Internationalisation of teacher education: priorities, strategies, and areas for development

Key findings from a survey of European higher education institutions

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As part of the DAAD program ‘Lehramt.International’, higher education stakeholders in Europe were surveyed in the first quarter of 2020 in order to identify priorities in the internationalisation of teacher education as well as development areas and measures taken to achieve it. Overall, 407 higher education stakeholders involved in teacher education responded to the survey, representing 28 countries. Germany was represented by 89 respondents. The present analysis focuses on the German perspective and compares it with transnational results from across Europe. Some of the key findings are:

- Both in Germany and in Europe, the higher education stakeholders surveyed are clearly convinced that internationalising teacher education is of great significance to society.

- Expanding student mobility was ranked as the highest priority as a means of internationalising teacher education in the long term. By contrast, strategies to support internationalisation at home fell in the lower third of priorities.

- Compared to the rest of Europe, German respondents were particularly likely to report that their higher education institution offered intercultural learning opportunities at home or abroad. For both Germany and Europe, the primary focus of these opportunities is on international mobility. Reports of learning opportunities to support internationalisation at home were much less common.

- For student teachers, opportunities to study abroad are the most prevalent of made by higher education institutions, although internships abroad represent an additional priority in Germany. In terms of internationalisation at home, special certificate programs for intercultural competences emerge as a very popular instrument in Germany that is reported at almost twice the rate of the European average.

- At the time of the survey, virtual teaching and learning formats arranged in collaboration with international partner institutions were rather an exception in teacher education, reported by only around a quarter of the respondents.
SUMMARY

- The question about barriers to international mobility for student teachers underlines that the risk of a potential delay or prolongation of studies prevents students from going abroad. In Germany, higher education stakeholders rated this as the most significant obstacle – with an average above the European. On a European level, on the other hand, financial obstacles were identified as being most hindering.

Across all countries in the survey, the findings show that Europe has already made much progress towards internationalisation, although there remains some scope for development. In Germany and in Europe the provision of intercultural learning opportunities can be further expanded. At the same time, it seems likely that higher education institutions will have changed much of what they offer as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, with virtual formats becoming more commonplace, as one example. It remains to be seen whether virtual courses or other offers for internationalisation at home will persist beyond the pandemic.

With regard to Germany, it may be concluded that the internationalisation of teacher education is comparably advanced, and that offers for student teachers are above the European average in most areas. This is certainly due in part to the efforts made by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research as well as by higher education institutions themselves to promote internationalisation through programs such as ‘Lehramt.International’. The high rate of German higher education institutions participating in the survey further underlines the commitment of the stakeholders involved.

Overall, the survey results illustrate that the internationalisation of teacher education is considered a significant issue in Europe. The results also confirm the conclusions reached by the EU in the summer of 2020 on initial and ongoing teacher education, whereby internationalisation was defined as a priority issue. In the light of these developments, the latest European Commission program represents a major step forward, by supporting the creation of 25 Erasmus+ Teacher Academies and boosting the internationalisation of teacher education through European partnerships, mobility opportunities and legal and regulatory frameworks. With this in mind, the results of the present survey provide some initial points for discussion.
1 Introduction

In recent years globalisation has made a profound impact on higher education. Most higher education institutions in Germany now have an internationalisation strategy in place or are in the process of developing one.¹ According to the German Joint Science Conference (Gemeinsame Wissenschaftskonferenz – GWK), internationalisation is an issue that higher education institutions should think about jointly and thoroughly in all areas – research, teaching and training, management and administration and also supporting service departments.²

Internationalisation is a much more prominent issue now than it was a few years ago, particularly in the field of teacher education. Teachers are increasingly required to work with cultural diversity and multilingualism in schools, and they will be especially likely to succeed in this if they acquire intercultural experience and relevant skills during their own education and training. Major international comparative studies such as the OECD’s Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)³ show that teachers feel they lack adequate preparation to meet the needs of diversity in the classroom. In OECD countries, for example, only an average of 26% of teachers feel well or very well prepared for this task.⁴ At the same time, only a third of teachers report that their teacher education covered the topic of teaching in multicultural or multilingual contexts. In light of these findings, it is evident that there is considerable scope for development around internationalisation in teacher education.

