain **knowledge about other school systems**, including their differences and strengths, and engage in exchange of information about practical methods and critical reflection on teaching practices that improves pedagogy and curriculum design.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Strengthened professional growth:** Enhanced professional development and sharper professional awareness.
- ▶ **Cultural competence:** Increased intercultural skills for diverse classrooms and school communities.
- ▶ **System understanding:** Deeper knowledge of other school systems—their differences and strengths.
- ▶ **Expanded networks and cooperation:** Broader international networking that fosters Europe wide collaboration.
- ▶ **Better practice through exchange:** Practical method sharing and critical reflection that refine teaching approaches.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Fair compensation and recognition:** Provide stipends/time allowances and formal acknowledgment to value teachers' efforts.
- ▶ **Structured international networking:** Build partnerships and recurring joint activities to sustain cross border professional ties.
- ▶ **Multi stakeholder dialogue spaces:** Convene schools, universities, authorities, and NGOs for regular discussions and idea exchange.
- ▶ **Comparative system learning:** Organize school visits, shadowing, and briefings to surface differences and strengths across systems.
- ▶ **Method sharing and reflection routines:** Host workshops, peer observations, and communities of practice to exchange practical methods and embed critical reflection.

4.3. Inspiration and Innovation

Participants highlighted that **mobility fuels inspiration to do things at home** by enabling **sharing challenges and problem-solving, creating ideas and projects upon return, and visiting more schools** to broaden horizons. Exposure to a nest to develop EU values, seeing different styles of teaching, and demonstrating diversity and cultural differences leads to learning a lot in a short time, making good teachers even better, and **reflecting on your own practice with a new perspective**. Together, these experiences convert short, intensive encounters into sustained innovation in classrooms and schools.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Actionable inspiration at home:** Concrete practices and ideas that can be adapted and implemented locally.
- ▶ **Rapid professional learning:** High-intensity exposure that enables learning a lot in a short time.
- ▶ **Diverse pedagogical insights:** Understanding different teaching styles and cultural differences that expand one's repertoire.
- ▶ **EU values in practice:** A supportive "nest" where European values are experienced, discussed, and applied.
- ▶ **Reflective improvement:** Critical reflection that helps good teachers become even better.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Structured school visits:** Plan purposeful visits to multiple schools to compare approaches and gather transferable practices.
- ▶ **Challenge exchange sessions:** Facilitate guided sharing of challenges and joint problem solving to generate workable solutions.
- ▶ **Idea to project pipelines:** Provide templates and mentoring to turn fresh ideas into projects upon return.
- ▶ **Classroom observation protocols:** Use simple tools to capture insights on different teaching styles and cultural contexts.
- ▶ **Reflection and dissemination routines:** Build in debriefs, portfolios, or brief presentations to reflect on practice and spread inspiration at home.

Factors increasing mobility participation for in-service and pre-service teachers

This section synthesises the **key factors that increase participation in teacher mobility**, as identified through National Labs conducted in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Romania, and Spain within the framework of the *21st Century European Teachers project*. These National Labs convened key stakeholder groups—including in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, parents, teacher educators, and educational administrators—to surface practical enablers that turn interest in mobility into real uptake across diverse educational systems. The synthesis is further informed by partner discussions within the consortium, which helped validate common participation drivers across contexts and translate them into actionable levers for programme and institutional design.

Across the evidence, participation grows when mobility is **positioned as feasible, meaningful, and normalised**—not as an exceptional add-on that depends on personal sacrifice. Findings converge around four enabling clusters that work best when implemented together: **(1) institutional and structural support** (visible leadership endorsement, protected time, clear procedures, administrative help, funding access, and formal recognition in study/work plans and career frameworks); **(2) programme design and models** (a diversified offer—micro-mobilities, shadowing, blended/virtual pathways, longer stays, reciprocal host-inclusive formats—aligned with career stage, practicum requirements, and family/work realities); **(3) awareness, motivation, and cultural readiness** (early, transparent information; peer mentoring and alumni “role models”; collective/group formats that reduce uncertainty and strengthen professional community; and purposeful preparation that addresses cultural, professional, and personal anxieties); and **(4) tools, partnerships, and resources** (strong school–university networks, Erasmus+/eTwinning pipelines, project-based collaboration with tangible outputs, and language/digital support that lowers perceived risk). Together, these factors describe a clear policy message: **participation rises when institutions actively de-risk mobility, design flexible pathways, build readiness and motivation, and provide the partnerships and supports that convert opportunity into sustained professional learning.**

