

Bologna and Initial Teacher Education in Portugal²

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ABSTRACT

The recent reform of initial teacher education policy in Portugal was developed in the context of implementing the Bologna Process and the broader European Union work programme of "Education and Training 2010". This keynote highlights the links of this reform with the policy guidelines of these European processes; it also compares this reform with the changes other European member states are making following the Bologna Process concerning the degree structure of teacher education programmes. The Portuguese teacher education reform is integrated in a career-long professional development perspective and particularly emphasises: a research-based level of qualification; a professional qualification where the learning outcomes are those required by the renewed role of the teacher; a teaching qualification acquired in the teaching context with supervised practice, internship and early career support (induction) periods demanding mutual-benefit partnerships between higher education institutions and schools; quality development and quality assurance measures. However, the transformation of this written reform into innovative practices of policymakers, of teacher education institutions and of teacher educators and mentors, as well as of the main stakeholders constitutes a great implementation challenge which is benefitting from the support stemming by European co-operation.

Key words: teacher, teacher educator, quality of education, teacher education policy, professionalism

The recent reform (February 2007) of initial teacher education policy in Portugal was developed in the context of implementing the Bologna Process components (namely those related to the degree structure, the

² Keynote for the TEPE (Teacher Education Policy in Europe) 2009 Conference (Umea, 18-20 May).

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System ("ECTS"), learning outcomes and quality assurance) and of the broader European Union work programme of "Education and Training 2010" (Portugal, 2007b). The improvement of teacher education quality is one of the objectives of this work programme developed in the European Union in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy; this work programme also integrates higher education and the Bologna Process. The most recent documents related to this objective are the Communication from the European Commission of August 2007 (European Commission, 2007) and the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union of November 2007 (Council of the European Union, 2007)³. These Conclusions were reached following the mentioned Communication and define the policy priorities on teacher education agreed by the education ministers as guidelines for national policies and European Union co-operation in the field.

This keynote⁴ highlights the links between the teacher education reform in Portugal and the policy guidelines of these European processes; it also compares this reform with the changes other European member states are making following the Bologna Process concerning the degree structure of teacher education programmes⁵. We could say that the

³ In September 2008, the European Parliament also adopted a Resolution on this topic. The European Parliament also recently commissioned, at the request of its Committee on Culture and Education, a study on the content and quality of primary school teacher education in the European Union member states (Institute of Education, 2008). The work developed in the late 1990s by the Erasmus Thematic Network of Teacher Education in Europe ("TNTEE") (Buchberger et al., 2000) can be seen as a background for the preparatory work on this objective carried out by the Commission and member states' representatives between 2002-2007; for further information on this preparatory work between 2002-2004, see Campos (2006). In this context, an OECD study (2005) also deserves mention.

⁴ A shorter version of this keynote was presented at the European Network of Education Councils ("EUNEC") Conference *The Teaching Profession: Changes, Challenges and Perspectives* (Vilnius 13-15 October 2008). To some extent, it follows the text about *Teacher Education Policy in Portugal* distributed by the Portuguese Ministry of Education during the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of European Union (Portugal, 2007 c); I am the author of the section of this text on initial teacher education.

⁵ This comparison is based on a survey made in 19 European member states by Dimitropoulos (2008) in the framework of activities of the European Network for Teacher Education Policies ("ENTEP") activities. In relation to implementation of the Bologna Process in teacher education programmes of 12 South-East European countries, see Zgaga (2006).

Bologna guidelines apply to teacher education programmes in that they are provided at the higher education level; the "Education and Training 2010" guidelines also refer to the *content* of these programmes.