Policymakers have also recognised this need and picked up on the results of TALIS and other studies. European ministers of education have attached particular importance to international mobility for teachers and the internationalisation of teacher education in European Council conclusions. These were issued in 2020 under the title of ‘Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future’.⁵ The European Council conclusions call on member states to put in place a range of measures to support teachers’ continuing professional development, promote mobility and involve teachers in policymaking. In its conclusions, the Council stresses the importance of international mobility for student teachers. In addition to this, it draws attention to obstacles and challenges such as a lack of language competences and the recognition of stays abroad:

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³ PISA (‘Program for International Student Assessment’) and TALIS (‘Teaching and Learning International Survey’) are two international comparative studies which the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has commissioned since 2000 and 2002 respectively. The most recent PISA study was carried out in 79 countries. TALIS focuses on conditions for teachers and learners. Thus far it has been carried out in 24 countries across four continents.
Moreover, initial education programs for teachers often display a weak international dimension and low levels of study and traineeship mobility, in comparison to study programs in other subject fields, and there are challenges related to recognition of mobility periods abroad and learning outcomes. As such, internationalisation processes in initial teacher education are still somewhat behind other study programs. Although the same may be inferred for several European countries, the diversity of school and teacher education systems in the European educational area makes it likely that there will be differences between the various countries in terms of their specific needs around and approaches to internationalisation. The present study aims to identify these points of commonality and difference and to shed light on them through the framework of the following questions:

- How far is internationalisation seen as a relevant issue in teacher education, and why?
- What developmental needs are associated with the internationalisation of initial teacher education? How are these needs prioritised?
- What opportunities to develop intercultural competences are offered to student teachers and higher education employees?
- What are the barriers to student teachers’ international mobility?
- What forms of advice and information are used to encourage student teachers to become internationally mobile?
- What aspects are considered when choosing international partner institutions for cooperation in the field of teacher education?

Cf. ibid., p. 15.
2 Methodology

2.1 Sample

In order to provide an overview of internationalisation strategies and development fields in teacher education, the DAAD program "Lehramt.International" surveyed teacher education representatives from European higher education institutions. The survey was aimed at higher education staff involved in internationalisation and/or teacher education, e.g., at International Offices, centres of teacher education or in higher education teaching. It was carried out between January and May 2020 by the DAAD in collaboration with the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (Diku). Participation was voluntary and took place anonymously through the Limesurvey online survey tool. Higher education representatives were recruited to the survey by email through the networks of the DAAD and Diku.

2.1.1 Surveyed higher education representatives, by country

A total of 407 higher education representatives from 28 European countries took part in the survey. However, there were substantial discrepancies in the distribution of respondents from the different European countries (cf. Figure 1). For example, with 89 and 62 respondents respectively, Germany (22%) and Italy (15%) are considerably overrepresented, while Lithuania and Cyprus are substantially underrepresented, with only one respondent each. As some countries are represented by only a few respondents, the present study does not include detailed analyses of or comparisons between individual countries. Instead, it focuses on German higher education institutions, as the 89 respondents from 53 different higher education institutions

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7 Diku merged with other institutions into the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education in July 2021.
8 In the following illustrations, ‘n’ stands for the number of valid respondents or responses to each question.
provide sufficient information. A European average has nevertheless been calculated for each question block, which will make it possible to contextualise the findings about Germany (cf. Chapter 2.3). There number of respondents per institution ranged between one and two persons (except for one institution with ten respondents).

2.1.2 Respondents by primary field of work
The respondents represent a broad spectrum of perspectives on initial teacher education. As such the various stakeholder groups involved in internationalising initial teacher education are well represented here. In the subgroup of respondents from Germany the majority (58%) worked in teaching or in a centre for teacher education (Figure 2). Another quarter (25%) worked in International Offices, management and administration. This distribution is broadly in line with the full European data set.

