



Teaching across the border in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR): Legal obstacles and opportunities

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Lesgeven over de grens in de Euregio Maas-Rijn (EMR): Juridische obstakels en mogelijkheden

Grenzüberschreitender Unterricht in der Euregio Maas-Rhein (EMR): Rechtliche Hindernisse und Möglichkeiten

L'enseignement transfrontalier dans l'Euregio Meuse-Rhin (EMR): Obstacles juridiques et opportunités

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ITEM
Cross-border

Opettaminen naapurimaassa tai -alueella Euregio Meuse-Rhinessä: Lainsäädännölliset haasteet ja mahdollisuudet

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Outline

- 1 Research aims
- 2 Experiences of cross-border mobility of teachers
- 3 Analysis of obstacles: Recognition of qualifications
- 4 (Employment conditions, social security & taxation)
- 5 Conclusions and recommendations

Research aims

- Gain a more comprehensive image of the **legal and administrative obstacles** that **secondary school teachers** experience in the event of cross-border mobility
- Potential solutions and best practices for overcoming them – contribute to **improved labour mobility** for secondary school teachers in the EMR
- Research methods: a review of literature, semi-structured interviews, and a legal analysis of relevant legislation and policy

Interview results:

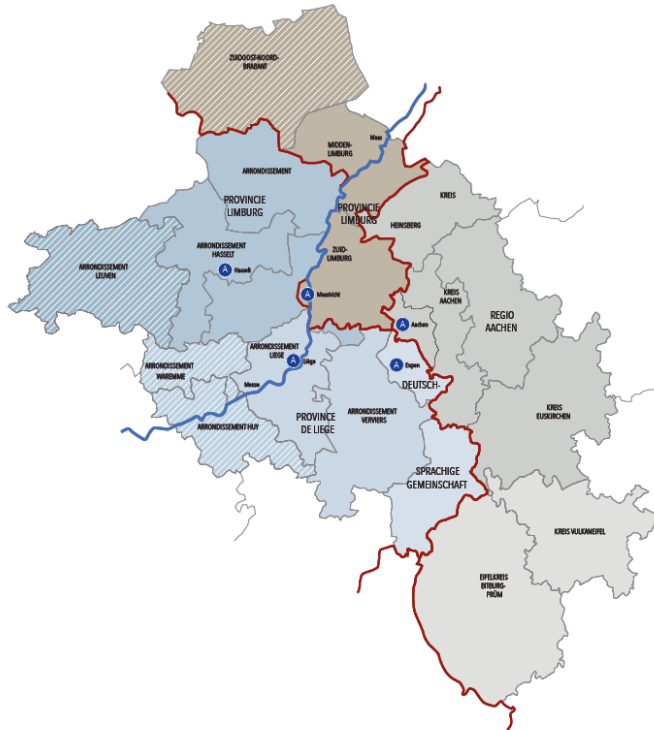
Experiences of cross-border mobility of teachers

- Viewed as interesting option in a **regional labour market such as EMR**
- Combatting (language) teacher shortages, especially in neighboring languages or/and as part of CLIL programmes
- But: **legal integration of teachers into neighbouring education system remains a challenge**
- Main categories of obstacles: recognition of qualifications, employment conditions, social security & taxation

Obstacles that teachers experienced

- Most prevalent obstacle: **Recognition of professional qualifications**, discourage cross-border mobility
- Reasons: **lengthy procedure**, **lack of information**, teachers were frequently required to complete **additional training** before recognition was granted
- Not only between national borders, but also in cases of intra-mobility (Belgium)

Case examples



Case examples



- **Netherlands to German-speaking community: 2 weeks** (language test)

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- **Netherlands to German-speaking community: 2 weeks** (language test)
- **Netherlands to Germany: 2 years** (additional training)

Case examples



- **Netherlands to German-speaking community: 2 weeks** (language test)
- **Netherlands to Germany: 2 years** (additional training)
- **Flemish Community to French Community: 8 years**

Legal analysis of obstacles: Recognition of qualifications

- **Procedures** harmonised in the EU by means of the Professional Qualifications Directive 2013/55
- Regulated (“protected”) professions = secondary school teacher
- The requirements on the **profession** of secondary school teacher are not harmonised, qualifications and content of training vary

Legal analysis of obstacles: Recognition of qualifications

- Local authorities compare on **case-by-case** the foreign qualifications of the teacher with those obtained in the host Member State.
 - Diploma and work experience (*all relevant experience*)
 - Language level/certificates of good conduct
 - Decision in 3 months
 - If substantial differences, compensation measures (exam/training), max. 3 years