The new initial teacher qualification policy in Portugal was designed to meet the education and training challenges teachers face nowadays and to make a greater contribution to improving the quality of their teaching practices. This reform is integrated in a: (i) *career-long professional development perspective* and it particularly emphasises (ii) *a research-based level of qualification*; (iii) *a professional qualification* where the learning outcomes are those required by the renewed role of the teacher; (iv) *a teaching qualification acquired in the teaching context* with supervised practice, internship and early career support (induction) periods demanding mutual-benefit partnerships between higher education institutions and schools; and (v) *quality development and quality assurance*. However, the transformation of this written reform into innovative practices of policymakers, of teacher education institutions and of teacher educators and mentors as well as of the main stakeholders constitutes a great (vi) *implementation challenge* which is benefiting from the support stemming from European co-operation.

1 Career-long teacher professional development

According to the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union, "Member States should give high priority to sustaining and improving the quality of teacher education within a career-long perspective" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/7). The Portuguese teacher education system was already designed in a career-long perspective by the 1986 Education Act, in the same year Portugal joined the European Union (Campos, 2000). From the early 1970s, the initial subject-teacher education programmes have been higher education degrees following either the concurrent or the consecutive model; class-teacher education programmes, organised according to the concurrent model, have also been provided by higher education institutions and have awarded a degree since the mid-1980s. In-service teacher education, including specialised teacher education (curriculum development, teaching supervision, school management and leadership etc.), became widespread from the early 1990s onwards thanks to the contribution of the European Social Fund. However, the foreseen

induction period was never implemented. We only deal here with the initial segment of the system, noting that even this should be designed in a lifelong learning perspective, as pinpointed in the Bologna Process.

2 Teaching qualification at a higher and research-based level

Master's level professional qualification. The Council of the European Union agreed to "endeavour to ensure that teachers hold a qualification from a higher education institution..." and to "consider the adoption of measures aimed at raising the level of qualifications...for employment as a teacher" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8). From 2007/2008 onward, to be allowed to teach in Portugal one has to acquire a Master's professional qualification from the 2nd cycle of higher education within the context of the Bologna Process, that is, at level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework ("EQF") (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2008). The total higher education ECTS credits demanded vary between 240 and 300 (180+60 to 120), depending on the school education level.

In the *class teacher* case, the 1st cycle is already aimed at teacher education and at qualifying the students for a broader range of professional tasks in the training, socio-cultural and communication sectors; this common first cycle gives access to a specific class teacher qualification at master's level:

- (i) pre-school or the first four grades of primary school (60 ECTS credits);
- (ii) pre-school and the first four grades of primary school (90 ECTS credits);
- (iii) primary school (six grades) (90 to 120 ECTS credits).

In the *subject teacher* case, only the 2nd cycle, with a workload of 90 to 120 ECTS credits, is specifically aimed at the teaching qualification; access to this cycle presupposes that candidates have already completed a minimum number of ECTS credits in respective subjects during the preceding 1st cycle of higher education. One could say that class teacher education follows the *concurrent* model, while the education of subject teachers is to a certain extent organised in a *consecutive* way.

The same qualification level for all teachers. It is worth pointing out that since 1997 the level of professional qualification for teaching (as well as salary) has been the same for all teachers, putting an end to the differences between class teachers and subject teachers; however, until now this qualification used to be obtained in the 1st cycle of higher education (level 6 of the EQF).

Raising qualification level. It should be underlined that the recent change mentioned above does not mean longer courses (they were already 4 to 5 years long), but rather changes in the level of expected learning outcomes. As is well known, the EQF characterises qualification levels by the nature of specific learning outcomes and not in relation to aspects of input or training processes leading to such outcomes; there are also level descriptors within the framework of the Bologna Process. This level raising has clear implications for curriculum organisation: it is not enough to simply change the names (Master's instead of Bachelor)⁶.