Denmark

Mobility participation increases when it is experienced as a **voluntary, professionally meaningful choice** rather than an imposed administrative requirement. The Danish national lab stressed that teachers and student teachers should have space to pursue their own professional questions and avoid mobility being framed as “extra tasks.” Motivation is also strengthened when the benefits can be clearly profiled and verbalised—helping participants translate what they gained into concrete narratives and identity markers that matter for them and for their institutions. **Collective formats** further reinforce willingness to participate: when several participants travel simultaneously (including cross-cohort and cross-class groupings), **shared reflection** during and after the stay creates mutual encouragement, reduces uncertainty, and builds a supportive professional community that makes mobility feel achievable and worthwhile.

Participation also rises when mobility is **well prepared, well supported, and anchored institutionally**. Participants highlighted the need for structured preparation between hosts and guests, conceptual clarification across countries, and deliberate preparation for professional, cultural, and personal challenges (including anxiety), so expectations are aligned before departure. **Differentiated mobility forms**—recognising the different purposes of short and long stays, ensuring options for longer stays, and combining international mobility with local mobility—make participation feasible for a wider range of candidates. Strong **management support** before, during, and after mobility, a clear link to strategic goals, and structured follow-up help turn experiences into school or programme development rather than one-off visits. Finally, **systematic access to funding and administrative support**

(templates, advice, facilitation, and staff handling formalities), together with **clear roles**, resources, and institutionalised tripartite collaboration (teachers–student teachers–lecturers), lowers the practical threshold and normalises mobility as a recognised part of work and study.

Finland

The Finnish national lab highlighted that **pre-service teachers show very high motivation** to participate in international mobility, with many expressing a clear desire for **more opportunities**. This willingness is strongly linked to the **perceived meaningfulness and relevance** of mobility: student teachers see it as both personally enriching and professionally valuable, which increases their readiness to engage.

Participation interest is further boosted by the prospect of **exposure to foreign teaching methods and school cultures**, described as **exciting and inspirational**. Mobility is also valued for **broadening horizons** and providing **new perspectives**, which act as key motivators. Finally, the lab noted that greater **involvement of policymakers** could help translate this high demand into more structured and predictable mobility opportunities.

Italy

For pre-service teachers in Italy, mobility participation increases when students receive **targeted language preparation** (especially strong English foundations) and **early, transparent information** about opportunities that is easy to access. Uptake also improves when mobility is clearly **embedded in the curriculum**—with explicit learning outcomes—and when traineeships abroad receive **formal recognition** from national teacher education systems and public schools. Strong, ongoing **university–host school cooperation**, supported by alignment of objectives and expectations, plus **peer mentoring** and visible role models (testimonials from former participants), helps student teachers make informed, confident decisions.

For in-service teachers, participation rises when language learning is treated as an integral part of **continuous professional development**, and when mobility takes place within stable **long-term partnerships** (e.g., eTwinning) that reduce risk and build trust. **Flexible formats**—short-term, blended, and hybrid models (virtual collaboration plus short physical exchanges)—make mobility compatible with professional and personal constraints, including options like **classroom swaps** that preserve curricular continuity. Finally, participation is strengthened by visible **leadership support**, encouragement from local authorities to engage in European programmes, a dedicated **mobility coordinator** to reduce administrative burden, and ongoing communication among staff, and **formal recognition** of mobility in professional development and career progression frameworks.