Recognition of (professional) qualifications in the EMR

Country/region	Competent authority	Other requirements	Costs
The Netherlands	<i>Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO) + OCW</i>	Certificate of good conduct + proof of Dutch language skills may be asked	Free of charge
Germany, NRW	<i>Bezirksregierung Arnsberg</i>	Employer may ask: Personal aptitude, health + German language skills	Free of charge
Flemish Community	<i>Agentschap voor Onderwijsdiensten (AGODI)</i>	Must demonstrate sufficient level of Dutch (in some cases French)	Free of charge
French Community	<i>Direction de la reconnaissance des diplômes étrangers + expert committee</i>	Must demonstrate (specific level of) French	65 euros
German-speaking Community	<i>Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens</i>	Must demonstrate (specific level of) German (+ French)	Free of charge

Conclusions: Recognition of qualifications

- Differences in the profession among EMR (**full report**)
 - Number of taught subjects
 - Level of training: Universities vs. Higher vocational schools (HBO)
 - Content of training: Balance of practise (internships) and theory
 - = **Additional training may be required...**
- Procedurally
 - Language requirements: **strictest in Belgium**. But: transition period
 - Certificate of competence per subject/age range

Alternative paths to teach in a neighbouring country/region

- Recognition always not necessary (or procedurally lighter options) – a solution?
- On the EU-level
 - **Temporary and occasional basis** vs. establishment
 - Free movement of services
 - Declaration (not comprehensive comparison)

Alternative paths In the Netherlands

- Lateral entry (*Zij-instroom*)
 - Nuffic: Specifically programmes for German and French language teachers
- Guest/hybrid teacher (*Gastdocent/hybride leraar*)

Alternative paths In Germany (NRW)

- Lateral entry (*Seiteneinstieg*): high demand and teacher shortage
 - *Berufsbegleitender Vorbereitungsdienst, OBAS*
 - *Pädagogische Einführung, PE*
- Temporary employment (*Vertretungslehrer/in*)
- Teaching at a private school (*Ergänzungsschulen*)

Alternative paths In Belgium

- **Exceptional circumstances**
 - Exceptional and temporary situations (Flemish Community)
 - Teacher shortages (language teachers) – French Community
 - Temporary shortage of qualified school staff (German-speaking community)



Conclusions on alternative paths

- **Lateral entry:** leads generally to full qualification as teacher
- Advantages:
 - Shorter in duration than regular teacher education
 - Reimbursed training period with relevant experience
 - Neighbouring language programmes (NL/Nuffic)
- But:
 - More appealing to early career teachers (or aspiring teachers), than those with multiple years of professional experience

Conclusions on alternative paths

- EU-level: What is **temporary and occasional**?
- **Exceptional situations** (e.g. teacher shortages) across EMR possible: but general disadvantage in employment conditions
 - Usually does not allow for permanent appointment/contract
 - Lower salary scale
- **Cross-border mobility**: not only an exception or temporary measure? But a (permanent) opportunity in the EMR

Conclusions on alternative paths

- Focus should be placed on **solutions that aids the teacher to become fully qualified** in the neighbouring region
 - Maintaining level of qualification, quality of education
 - Beneficial for teachers: qualifications have consequences on their employment conditions
- **These obstacles as well as their solutions are not considered in isolation from each other, since in fact they have an effect on each other**

Other obstacles: Differences in employment conditions, social security and taxation

- Differences that may facilitate or discourage mobility: professional status, salary, working hours, holiday planning...
- Social security and taxation: highly complex legal framework, individual circumstances yet impacts health insurance, child benefits, tax deductions/benefits
 - Note: Impact of employment conditions!

Conclusions and recommendations

- Potential to increase cross-border mobility
- A potential measure to mitigate language teacher shortages; EMR as regional labour market (360°)
- To facilitate cross-border mobility:
Obstacles not distinct from one another: a comprehensive, holistic approach for addressing them

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Strengthen (central) information provision in the EMR.

- Targeted information for teachers and schools
- Responsibility and mandate

Conclusions and recommendations

2. Recognition of professional qualifications:

Bridge differences in the secondary teaching profession in the EMR

- Common training programs, modules, exchanges, internships and/or secondments
- Strengthen **euregional and intercultural competences** of a teacher
- Evaluated positively during recognition process; no additional training
- Permanent perspectives in a neighbouring (cross-border) labour market as a fully qualified teacher

Conclusions and recommendations

3. Foster cooperation in the EMR at the national, regional and operational levels.

- In EMR decisions that are to affect cross-border workers inherently should not be taken unilaterally on a regional or national level
- Involvement of schools (Euregional networks)



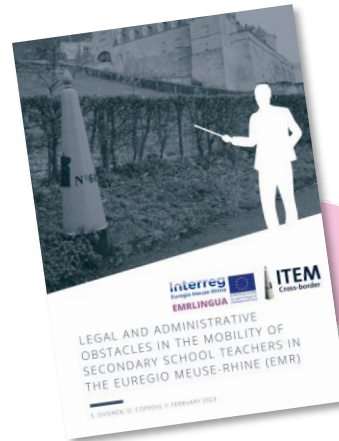
Thank you, Bedankt, Dankeschön, Merci, Kiitos!



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Executive summaries
EN/NL/DE/FR

Pick up at ITEM stand



Full report available at
www.crossborderitem.eu