Figure 2: Respondents from German higher education institutions, by primary field of work (n=407)

2.1.3 Respondents by size of higher education institution
Using the number of enrolled students as a measure, it is evident that smaller and larger higher education institutions participated in the survey (Figure 3). Just under a third of the respondents said they were from a higher education institution with between 10,000 and 25,000 students enrolled (2018/19 winter semester). Around a fifth reported a total number of over 25,000 students for that period. Only 11% of the respondents were associated with a small higher education institution with fewer than 500 students.
2.2 Survey

The survey used a questionnaire based on parts of an English-language instrument developed by Wernisch (2016), the content of which was adapted and expanded for the present study. In addition to demographic information, the questionnaire focused on six key areas:

1. convictions about internationalisation in teacher education;
2. areas for development around internationalising teacher education;
3. intercultural learning opportunities for student teachers and higher education employees connected to teacher education;
4. barriers to teacher education students’ mobility;
5. information and consultancy measures to promote international mobility for student teachers;
6. criteria for choosing international partner institutions.

The majority of questions in each block were closed-ended, with some opportunities for open responses. In order to capture responses that could be interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively, the survey employed a combination of assessment scales, multiple choice questions, ranking questions and free text fields. The majority of questions in each block were closed-ended, with some opportunities for open responses. In order to capture responses that could be interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively, the survey employed a combination of assessment scales, multiple choice questions, ranking questions and free text fields. The majority of questions in each block were closed-ended, with some opportunities for open responses. In order to capture responses that could be interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively, the survey employed a combination of assessment scales, multiple choice questions, ranking questions and free text fields.

Figure 3: Respondents from German higher education institutions, by number of students enrolled in 2018/19 (n=89)

![Bar chart showing the distribution of respondents by student enrollment size.]

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The original English edition of the survey may be found in Appendix 1.
were asked to assess how far they agreed using a five-point scale (0='not at all' to 4='very much'). Respondents could choose the 'I don’t know' option if they were unable to evaluate a statement.

to (2) Current areas for development were surveyed using the following primary question: 'Do you consider the following developmental fields to form priorities for internationalizing teacher education at your institution in the upcoming years?'. Here the respondents were asked to assess 12 areas for development on a five-point scale (0='not at all' to 4='to a large extent', plus 'I don’t know').

to (4) A similar format was employed for the primary question on barriers to teacher education students’ mobility: ‘To your knowledge, to what extent are the following aspects a problem for teacher education students at your institution when considering international mobility?’ The respondents rated 12 potential problem areas (such as prolongation of studies) on a five-point scale. A free-text field was also supplied in order to capture less well-known barriers.

Cronbach’s alpha was calculated for each scale in order to assess the reliability of the three assessment scales. The Cronbach’s alpha value across all three scales was between 0.81 and 0.92, which suggests a high degree of reliability.11

to (3) Intercultural learning opportunities were surveyed using the following primary question: ‘To your knowledge, which of the following learning opportunities are offered for teacher education students at your institution in an institutionalized form?’.
Respondents could choose multiple statements from a list of 11 statements about intercultural learning opportunities in their home institutions (such as foreign language courses) or abroad (e.g., study abroad).

A similar question surveyed seven different learning opportunities for academic staff involved in teacher education (such as teaching opportunities abroad for academic staff).

zu (5) Information and consultancy measures to promote mobility for student teachers were surveyed using a multiple-choice question with up to seven options: ‘To your knowledge, which of the following strategies does your institution offer to promote incoming and outgoing mobility as well as intercultural learning among teacher education students?’.

zu (6) Criteria for choosing international partner institutions for cooperation in teacher education were surveyed using the following primary question: ‘To your knowledge, what do teacher education institutions look for when they choose international partner institutions?’ To this end, respondents put six criteria into their preferred order or ranking (Figure 4). The six criteria in such a decision (including an ‘other’ category) could be ranked by the respondent. When evaluating the question, the criterion ranked first in a response was awarded six points, five for the criterion in second place and so on. The points awarded to each criterion were then added and divided by the number of responses.

11 The internal consistency table for the three assessment scales may be found in Appendix 2.
The six areas of focus were assessed through ten questions and 68 sub-questions or answer categories. In addition, the survey included eleven further questions on demographic and institutional information, good practice regulations and internationalisation initiatives.