Romania

Mobility participation for pre-service and in-service teachers increases when individual readiness is already in place and supported by trusted peers. The Romanian national lab highlighted that **prior positive experience** with mobility or international projects often lowers hesitation and raises willingness to apply again. Among all personal factors, **strong foreign language skills**—with English proficiency identified as the strongest single predictor—make participation feel more feasible and less risky. Participation is further strengthened by **high intrinsic motivation for professional development**, especially when teachers and student teachers can see mobility as a meaningful step in their learning pathway. Finally, access to **peer networks and mentorship**—from colleagues who have already taken part—helps candidates understand what to expect, navigate uncertainty, and move from interest to action.

At the institutional and system level, participation increases when mobility is clearly organised, resourced, and legitimised. Schools with an active **Erasmus+ coordinator**, **supportive leadership** that values internationalisation, and an **established history of European projects** (eTwinning/Erasmus+) tend to have the routines and confidence to mobilise staff and student teachers more regularly. Practical feasibility matters: **clear internal selection**

procedures and reliable **substitute coverage** reduce barriers for in-service teachers, while dedicated pre-departure preparation supports both groups. At program/policy level, **simplified application and reporting**, higher and more realistic grants (including top-ups for disadvantaged participants), and **formal recognition of mobility in career development frameworks** make participation more equitable and worthwhile. Context also plays a role: **larger urban schools** often have greater capacity, **digital infrastructure** enables online preparation and networking, and strong **eTwinning participation** acts as a gateway that builds confidence and partnerships that later translate into physical mobility.

Spain

Mobility participation among in-service teachers in Spain increases when it is treated as a valued part of professional life rather than an “extra.” The Spanish national lab stressed the importance of **formal recognition mechanisms**—with mobility acknowledged in **career progression and professional evaluation frameworks**, supported by certification and validation of international learning outcomes. Participation also rises when schools provide institutional time allocation (official release time and workload adjustments), backed by **leadership and governance support** from school leaders and education authorities. Finally, access improves when teachers can rely on **clear, centralised information systems** (national/regional platforms) and **designated mobility coordinators**, combined with **targeted, equitable funding** that addresses socio-economic disparities and incentivises participation from underrepresented regions, alongside **language and digital competence support** and structured pre-mobility preparation.

For pre-service teachers, participation increases when mobility is structurally “built in” to initial teacher education rather than treated as optional. The lab highlighted **structural integration into curricula**, including **automatic academic recognition** of mobility experiences, so students can participate without delaying studies. Uptake is also strengthened through **mentoring and guidance structures**—coordinated support between universities and host schools, plus **peer mentoring** from former participants—so students understand pathways and feel confident. Equity-focused participation depends on **inclusive funding mechanisms** (grants covering full costs and additional support for disadvantaged and first-generation students). Finally, **progressive mobility pathways**—combining short-term, blended, and long-term formats, with virtual exchanges as preparation or complement—together with language preparation and confidence-building through **integrated multilingual education**, expand access and readiness across a wider range of student teachers.

21st Century European Partners

Expanding participation in mobility hinges on two foundational enablers: **Institutional and Structural Support** and **Program Design and Models**. When school and university leaders visibly back mobility—with practical administrative help, internationalised teams, protected time built into workload, clear and simple procedures, and strategic planning—teachers and student teachers can participate without penalty or guesswork. A diversified offer further lowers the threshold: flexible formats that include reciprocal host learning, short micro mobilities and teacher to teacher shadowing, one-month sabbaticals, practicum aligned placements, collaborative teaching during visits, and longer exchanges in secondary settings. Matching format to career stage, timetable, and family realities turns interest into feasible action.

Demand and impact grow when **Awareness, Motivation, and Cultural Readiness** are cultivated and the right **Tools, Partnerships, and Resources** are in place. Targeted information, concise “education pills” drawn from student teaching, authentic encounters with mobility alumni, and a culture that normalises curiosity and peer encouragement reduce hesitation and build confidence. Robust supports—language assistance, digital and virtual mobility options with meaningful technology integration, strong school–university networks and Erasmus+

partnerships, project-based collaboration, and ongoing connections—lower administrative friction and help educators convert travel into concrete improvements in their own classrooms.

Participation rises when institutions back and simplify mobility, offer flexible program designs, nurture awareness and motivation, and provide the tools and partnerships that help teachers and student teachers turn opportunity into lasting practice.