Research-based qualification. The Council of the European Union agreed to "endeavour to ensure that teachers hold a qualification...which strikes a suitable balance between research-based studies and teaching practice" and "Promote...the acquisition of competences which enable teachers to...develop new knowledge and be innovative through engagement in reflective practice and research" (Council of the European Union, 2007, pp. C300/8 and 9). In fact, this higher level of teacher qualification is characterised by a closer relationship with research. The construction of particular solutions for the diversity of teaching situations requires that teachers make links, through reflective practice, between the knowledge acquired in their professional experience and research results and theoretical developments (Niemi, 2008; Edwards, 2001; Erixon et al., 2001). For this reason, greater emphasis is given in the Portuguese reform to the methods and results of educational research as a component of initial teacher education in order to develop an

⁶ In a recent policy paper, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE, 2008) "expressed regret at seeing that Ministers failed to bring forward any firm commitment in relation to raising the level of qualification...of teacher education. The Ministers...failed to express any substantial recommendation as regards the need to raise the actual level of qualification of teachers" (p. 27). On the contrary, the Ministers, as already mentioned, agreed to "consider the adoption of measures aimed at raising the level of qualifications...for employment as a teacher" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8).

investigative attitude in their professional practice in a specific context. This is one of the distinguishing features of this teacher education reform and the one that creates the most challenges for higher education institutions⁷.

Qualification for teaching in school education as well as in vocational and adult education. This research-based professional qualification is required in order to be authorised to teach in pre-school education and in all programmes awarding compulsory (nine-year-long) and upper-secondary education certificates; therefore, it covers teaching:

- in public and private sectors;
- not only when students are children and youngsters but also when they are adults; and
- in school education and also in vocational training programmes as long as they award certified academic qualifications⁸.

The degree structure of teacher education programmes in other European member states. According to a survey conducted by Dimitropoulos (2008) in 19⁹ EU member states, not all of them had already made reforms in teacher education after the Bologna Declaration. What follows refers to the situation at the end of 2007.

Only in two-thirds of the surveyed member states do *pre-school teacher* education programmes award a higher education degree, a bachelor in the great majority and a master's in a few cases; the others still award a secondary education or a post-secondary education diploma. Nearly all the programmes follow the concurrent model and their duration ranges from 3 to 4 years; in some member states, however, both models,

⁷ For information on research structures in teacher education in Portugal, see Campos (2001).

⁸ It is worth noting that teaching qualifications for technical and vocational subjects were not affected by this recent reform. The policy decision about the qualifications required to teach these subjects is currently under review; it is foreseen that professionals with a minimum qualification level from the 1st cycle of higher education (Level 6 of the EQF) and additional pedagogic training can become teachers. Regarding this topic, the Council agreed to endeavour to ensure that teachers "working in the field of initial vocational education, are highly qualified in their professional area and hold a suitable pedagogical qualification" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8)

⁹ Austria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

concurrent and consecutive, coexist. Nevertheless, only in a few member states do these programmes apply the ECTS.

The situation is somewhat different when it comes to *primary school teacher* education. Now all teacher education programmes award a higher education degree, mostly a bachelor, and half of them apply the ECTS; their duration ranges from 3 to 5 years and, in general, they follow the concurrent model, although in some member states both models coexist.

Finally, *subject teacher education* programmes follow a consecutive model: the teaching qualification is acquired after a bachelor degree in a programme awarding a post-graduate diploma or, in some cases, a master. Most of the programmes apply the ECTS and their duration ranges from 4 to 6.5 years.

Dimitropoulos (2008) concludes the survey by identifying some emerging trends in reforms of the degree structure of teacher education programmes whenever they are already adapted to the Bologna Process framework:

- developing in higher education institutions;
- awarding a higher education degree;
- awarding a master's degree, namely in the case of subject teacher education programmes;
- applying the ECTS; and
- following the concurrent model (in the case of class teacher education programmes) or the consecutive one (in the case of subject teacher education programmes).

One could say that these are the trends guiding the reform of initial teacher education in Portugal.

3 Curriculum based on learning outcomes: outcomes required by the teaching role

Level and field of learning outcomes. In terms of the Bologna Process, higher education programmes are characterised and compared not only in terms of the credits or hours students need to complete, but also in terms of the kind of learning outcomes (level and field) that those hours are

dedicated to. The desired learning outcomes, or those that the courses should guarantee, are the organising principle of the teacher education curriculum and the fundamental criterion for its accreditation. After having made reference to the *level* of learning outcomes, we now turn to the specific characteristics of the *field* of teaching qualification.