2.3 Analysis and limitations

The following analysis focuses on data from respondents in Germany and compares it to a European average where a question permits it.\(^2\) In order to prevent that overrepresented countries, such as Germany, carry more weight in calculations of European averages than less represented countries, an average was first calculated for each country. These were then used to calculate an overall average of all country averages. However, even though the countries had comparable weighting in the analysis, the values and results should be interpreted with appropriate caution. It should also be borne in mind that the scales used in the questionnaire were ranking and rating scales. As such, the values are based on respondents’ subjective views. Differences between countries may therefore be attributable to the respondents’ individual experiences and perceptions.

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\(^2\) A separate analysis of the data revealed that responses from countries with fewer than five participants in the survey did not represent outliers that could distort the European averages. To test this, a European average for all countries was calculated for each question or question option and compared with the averages of countries with five or more respondents. There being no significance between these two averages, further analysis was undertaken on the basis of the averages for all countries.
3 Findings

3.1 Convictions about internationalisation in teacher education

The first question block surveyed whether respondents considered a series of beliefs about internationalising teacher education were widely held in their respective institutions (Figure 5). Overall, the respondents strongly agreed with the statements in the questionnaire. Any statement with an average score of over 3 was assessed as important or very important. Internationalisation was identified by both European respondents and the German subsample as a highly relevant issue. German stakeholders most highly rated the need to foster a European/global identity and outlook, and ‘international competences’. Their average score of 3.6 was slightly above the European average. At a European level, increasingly multicultural societies in Europe and the world lead to the need to develop new competences in teachers received the highest average rating. Although this aspect received only the second-highest rating in Germany, the rating itself hardly deviates from the European average – indeed it is marginally higher. Overall, however, there was only a slight difference between the scores from Germany and Europe, never differing by more than 0.3 points.

Figure 5: Convictions and arguments for internationalisation in teacher education

In order to save space, the response options from each question block are presented in shortened form in the following illustrations. The full wording for each may be found in the questionnaire in Appendix 1.

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13 In order to save space, the response options from each question block are presented in shortened form in the following illustrations. The full wording for each may be found in the questionnaire in Appendix 1.
3.2 Areas for development around internationalising teacher education

With regard to areas for development, respondents were asked to assess how far certain aspects formed priorities for the internationalisation of teacher education at their respective institutions. All aspects were rated with an average above the scale centre (‘2’), showing they are perceived as relevant areas for development in internationalising teacher education (Figure 6). According to the responses, expanding student mobility forms the highest priority in Germany as well as in Europe. While incoming and outgoing mobility for academic staff was ranked second in Europe, it was ranked eighth (out of 12) in Germany.

Overall, the data suggests that internationalisation at home is considered a lower priority than international mobility. Both in Germany and in Europe, strategies to promote intercultural learning at the home institution were scored in the bottom third of the priorities. Expanding teaching in English, recruiting international students and academic staff, and increasing the international orientation of degree programs occupied the bottom four ranks. The clearest differences between German and European averages were also evident for these categories, amounting to just under half point on the scale.

Figure 6: Priorities for internationalising teacher education

Do you consider the following developmental fields to form priorities for internationalizing teacher education at your institution in the upcoming years?

- Increasing mobility
- Fostering support for students to consider and include an international dimension into their studies
- Increasing institutional support for internationalization
- Reducing various barriers to mobility
- Increasing curricular and structural integration of mobility programs
- Increasing faculty commitment and faculty involvement in internationalization
- Increasing the quality of mobility programs to maximize student learning and program effectiveness
- Increasing academic staff mobility (incoming and outgoing) to support internationalization
- Review existing international programs and partnerships to align them with student demand (e.g. demand for more integrated internship programs) and institutional priorities
- Increasing the international orientation of degree programs at large
- Increase teaching in English
- Increasing the recruitment of international students and staff

- Germany (n ≥ 82)
- Europe (n ≥ 389)

![Bar chart showing priorities for internationalising teacher education in Germany and Europe](chart.png)
3.3 Intercultural learning opportunities in teacher education

3.3.1 Learning opportunities for student teachers

The development of intercultural competences depends on what intercultural learning opportunities student teachers are offered by their higher education institution and on how they are used. In order to survey this offer indirectly, the higher education representatives were asked about the learning opportunities they knew to be offered by their institution. It was not possible to collect data on the actual number or scope of these offers. As such, the question focused on whether the various learning opportunities were offered or not. The offer covered by the survey included intercultural learning opportunities ‘at home’ (such as courses taught by international visiting lecturers) and abroad (such as study abroad).