5.1. Institutional and Structural Support

Participants stressed that sustained mobility depends **on institutional support for the practical aspects of mobility**, underpinned by school or university leaders backing mobility and leadership supporting projects. Building capacity through the internationalization of teams at schools, allocating mandatory time for mobility (e.g., every two years), and ensuring easy access and clear procedures were seen as essential. Finally, **strategy and planning at institutional level** are needed to align resources, timelines, and responsibilities.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Robust practical support:** Institutions provide hands on help for the practical aspects of mobility.
- ▶ **Leadership endorsement and resourcing:** Leaders actively back mobility and the projects that enable it.
- ▶ **Internationalized teams:** School teams develop shared capacity and culture for international engagement.
- ▶ **Protected time for mobility:** Regular, mandated time windows make participation feasible and predictable.
- ▶ **Simple, transparent pathways:** Easy access and clear procedures, guided by an institutional strategy.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Create a mobility support function** to coordinate logistics, guidance, and practical assistance for participants.
- ▶ **Formalize leadership backing** via policies that allocate resources, approve projects, and recognize mobility in planning cycles.
- ▶ **Internationalize teams** by embedding mobility goals into department plans, roles, and collaborative routines.
- ▶ **Institute mobility timeframes** (e.g., every two years) with aligned timetables and cover arrangements.
- ▶ **Streamline processes** with one stop access, clear step by step procedures, and an institution level strategy and roadmap.

5.2. Program Design and Models

Participants emphasized the value of **different models for mobility where hosts also participate and learn**, including micro-mobilities (short visits or shadowing), a sabbatical model (e.g., one-month visits), and collaborative teaching as part of a visit. They also highlighted shadowing teacher-to-teacher as a practical, high impact format and the importance of practicum similarities to ease mobility, ensuring smooth alignment across contexts. Finally, mobility in secondary programs (e.g., one-year exchanges) provides deeper immersion and continuity, complementing shorter formats and enabling a coherent pathway across stages.

Key models:

- ▶ **Micro mobilities & shadowing:** Short visits and teacher to teacher shadowing for focused, high yield learning.
- ▶ **Sabbatical visits:** Time bound stays (e.g., one month) that allow deeper immersion and project development.
- ▶ **Collaborative/co-teaching visits:** Joint lesson planning and teaching as part of the mobility experience.
- ▶ **Reciprocal, host-inclusive formats:** Designs where hosts also participate, learn, and reflect alongside visitors.
- ▶ **Secondary-level program exchanges:** Longer placements (e.g., one-year exchanges) to build sustained practice and continuity.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Align practicum structures** to ease mobility (similar expectations, supervision, and assessment across contexts).
- ▶ **Co-design with host institutions** so that hosts actively participate and benefit (shared goals, roles, and reflection).
- ▶ **Use structured shadowing guides** (simple observation foci and debrief routines) to maximize micro-mobility impact.
- ▶ **Offer modular durations** (from short visits to one-month sabbaticals) so participants can match models to availability.
- ▶ **Set clear pathways for longer exchanges** in secondary programs (eligibility, timelines, and mentoring for continuity).

5.3. Awareness, Motivation and Cultural Readiness

Participants emphasized that effective mobility relies on **knowledge and awareness about mobility possibilities**, supported by awareness campaigns (such as “education pills” from student teaching) and authentic encounters with people who have experienced mobility. **Promoting openness, motivation, curiosity, and genuine interest**, as well as providing encouragement to participate and share positive experience, is essential. Ultimately, curiosity and the willingness to embrace change contribute to the cultural readiness that sustains participation and learning before, during, and after mobility.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Informed participation:** Clear awareness of mobility possibilities, routes, and benefits.
- ▶ **Peer-inspired readiness:** Motivation sparked by authentic meetings with experienced participants.
- ▶ **Positive culture of engagement:** Encouragement and visible sharing of success stories.
- ▶ **Curiosity-driven growth:** Willingness to explore, adapt, and make progress through mobility.
- ▶ **Sustained motivation:** Ongoing interest anchored in genuine personal and professional goals.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Targeted awareness campaigns** using concise “education pills” from student teaching cases to demystify mobility options.
- ▶ **Authentic peer encounters** (alumni talks, Q&A sessions, mentoring) with teachers who have completed mobility.
- ▶ **Recognition and storytelling:** Celebrate and showcase positive experiences to encourage participation.
- ▶ **Readiness building activities:** Workshops that nurture openness, motivation, curiosity, and genuine interest.
- ▶ **Action prompts for progress:** Simple next-step guides and sign-ups that channel curiosity into concrete participation.