Learning outcomes required by the teaching role. The Council noted that “numerous ... changes in society...hasten the need for the development of more competence-centred approaches to teaching, together with a greater emphasis on learning outcomes” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/7). Whatever the chosen term (competencies, standards...), in the last few years several EU member states have already defined the expected learning outcomes of teacher education programmes (Eurydice, 2006). In the recent policy definition used in Portugal, these programmes should ensure the acquisition of learning outcomes required by the teaching role and by career-long professional development. The teaching profile and the curriculum to be taught are the main sources for setting up these learning outcomes; other factors to be considered for choosing learning outcomes are emerging changes in society and schools and, as a consequence, in the role of the teacher; as well as scientific and technological developments and any relevant research in the area of education. This means that higher education institutions, whenever they are preparing future teachers, should also take into account and contribute to the permanent renewal of the school education curriculum.

Teaching profile. The teaching profile was already designed in 2001 and is organised according to the role of teachers not only in the classroom, but also in the school, in the relationship between the school and the community and in their own professional development¹⁰. In this profile, teaching is clearly defined as a *professional* activity rather than a *technical* one. In this context, the Council of the European Union has highlighted the preparation of some more demanding “new” tasks of the teacher’s role (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/9)¹¹.

¹⁰ The English version of this profile can be found in Campos (2002).

¹¹ In fact, the Council agreed to “Promote, during initial teacher education, early career support and through continuous professional development the acquisition of competences which will enable teachers to:

- Teach transversal competences such as those outlined in the Recommendation on key competences,

Learning outcome areas. The specific content of learning outcomes (knowledge, competencies and attitudes) needed to fulfil teacher tasks is to be defined by higher education institutions in the framework of their scientific and pedagogical autonomy. Nevertheless, some broad learning outcome areas were defined by the Portuguese policy reform; however, it is assumed that these learning areas should not be treated separately but as components of a whole in the construction of professional knowledge. Thus the main learning outcome areas that characterise the teaching qualifications are as follows:

- *Specific subjects of each teaching area:* learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge that learners have to acquire, according to the demands of the school education curriculum; it should be stressed that the 2007 reform pays special attention to the reinforcement of the subject-based preparation of class teachers: the workload dedicated to specific teaching subjects is now greater (120 to 150 ECTS credits) than before and is distributed between the first and the second cycles.
- *Education:* learning outcomes relevant to all teachers’ performances in classroom, in school, in the relationship with the community and in participation in the development of education policy.
- *Specific didactics:* learning outcomes related to the learning process and to the teaching of curriculum areas or subjects that individual teachers are responsible for, taking into account the suitability of this process for the specific nature of such areas or subjects, the learning objectives of the target school level and the age of the learners; this area has acquired an identity, being isolated from that of *Education*

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- Create a safe and attractive school environment which is based on mutual respect and cooperation
 - Teach effectively in heterogeneous classes of pupils from diverse social and cultural backgrounds and a wide range of abilities and needs, including special education needs,
 - Work in close collaboration with colleagues, parents and the wider community,
 - Participate in the development of the school or training centre in which they are employed,
 - Develop new knowledge and be innovative through engagement in reflective practice and research,
 - Make use of ICT in their various tasks, as well as in their continuing professional development,
 - Become autonomous learners in their own career-long professional development” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/9).

For information on the new tasks of the teacher’s role, see Campos (2005, 2006).

with the same workload (22 to 30 ECTS credits) in order to value the specificity of the teaching subject.

- *Teaching practice*: learning outcomes related to the capacity to use knowledge in concrete professional teaching situations and to analyse and evaluate these situations in order to make them suitable to a specific context.
- *Cultural, social and ethical*: learning outcomes related to the major problems of the world today, cross-curricular areas and the ethical and civic aspects of teaching.
- *Education research methods*: learning outcomes related to the principles and methods that allow teachers to adopt a research-based attitude in their specific teaching context¹².