The results underscore the priorities shown by responses on the areas for development, in that learning opportunities at home institutions were, on average, reported by fewer respondents ($M_{\text{Germany}} = 56\%$; $M_{\text{Europe}} = 47\%$) than opportunities abroad ($M_{\text{Germany}} = 70\%$; $M_{\text{Europe}} = 58\%$). Overall, the distribution of learning opportunity offers and the focuses reported by German respondents were in line with the European average (Figure 7).

That being said, the German values were above the European values in almost all categories: it appears that there is an above-average offer of learning opportunities across these higher education institutions. Opportunities for internships or study abroad were reported particularly frequently (83% and 96% respectively). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the data obtained through this survey only indicates whether or not a certain type of learning opportunity is provided by a given institution for teacher education students. It does not, however, indicate the scope of this provision, e.g., in terms of scholarships provided or places on a course.

The most common learning opportunity offered by higher education institutions in Germany and in Europe is study abroad. Internships abroad and foreign language courses (at the home institution) were both in second place in Germany. With regard to European responses, courses taught in English ranked second. This category is also the only type of learning opportunity where Germany is below the European average.
The clearest difference between Germany and Europe shows around programs, through which students can earn certificates for intercultural competences, e.g., by completing certain modules or demonstrating specific experience. Just under half of the German higher education representatives reported that their institutions offered certificates of this kind. This was almost twice the European average, where this approach to internationalisation was one of the least common (26%). Similar differences may be observed for language courses abroad. These do not seem to be part of the standard offer in Germany or in Europe, as only 35% of the respondents in Germany reported such offers for their institutions, while the value for Europe was only 15%.

An examination of intercultural learning opportunities at home institutions shows that there is still room for development around some learning opportunities. On average, less than half of the European respondents reported courses with international content or international teaching staff. Joint virtual courses offered in partnership with international partner institutions were reported by only a few respondents on average, both in Germany and in Europe, with only just under a quarter of respondents reporting virtual cooperations related to teacher education.

These results show that the internationalisation of German teacher education is being implemented very comprehensively and consistently. Comparisons with other countries emphasize this (Figure 8): while the profile for offers in Germany closely resembles the European average in many respects, the profiles of other countries show striking differences in the scope (i.e. the size of the outlined area) and in their emphasis (i.e. the shape of the plot). For example, Italy’s profile shows a comparatively low level of internationalisation for teacher education, which clearly
falls behind that of Germany in many regards. At the same time, Italy and Croatia appear to attach less importance to internships abroad than to study abroad. While in Germany the difference between study abroad and internships abroad is only around nine percentage points, internships are around 26% lower for Italy and 44% for Croatia compared to study visits. The reverse is true for Sweden, where internships (92%) are reported more commonly than study visits (85%). In terms of internationalisation at home, Norway stands out for its high scores for courses with an international orientation (73%) and courses in English (77%).

**Figure 8: Proportions of higher education representatives surveyed who reported that intercultural learning opportunities for student teachers were offered at their higher education institution (Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Croatia)**
Table 1: Proportions of higher education representatives surveyed who reported that intercultural learning opportunities were offered for student teachers at their institution (details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Germany (n = 89)</th>
<th>Croatia (n = 34)</th>
<th>Italy (n = 62)</th>
<th>Norway (n = 22)</th>
<th>Sweden (n = 26)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses with an international orientation</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses taught in English</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses taught in virtual collaboration with international partners</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses taught by international teaching staff</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language courses at the home institution</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special certificate programs taken in addition to regular curriculum</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other certificate programs taken in addition to regular curriculum</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study abroad</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships abroad</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short stays abroad</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language courses abroad</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.2 Learning opportunities for higher education staff

In addition to offers for student teachers, the survey also addressed intercultural learning opportunities for higher education staff connected to teacher education. The results show that in four of the seven areas surveyed, Germany was slightly below the European values, although they were essentially in line with them. On average both in Germany and in Europe, around three-quarters of respondents identified teaching opportunities abroad, participation in international conferences, international exchange opportunities for administrative staff, research opportunities abroad as opportunities to acquire intercultural competence or to gain international experience (Figure 9). One area in which Germany clearly lags behind Europe is study visits for higher education staff connected to teacher education. This option was reported by less than half the respondents, in contrast to 64% for the European value.