5.4. Tools, Partnerships and Resources

Participants emphasized that impactful mobility is strengthened by **online and digital tools for virtual mobility** and thoughtful technology integration, supported by strong partnerships and networks. Participation in Erasmus+ projects provides structure and resources, while a project-based methodology ensures concrete outputs and sustained collaboration. Targeted language support and intentional **networking and connections** further enable inclusive participation and long-term cooperation across institutions and contexts.

Key outcomes:

- ▶ **Expanded access through virtual tools:** Online and digital solutions make mobility more flexible and inclusive.
- ▶ **Improved tech-enabled practice:** Thoughtful technology integration enhances collaboration and learning design.
- ▶ **Stronger partnership ecosystems:** Durable networks that sustain joint work and mutual learning.
- ▶ **Concrete, project-based outputs:** Collaborative projects that translate mobility into practical results.
- ▶ **Enhanced language readiness:** Language support that boosts confidence and effective cross-cultural communication.

Practical solutions:

- ▶ **Curate a virtual mobility toolkit** (platforms, collaboration spaces, and guidelines) to support online/digital engagement.
- ▶ **Provide integration support for technology** through training, templates, and lightweight standards for shared work.
- ▶ **Invest in partnerships and networks** with clear roles, MoUs, and regular networking opportunities to deepen connections.
- ▶ **Leverage Erasmus+ participation** to structure cooperation, co fund activities, and share proven practices.
- ▶ **Offer language support services** (materials, mentoring, and conversation practice) to facilitate inclusive participation.

Alternative Mobility Blueprints

This set of blueprints operationalises mobility as a structured international learning, teaching, training, placement, observation, or collaboration activity (physical, virtual, or blended) recognised by sending/host institutions. It responds directly to the cross-national evidence captured through National Labs and partner exchanges, which clustered mobility conditions into:

- ▶ **Three obstacle groups (see Section 3):** (1) structural/institutional barriers; (2) financial/time constraints; (3) personal/professional challenges.
- ▶ **Three benefit groups (see Section 4):** (1) personal/cultural growth (“mirrors and windows”); (2) professional development & networking; (3) inspiration & innovation (transfer back home).
- ▶ **Four participation enablers (see Section 5):** (1) institutional/structural support; (2) programme design & models; (3) awareness/motivation/cultural readiness; (4) tools/partnerships/resources.

The blueprints are aligned with the project’s four emerging subject areas: Technological empowerment, Sustainable learning, Entrepreneurship, and Playful learning [<https://21centuryeuteachers.eun.org>]. Across contexts, the document defines **institutional readiness** as the organisational capacity (leadership endorsement, administrative support, financial processes, substitute/coverage planning, recognition pathways) required to plan and deliver mobility. Therefore, all mobility designs below embed a minimum common architecture:

1. **Recognition and feasibility** (built into work/study plans; clarity on procedures; manageable scheduling).
2. **Equity supports** (real-cost funding, family-aware planning, accessibility, and language support).
3. **Practice-orientation** (lesson plans, co-teaching or classroom transfer; observation + reflection).
4. **Outputs and follow-up** (reflection, dissemination, and return-to-school implementation).

6.1. Alternative blueprints for in-service teacher mobility

Model 1. Micro-mobility & teacher-to-teacher shadowing (high-frequency, low-burden)

Micro-mobilities and teacher-to-teacher shadowing are explicitly identified as high-impact, feasible formats that lower participation barriers, especially where workload and substitution are constraints.

Design features:

- ▶ Short visit(s) focused on observation priorities + structured debrief routines (“structured shadowing guides”).
- ▶ Built for **busy schedules** and to reduce “mobility as an extra burden.”