4 Qualification acquired in a teaching context

Learning within a work context. The Council agreed to “endeavour to ensure that teachers hold a qualification...which strikes a suitable balance between research-based studies and teaching practice” and to “consider the adoption of measures aimed at raising...the degree of practical experience required for employment as a teacher” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8). Reforms of initial teacher education in several European member states pay special attention to learning in the teaching context as an essential dimension in order to develop the professional competence of future teachers (Ministry of Education of Portugal, 2008, 88-118). In the Portuguese reform, the emphasis placed upon teaching practice, and in particular that supervised by qualified teachers, involves recognition of the importance of this unique and irreplaceable learning environment in acquiring teaching competence. Thus, teaching practice increases gradually from the beginning of the teacher education course, not as an isolated component but as an opportunity to mobilise and integrate a broad range of knowledge, competencies and attitudes in order to solve real issues in the classroom, in the school and in its relationship with the community. This component, which includes observation and

¹² The ECTS credits of each area in the subject-teacher programmes (master of 90 to 120 ECTS credits): (i) Specific subjects of each teaching area: (bachelor) + 5%; (ii) Education: 25%; (iii) Specific didactics: 25%; (iv) Teaching practice: 40%; the last two areas (Cultural, social and ethical and Education research methods) are included in the ECTS of areas (ii) and (iii).

collaboration in teaching situations and supervised planning, as well as teaching and assessment inside and outside the classroom in a variety of contexts, involves between 50 to 70 ECTS credits in the case of class teachers and between 35 and 50 ECTS credits in the case of subject teachers.

Teaching practice assessment, an essential element of awarding a professional qualification. The relevance given to this component is so great that its final assessment has to take into account how well prepared the future teacher is to satisfy, in an integrated way, all teaching requirements. Success in the teaching practice component, thus assessed, is a precondition to be awarded a teaching qualification and failure in this component cannot be compensated by success in the more theoretical components.

Early career support (induction period). The Council of the European Union agreed to “Endeavour to ensure that teachers...have access to effective early career support programmes at the start of their career” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8). The induction period of beginning teachers is being developed in several EU member states (Fransson & Gustafsson (eds.), 2008; Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2007; Eisenschmidt, 2008). In the recent reform of access to work in state schools (Portugal, 2007 a), it was decided that during the probationary year the teacher is given didactic, pedagogic and scientific support by a qualified teacher who has preferably had specialised training in curriculum organisation and development or pedagogic supervision and trainer training. Hence, it can be said that this reform establishes the provision of an early career support period (induction) for the professional development of new teachers¹³.

Partnerships with schools and community institutions. The Council of the European Union agreed to “encourage closer links and partnerships between schools – which should develop as *learning communities* – and teacher education institutions” (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/8). In fact, teaching practice and educational research activities in a school context imply that higher education institutions cannot provide teacher education programmes without establishing sustained

¹³ However, as it is linked to the probationary year, the induction period does not involve all new teachers since in various situations some of them are exempt from the probationary year.

collaboration protocols with schools. The relevance of partnerships between higher education institutions and schools for career-long teacher professional development is being highlighted by teacher education policies which consider learning in the teaching context as an important component of such education (Snoek, 2008). Within the context of such partnerships, the Portuguese reform also expects higher education institutions to play an active role in improving teaching quality in these schools, responding to the in-service (including the early career support) and specialised training needs of schools and teachers. The quality criteria of such partnerships were also defined by this reform and compliance with them is required for higher education institutions to be able to obtain the state's authorisation to provide teacher education programmes.