On the other hand, there are large above-average differences for the provision of language courses, both at home higher education institutions and abroad. Germany figures substantially above the European average for both of these. At 16%, language courses abroad were no more common for higher education staff than they were for student teachers. Language courses at their home institution was reported twice as frequently. However, there are clear disparities on this point between Germany and Europe, where 69% of respondents identified offers of this kind.
3.4 Barriers to teacher education students’ mobility

International mobility of students can be restricted by barriers that are personal or structural in nature. In order to understand how these barriers affect student teachers, higher education representatives were surveyed on potential obstacles to mobility. The results show that low levels of mobility can hardly be attributed to a lack of mobility offers, information or advice measure or insufficient support. These points were rated on a scale from 0 (‘not at all’) to 5 (‘to a large extent’). On average, scores between 1.1 and 1.5 were assessed as being only slightly problematic, both in Germany and in Europe (Figure 10).

By contrast, the scores underline the relevance of prolonging studies and difficulties with reconciling visits with the curriculum and financing. With regard to Germany, it is evident that a potential prolongation of studies is a substantial barrier to international mobility for student teachers. This aspect is ranked top in Germany, and, with an average score of 3.2, lies almost a whole point above the European average. Nevertheless, prolongation of studies was also a very relevant issue in Europe, coming in third place. Difficulties reconciling visits with curriculum requirements was ranked as the second-most important issue both in Germany and in Europe, although the obstacle was rated as more problematic in Germany than in Europe ($M_{\text{Germany}} = 3.0$; $M_{\text{Europe}} = 2.2$). Financing difficulties was assessed as being similarly problematic on both levels, although it represented the highest-ranked barrier for Europe.
3.5 Information and consultancy measures to promote international student mobility

Which measures do higher education institutions put in place to lower barriers for student teachers and promote stays abroad? The strategy most commonly identified by respondents, both in Germany and in Europe, is the provision of information materials for students (Figure 11). Almost all respondents from Germany reported that such measures were in place at their institutions. This also matches the perception described above that access to information and advice presents hardly any barrier for student teachers. However, the data does raise the question of whether information and advice for student teachers is primarily aimed at those students who are already open to international mobility and have at least a basic level of interest, as the presenting arguments to students about the reasons to go abroad option was identified by only two-thirds of respondents, both in Germany and on the European average. However, this approach is an essential element in winning over students to undertake stays abroad if they are not interested in or are uncertain about mobility. Peer-to-peer support could also be employed as a strategy here,
e.g., by employing students with mobility experience as multipliers. However, only around half of the respondents listed such approaches among the measures that were being implemented.

There was a comparatively low rate of reporting for approaches aimed at promoting internationalisation at home. Granted, three-quarters of the respondents stated that their higher education institution provided information material for international students. However, with regard to Germany, it is notable that this measure is employed less often than the European average and substantially (-20%) less often than measures targeting German students. Strategies to provide information for higher education staff abroad are also low when compared to the European average, being reported by only 39% of respondents.

**Figure 11: Information-sharing strategies to promote international mobility for student teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Germany (n = 89)</th>
<th>Europe (n = 407)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information materials for outgoing students</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information days and events</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing academic staff at home institution with information</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information materials for incoming students</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting and presenting arguments to students about the reasons to go abroad</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using students with international experience as ambassadors and multipliers</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing academic and/or administrative staff at international institutions with information</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.6 Criteria for choosing international partner institutions

Finally, the higher education representatives were surveyed on the criteria that form the basis for choosing international partner institutions for cooperations related to teacher education. The results shown in Figure 12 indicate the average ranking assigned to each criterion by the respondents. By way of example, *prior experience of collaboration* was the top-ranked criterion, both for German higher education institutions and the European average, with average scores of 4.7 and 4.6 respectively.
Overall, there were only slight differences between the scores for Germany and Europe. While in Germany *international reputation* and *potential future research collaboration* took second and third places respectively, the order was reversed in the European average. The same applies to the rankings of *popularity of the institution* and *popularity of the institution’s location*. One further criterion that was included by 19% of German respondents in the free text field was the overlap between the higher education institutions in terms of the courses they offer, structures and research interests.
4 Conclusions

Despite the limitations regarding the sample that were described above and the fact that the survey was conducted before the pandemic, the findings overall reinforce the view that the internationalisation of teacher education is perceived as an issue of great relevance to society, both in Germany and in Europe. As such the results align with the EU’s efforts to boost the internationalisation of teacher education through its Council conclusions on initial and ongoing teacher education on the one hand, and by pushing forward a program to set up 25 Erasmus+ Teacher Academies on the other.