Competency pathway: Observe → compare systems/practices → adopt 1–2 transferable methods → reflect and share locally.

Outputs: Observation notes, 1 adapted practice/mini-lesson, reflection + dissemination within school.

Model 2. Reciprocal host-inclusive exchange (mutual learning; shared ownership)

Participation grows when mobility is not one-directional but hosts also participate and learn, strengthening motivation and sustained partnerships.

Design features:

- ▶ Reciprocal visits and joint reflection sessions, with shared goals, roles and follow-up.
- ▶ Designed to strengthen **professional networks**, cooperation, and method exchange.

Outputs: Joint “transfer pack” (practices + conditions for success), and a shared dissemination product across institutions.

Model 3. Collaborative / co-teaching visit (practice-embedded professional learning)

The project highlights **collaborative teaching/co-teaching** visits as a core mobility model and emphasises the need for practice alignment and meaningfulness.

Design features (aligned to project co-education logic):

- ▶ Preparation → joint planning → co-teaching → evaluation/reflection loops.
- ▶ International peers can participate as observers and feedback partners (co-education phase).

Outputs: Co-taught lesson plan(s), classroom evidence, co-reflection notes, and an adaptation plan for the home school.

Model 4. Sabbatical model (one-month immersion)

A **one-month sabbatical visit** is identified as a model enabling deeper immersion and continuity beyond micro-visits.

Design features:

- ▶ Extended placement to access the “engine room” of practice (deeper authentic exposure), reinforcing reflection and sustained innovation.
- ▶ Requires strong institutional readiness: workload relief, cover planning, and recognition.

Outputs: A school-based innovation plan + implementation evidence after return (inspiration → local action).

Model 5. Blended mobility (virtual collaboration + short physical exchange)

The evidence emphasises that participation increases with **flexible formats** (short-term, blended/hybrid models), supported by digital tools and virtual mobility options.

Design features:

- ▶ Online preparation/co-design using a curated toolkit; short physical visit; online follow-up and dissemination.
- ▶ Directly addresses time constraints and administrative friction while sustaining partnerships.

Outputs: Co-created resources, documented process, and a transfer-and-scale plan inside the school.

Model 6. MOOC-integrated mobility (shared baseline + practice clinic)

21st Century European Teachers Project MOOCs are designed as flexible, self-paced learning experiences that culminate in lesson plan development aligned to each theme and the co-creation model.

Design features:

- ▶ MOOC completion (baseline concepts + lesson-plan drafting) → short mobility “clinic” for peer review, co-teaching rehearsal, and local adaptation.

Outputs: MOOC-based lesson plan(s) + refined implementation pack + evidence of classroom transfer.

6.2. Alternative blueprints for pre-service teacher mobility

Model 7. Practicum-aligned placement (recognition-first mobility)

Participation increases when mobility is embedded in curricula and receives automatic recognition without delaying studies; the document repeatedly flags inconsistent recognition and rigid academic schedules as barriers.

Design features:

- ▶ Mobility mapped to practicum requirements (supervision, assessment expectations, learning outcomes).
- ▶ Pre-departure preparation to reduce language/cultural anxiety and procedural uncertainty.

Outputs: Practicum portfolio + lesson plan(s) aligned to an emerging subject + structured reflection (“mirrors and windows”).

Model 8. Group mobility (cohort-based “collective mobility”)

Collective/group travel amplifies impact through shared reflection, reduced uncertainty, and stronger professional communities across cohorts and roles.

Design features:

- ▶ Small cohort mobility with guided peer reflection and shared dissemination upon return.
- ▶ Builds motivation and cultural readiness through peer support and alumni role models.

Outputs: Cohort reflection synthesis + joint resource set for the ITE programme.

Model 9. Co-education module mobility (pre-service + in-service joint learning)

The project’s co-education development lab approach integrates pre-service and in-service teachers in collaborative module development and classroom implementation with observation/feedback exchange.

Design features (four-phase model):]

- ▶ Preparation → discovering & exploring → co-teaching → evaluation & reflection.
- ▶ International team participates through observation/feedback, strengthening cross-border learning.