Mobility in transnational teaching contexts for teacher professional development. The Council of the European Union agreed to "support mobility programmes for teachers, student teachers and teacher educators which are designated to have a significant impact on their professional development, as well as to foster better understanding of cultural differences and an awareness of the European dimension of teaching" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/9). The teacher education reform in Portugal foresees a programme of incentives for quality, innovation and mobility. Regarding practice in transnational teaching contexts, the incentives aim at promoting the mobility of teachers and student teachers whenever relevant to the development of teaching competencies in the area of the European dimension of education and training. These incentives can be seen as a complement to the Erasmus and Comenius EU programmes.

5 Quality development and quality assurance

The Council of the European Union agreed to: "ensure that provision for teachers' initial education, early career support and further professional development is co-coordinated, coherent, adequately resourced and quality assured"; "provide appropriate support for teacher education institutions and teacher educators, so as to enable these to develop innovative responses to the new demands on teacher education" and to "... ensure that those institutions (schools and HE institutions) provide coherent, high quality and relevant teacher education programmes

which respond effectively to the evolving needs of schools, teachers and society at large" (Council of the European Union, 2007, pp. C300/8-9). Beyond being a concern of higher education reforms in the framework of the Bologna Process, quality development and assurance of teacher education institutions and programmes also constitutes a specific dimension of teacher education reforms in several European member states (Eurydice, 2006). In the recent reform of the Portuguese initial teacher education system, a number of mechanisms are aimed at promoting and ensuring the quality of teacher qualification.

At education system level. A biennial follow-up report should be prepared with recommendations for promoting the quality of the teacher education system. Further, the government has committed itself to create a specific programme aimed at stimulating and funding projects promoting quality, innovation and mobility in the development of teacher education programmes.

At programme level. In relation to teacher education programmes, such mechanisms consist of the following:

- the teacher education curriculum has to be suitable to professional performance profiles and to the school education curriculum, contextualised and updated through consultation with all those interested in the quality of teaching qualifications: schools, professional and scientific associations, previous graduates etc.;
- student numbers are being limited according to the number and qualifications of teacher educators and mentors available in higher education institutions and partner schools, as well as to the capacity and quality of these institutions; and
- teacher education programmes have to be accredited as a Master's degree and as teaching qualification by the National Accreditation Agency¹⁴, which has to achieve clarity with the Ministry of Education regarding professional accreditation.

Quality assurance of future teacher competence. Some of the most important requirements for the quality assurance of future teacher competence are the following:

¹⁴ Agency to be set up within the context of the European System of Quality Assurance in Higher Education. A first specific attempt of accrediting initial teacher education programmes was taken in Portugal in the early years of this century; however this policy measure was cancelled following a government change (Campos, 2004).

- verification, before starting a Master's course, of the qualitative suitability of ECTS credits completed in subject-teaching areas for the requirements of the school education curriculum;
- assessment, before starting a Master's course, of mother tongue oral and written skills;
- success in the teaching practice component, indispensable for the awarding of a teaching qualification, depends on trainees fully demonstrating competence in satisfying the requirements of the teaching profession;
- passing national written exams (with a mark of at least 14 out of 20) before applying for employment in state schools¹⁵, in order to check the future teacher's competence in the field of teaching subjects; and
- successfully completing a probationary year when starting a state school job in order to prove overall teaching competence.

The verification of the first three of the above requirements is the responsibility of teacher education institutions; the implementation of national examinations and of the probationary year is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

6 The challenges of implementation

We can conclude that the recent reform of initial teacher education in Portugal is in tune with the Bologna and European Union guidelines. It should also be pointed out that the main features of the Portuguese reform of initial teacher education are already aligned with the vision recently adopted by the *European Trade Union Committee for Education* (ETUCE, 2008)¹⁶.

¹⁵ This quality assurance mechanism of teaching qualifications, as with the following one, only involves teachers who wish to be employed by state schools and are, therefore, not part of the teacher education reform but part of the regulation of access to employment in state schools. In 2006/2007, only 15.6% of teachers were working in private education.