The survey here shows that higher education institutions providing teacher education in Europe are already implementing a range of internationalisation activities, the primary focus of which is on international student mobility. Activities aimed at internationalisation at home do also exist, although they appear to be less widespread. At the time of the survey, it was still very rare to provide learning opportunities that build on international cooperations in virtual formats. On this point it is likely that the Covid-19 pandemic will have caused higher education institutions to transfer their offers to different formats, although it remains to be seen how long this provision will continue into the post-pandemic period.

A first positive conclusion may also be drawn about Germany on individual points. It is true that there is still room for potential development and there are still structural obstacles to reconciling stays abroad into curricula which need to be addressed. Nevertheless, Germany is above the European average in its offer of most types of learning opportunities. This has certainly been helped by the efforts of politicians and higher education management which have been going on for several years to promote internationalisation in teacher education, be that in the form of individual activities or larger-scale structural program such as "Lehramt.International".
## 5 APPENDIX

### APPENDIX 1: ORIGINAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension / question</th>
<th>Items / response categories</th>
<th>Scale / format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic and institutional information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is your institution located?</td>
<td>single choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the name of your institution?</td>
<td>open response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your department:</td>
<td>open response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your main field of work in relation to the internationalization of teacher education?</td>
<td>single choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many students were enrolled in your institution in the course of 2018/19?</td>
<td>single choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the approximate percentage of students enrolled in teacher education?</td>
<td>single choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalization of teacher education at HEI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you consider the issues stated below to constitute relevant rationales and generally shared convictions at your institution?</td>
<td>0 – &quot;Not at all&quot;; 4 – &quot;Very much&quot;; 6 – &quot;I don't know&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you consider the following developmental fields to form priorities for internationalizing teacher education at your institution in the upcoming years?</td>
<td>0 – &quot;Not at all&quot;; 4 – &quot;To a large extent&quot;; 6 – &quot;I don't know&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The internationalization of teacher education is a way to improve the quality of teacher education and develop and modernize degree programs.
- Through internationally experienced graduates, the internationalization of teacher education fosters renewal, development and innovation in primary and secondary school systems and the improvement of their quality.
- Increasingly globalized and multicultural living and working environments lead to a need to foster a European/global identity and outlook, and 'international competences' such as international knowledge, intercultural skills, citizenship skills, language skills in young people.
- Increasingly multicultural societies in Europe and the world lead to the need to develop new competences in teachers, in particular in relation to the broad professional competence of dealing with and teaching in culturally diverse and heterogeneous settings.
- In teacher education there is a need for a stronger internationalization of systems and structures and for fostering the intercultural dimension of the field at large (developing a European identity, strengthening internationality, etc.).
- Increasing faculty commitment and faculty involvement in internationalization
- Increasing institutional support for internationalization (strategy, resource devotion, rewards, institutional structures, reviews)
- Review existing international programs and partnerships to align them with student demand (e.g.
demand for more integrated internship programs) and institutional priorities

- Increasing mobility
- Reducing various barriers to mobility
- Increasing the quality of mobility programs to maximize student learning and program effectiveness (e.g., through preparatory programs, accompanying support and learning programs, integration with curriculum)
- Increasing curricular and structural integration of mobility programs (reducing curricular barriers, reducing problems with accreditation, introducing mobility windows)
- Increasing the international orientation of degree programs at large (including international content, international and intercultural competences, etc.)
- Fostering support (information, counselling, workshops, courses, etc.) for students to consider and include an international dimension into their studies
- Increasing academic staff mobility (incoming and outgoing) to support internationalization
- Increase teaching in English
- Increasing the recruitment of international students and staff

To your knowledge, which of the following learning opportunities are offered for teacher education students at your institution in an institutionalized form? Please mark only those program offers which are not completely independent or singular offers, for example based on the initiative of one person.