Outputs: Co-designed lesson plan(s) for lower-secondary teaching + reflection evidence + local implementation report.

Model 10. Progressive pathway: virtual → micro → longer mobility

The 21st Century European Teachers Project stresses diversified offers and progressive pathways (short, blended, long-term) to match life constraints and increase participation.

Design features:

- ▶ Start with virtual collaboration (tools + partnership routines), then micro-mobility/shadowing, then optional longer placement.

Outputs: Stepwise portfolio evidencing growth in confidence, language readiness, and classroom practice relevance.

Model 11. MOOC-supported mobility (theory-to-practice bridge)

21st Century European Teachers Project MOOCs provide structured learning objectives and lesson plan development across the project's themes, supporting pre-service teachers as well as in-service audiences.

Design features:

- ▶ MOOC learning → mobility application tasks (observation foci, classroom micro-teaching, co-teaching rehearsal) → reflection and recognition.

Outputs: MOOC-aligned lesson plan(s) + practicum artefacts demonstrating transfer and innovation.

Across Models 1–11, the proposed mobility blueprints are deliberately **designed to reduce the three obstacle clusters identified in the project** evidence base. **Structural and institutional barriers** are addressed by building “institutional readiness” into every model—securing leadership endorsement, providing administrative support, planning substitute/coverage arrangements, and ensuring clear recognition pathways—while also simplifying and streamlining procedures so mobility becomes a supported, routine option rather than an added burden. **Financial and time constraints** are mitigated through flexible mobility formats (notably micro-mobilities and blended pathways), complemented by protected time and workload relief, and by targeted financial support that better reflects real participation costs, including family-related expenses where relevant. Finally, **personal and professional challenges** are reduced through family-aware scheduling, accessibility-first planning, language support, clear step-by-step guidance that demystifies processes, and confidence-building peer structures (mentoring and role-model/alumni approaches) that normalise participation and lower perceived risk for both in-service and pre-service teachers.

Suggestions for implementation

7.1. Before you choose a blueprint: apply the readiness checklist

Before selecting a mobility blueprint, apply “institutional readiness” as your operating standard: leadership endorsement, administrative support, sound financial processes, substitute/coverage planning, and clear recognition pathways must be in place to ensure mobility is feasible, equitable, and educationally meaningful rather than an additional burden on teachers or student teachers.

At a minimum, the **readiness checklist** should confirm that: (1) **recognition is secured** through embedding mobility in work/study plans with a clear credit/validation route; (2) **time is protected** via workload relief or defined mobility windows and a substitute/cover plan for schools; (3) **costs are covered realistically** through real-cost budgeting and targeted top-ups for expensive destinations and, where relevant, dependents/housing; (4) **practical support is in place** through a mobility coordinator/contact person and step-by-step guides, templates, and timelines; and (5) **equity supports** are guaranteed, including accessibility accommodations, language preparation, and mentoring/alumni role models to build confidence and normalise participation.

7.2. Standard mobility workflow (use for any blueprint)

This **four-phase workflow** provides a common operational backbone for all Models 1–10, reflecting the *21st Century European Teachers* project’s co-education logic (preparation → collaborative practice → reflection) and the document’s emphasis on feasibility, relevance to classroom practice, and structured follow-up/transfer.

Phase 1 — PREPARE (3–9 weeks, blended)

- ▶ **Key actions:** Select one emerging theme (Technological empowerment, Sustainable learning, Entrepreneurship, Playful learning); define participant goals and success criteria (outputs + recognition); provide language and intercultural preparation and reduce anxiety through clear procedures and checklists; and set collaboration routines and tools (a lightweight virtual mobility toolkit).
- ▶ **Deliverables:** A mobility plan (roles, timetable, cover plan, budget, recognition pathway) plus either observation foci or an initial lesson-plan draft (depending on the selected model).

Phase 2 — DISCOVER & EXPLORE (mobility period)

- ▶ **Key actions:** Implement the activity set that fits the chosen blueprint (e.g., shadowing, co-teaching, or placement); use structured observation protocols (especially for micro-mobility/shadowing); produce concise comparative “system snapshots” (what differs, what works, what transfers); and capture “mirrors and windows” reflections that connect intercultural experience with professional self-knowledge.
- ▶ **Deliverables:** An observation log with at least three transferable practices and a draft adaptation plan for the home context.