¹⁶ "ETUCE advocates an initial teacher education at Master's level which:

- Provides in-depth qualification in all relevant subjects, including in pedagogical practice and in transversal competences
- Is research-based, has high academic standards and at the same time is rooted in everyday reality of the schools
- Includes a significant research component and produces reflective practitioners

Challenges at policy and institutional level. However, public administration and teacher education institutions face some major challenges in the appropriate implementation of these policy guidelines of initial teacher education. Successfully moving from an outlined system to innovations in the practices of policymakers, of teacher education institutions and partner schools, as well as of teacher educators and mentors, depends on how far such challenges are met at the policy and institutional level.

The main challenges faced at the policy level include:

- the creation of a governmental programme for stimulating and funding quality, innovation and mobility;
- rigour in defining student teacher numbers according to the number of qualified teacher educators and mentors;
- the development of an effective professional accreditation system; and
- the development of a true early career support period and of a demanding probationary year.

At the institutional level the following challenges can be pinpointed:

- raising teaching qualification from level 6 to research-based level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework;
- The development of a teacher education curriculum:
 - *social demand-driven more than only supply-driven and with the participation of the main stakeholders*
 - *focused on the role of teachers and learning outcomes rather than on a collection of individual academic subjects*
 - *simultaneously research-based and practice-oriented*
 - *in a lifelong life-wide perspective;*
- the development of mutual benefit partnerships between HE institutions and schools; and
- the certification of professional teaching qualification based on demonstrated teaching competence.

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- Gives teachers the skills needed to exert a high degree of professional autonomy and judgment in order to enable them to adapt their teaching to the needs of the individual group of learners and the individual child or young person
 - Offers the right combination between theory and pedagogical practice and benefits from partnerships between teacher education institutes and schools
 - Encourages mobility of teachers within the different levels and sectors of the education system, provided the adequate re-qualification is acquired" (p. 8)

The challenge for implementation and European Union co-operation. The European Union's co-operation can be of great support in effectively facing all these challenges. In the "Education and Training 2010" work programme, in each member state the responsibility for achieving the shared goals agreed at European Union level belongs to national authorities. However, the Council also agreed to promote some forms of co-operation at the European level in order to support these authorities in national implementation efforts. Thus, according to the recent (November 2007) agreement among education ministers of EU member states, teacher education has to become *a transversal policy objective of the "Education and Training 2010" work programme and of its successor.* That is, European Union co-operation in this field may cover school education, vocational education and training and higher education as well as all teaching opportunities in lifelong learning. Further, in order to promote implementation of the policy priorities in teacher education outlined in the November Conclusions, the Council has invited the MS, with the support of the Commission, to "work together ... within the framework of the open method of coordination...", promoting, in an integrated approach "(i) evidence-based knowledge relevant to teacher education policies, (ii) further initiatives on mutual learning, (iii) innovative teacher education projects and (iv) the mobility of teachers, teacher educators and student teachers" (Council of the European Union, 2007, p. C300/9). Finally, the Council has also made reference to the main instruments for fulfilling these European Union co-operation initiatives, namely: (i) those forming part of the open method of co-ordination; (ii) the Lifelong Learning Programme; (iii) the 7th Framework Programme for Research Development; and (iv) the European Social Fund. Promoting such European Union co-operation in the teacher education field demands the development and implementation of an integrated action plan which the European Commission, in collaboration with the member states' representatives, is surely doing¹⁷.

¹⁷ In this article, the main accent of the links made between the recent initial teacher education reform in Portugal and the Bologna Process as well as the Education and Training 2010 work programme guidelines centred on their concern with the *quality* of teaching qualifications. However, these processes are also concerned with the issue of the *comparability* of teaching qualifications in order to facilitate the mobility of teachers as workers in the European employment space. The quality, level and degree structure of teaching qualification are relevant components of such comparability. Nevertheless, they are not enough: the comparability of learning outcomes still remains (Campos, 2007; Zgaga, 2008). There is still the need in the field of teacher education to implement the 2005 European Union Directive on the recognition of professional

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- qualifications. To our knowledge, nothing has been done so far regarding such implementation.

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