- Courses with an international orientation, e.g. comparative studies of education systems, global citizenship, intercultural competence
- Courses taught in English for incoming and home students (not necessarily with ‘international dimension’)
- Courses taught in virtual collaboration with international partners
- Courses taught by international teaching staff
- Foreign language courses
- Special certificate programs taken in addition to regular curriculum
- Other extra-curricular activities (e.g. international clubs, buddy network)
- Other: _________________
- I don’t know.

To your knowledge, which of the following international learning opportunities are offered for teacher education students at your institution in an institutionalized form? Please mark only those program offers which are not completely independent or singular offers, for example based on the initiative of one person.

- Study abroad (trimester, semester, year)
- Internships abroad (teaching practice or other internship; incl. job shadowing in schools)
- Short stays abroad (e.g. summer courses, study visits, excursions without a full academic course program)
- Language courses abroad
- Other: _________________
- I don’t know.

To your knowledge, which of the following opportunities are offered for academic or administrative staff involved in teacher education?

- Teaching opportunities abroad for academic staff
- Research opportunities abroad for academic staff
- International exchange opportunities for administrative staff
- Language courses (abroad)
- Language courses (at home)
- Participation in international conferences
- Study visits
- I don’t know.
- Others: _________________

To your knowledge, which of the following strategies does your institution offer to promote incoming and outgoing mobility as well as intercultural learning among teacher education students?

- Information days and events (e.g. study abroad day, info sessions presenting options and introducing procedures, etc.)
- Information materials for potentially outgoing students (brochures, study guides, websites)
- Information materials for potentially incoming students (brochures, study guides, websites)
- Collecting and presenting arguments to students about the reasons to go abroad (what is there to gain, what can one learn, how is it relevant to students and their later professional life, etc.)
- Providing academic staff at home institution with information so that they can formally and informally promote mobility
- Providing academic and/or administrative staff at international institutions with information so that they can formally and informally promote mobility
### Partnering with Higher Education Institutions for Teacher Education

To your knowledge, what do teacher education institutions look for when they choose international partner institutions?

- International ranking/reputation of the institution
- Popularity of the institution among students
- Potential future research collaboration
- Prior experience of collaboration with the institution
- Other (if applicable, please specify below): _______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>International ranking/reputation of the institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Popularity of the institution among students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Potential future research collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prior experience of collaboration with the institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please specify the option "Other" that you have used in the ranking above (if applicable).

### Barriers to Teacher Education Students’ Mobility

To your knowledge, to what extent are the following aspects a problem for teacher education students at your institution when considering international mobility?

- Financing difficulties
- Delay/ prolongation of studies
- Difficulties reconciling visits with curriculum requirements
- Organisational effort
- Separation from family and partner
- Problems with the recognition of international academic performance
- Problems with the recognition of international teaching practice (e.g., school internships)
- Lack of opportunities offered by home institution (e.g., few partnerships)
- Insufficient foreign language proficiency
- Lack of information and guidance at home institution
- Lack of follow-up and support at institution abroad (university or school)
- Benefits for career development are low or unclear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>&quot;Not at all&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;To a large extent&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;I don't know&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What other aspects are a problem for teacher education students at your institution when considering international mobility?

### Good Practice Regulations and Programs

In your country, have there been any regulations or regulatory changes that particularly hindered or supported the internationalization of teacher education at your institution? If so, please indicate a name, website link or brief description of the regulation.

To your knowledge, is there a "good practice" program or initiative that your government or institution has put in place to foster the internationalization of teacher education? If so, please indicate a name, website link or brief description of the program.
## APPENDIX 2: INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OF ASSESSMENT SCALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Response format</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>convictions and arguments for internationalisation in teacher education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 levels (0-4)</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>16.73</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current areas for development</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5 levels (0-4)</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>36.52</td>
<td>8.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barriers to teacher education students' mobility</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5 levels (0-4)</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>23.63</td>
<td>8.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remarks: N = 407, α = Cronbach’s Alpha, M = Median, SD = Standard Deviation