Phase 3 — CO-TEACH / CO-DESIGN (before and during the visit)

- ▶ **Key actions:** Apply the co-education/co-creation cycle—moving from preparation into collaborative teaching and joint reflection—to co-design lesson plan(s) around the selected theme; where relevant, run co-teaching sessions supported by peer or international observer feedback.
- ▶ **Deliverables:** Co-designed lesson plan(s) refined to a classroom-ready format.

Phase 4 — EVALUATE, REFLECT, TRANSFER (2–6 weeks after return)

- ▶ **Key actions:** Implement at home (classroom trial), then conduct guided reflection and dissemination; convert inspiration into a small, concrete improvement action (“idea-to-project pipeline”) to support sustained innovation beyond the visit.
- ▶ **Deliverables:** A mobility portfolio (evidence + reflection) and a dissemination output appropriate to the setting (school/ITE briefing, workshop, or resource pack).

7.3. Built-in risk controls

To keep any mobility model feasible and equitable, apply the following controls as soon as risks emerge: (1) when **recognition is unclear**, embed mobility formally in institutional procedures and evaluation systems and clarify credit/validation pathways early; (2) when **costs exceed grants**, activate targeted top-ups, secure affordable accommodation routes, and apply equity supports; (3) when **workload or substitute shortages block participation**, protect time through workload relief or mobility windows, plan cover arrangements early, and prioritise micro-mobility or blended formats; (4) when **language confidence is low**, provide language preparation and offer low-stakes entry points such as virtual or group-based participation; and (5) when **motivation or readiness is weak**, strengthen peer confidence through alumni role models, mentoring, and concise awareness actions (e.g., “education pills”) that normalise mobility and make next steps clear.

Conclusion

The cross-country evidence in this report shows that mobility is **powerful but conditional**: its benefits are clear, yet participation and impact depend on whether institutions fund, recognise, simplify, and support it in ways that fit educators' real lives and workloads. When obstacles across the three clusters—**structural/institutional, financial/time, and personal/professional**—remain unaddressed, mobility can become an “extra burden” and inadvertently widen inequities by privileging those with stronger institutional backing, fewer caregiving constraints, and greater linguistic and financial capital.

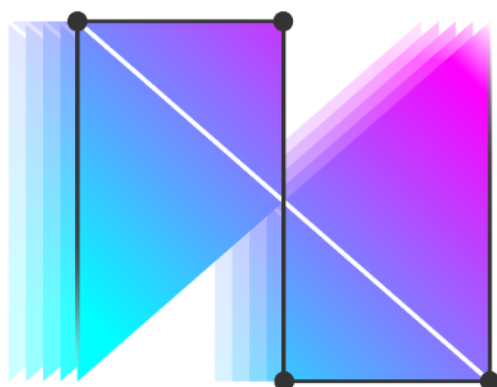
The blueprint models offered here respond by **designing barriers out of the system** through a shared minimum architecture: **(1) recognition and feasibility** built into work/study plans with clear procedures and manageable scheduling; **(2) equity supports** including real-cost funding, family-aware planning, accessibility-first arrangements, and language support; **(3) practice-orientation** through observation, reflection, co-teaching and classroom transfer, and **(4) outputs and follow-up** through portfolios, dissemination, and return-to-school implementation.

Implementation guidance reinforces that mobility choices should begin with an **institutional readiness checklist** (recognition, protected time and coverage planning, realistic budgeting, practical coordination support, and equity measures), then proceed through a common operational workflow (prepare → discover/explore → co-teach/co-design → evaluate/reflect/transfer), with built-in risk controls to address recognition gaps, cost overruns, workload constraints, language insecurity, or low readiness.

Taken together, the report positions mobility as a **designed competency pathway**: flexible enough to match diverse career stages and constraints, structured enough to produce transferable classroom value, and supported enough to be equitable and sustainable across institutions and countries.

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