

# The European Education Area and the European dimension of teaching: professional profile and training of the European teacher

Antonietta Marini-Industrial PhD Student-antonietta.marini@unifi.it

## Introduction

According to the Maastricht Treaty, the responsibility for the organisation and content of education and training systems lies with the Member States. However, the "Community" contributes to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States through a wide range of actions (mobility of students and teachers, joint study programmes, networks and exchanging information on national education systems).

Since the launch of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000 the competences of the European Union in the education field have increased. Member States agreed on common objectives, benchmarks and indicators to be achieved by adopting the Open Method of Coordination through common policy frameworks of cooperation (Education and Training 2010, Education and Training 2020, European Education Area strategic framework).

Cooperation in the education policy field over the last twenty years has led to a complex process of Europeanisation of national education systems, with different levels of governance. In many national education systems a specific role in promoting the European dimension of education is assigned to Regional School Authorities (in Italy Regional School Offices).

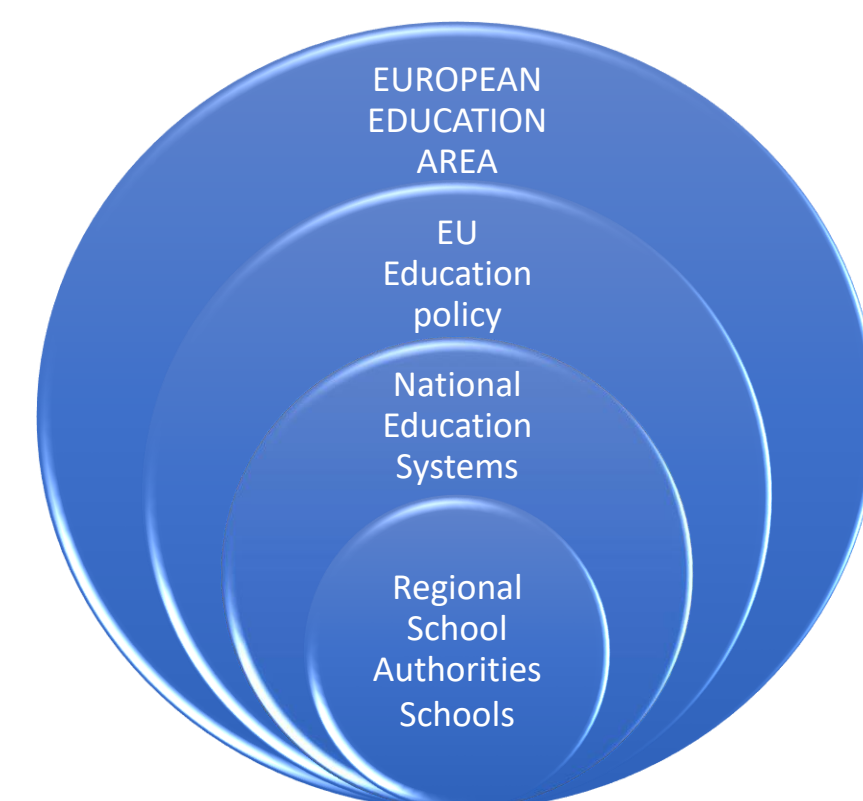
## Europeanizing Education: a top-down process



## The European dimension of teaching: a bottom-up movement

This bottom up movement originates from the autonomous initiative of schools and the main agents are the teachers themselves. According to the principle of subsidiarity, it is supported by the EU through the actions of the Erasmus+ Programme.

European mobility (physical and virtual) of teachers improves their professional practice and their pedagogical knowledge, skills and competences and helps to develop teachers' sense of belonging to a European teaching and learning community.



## Research questions

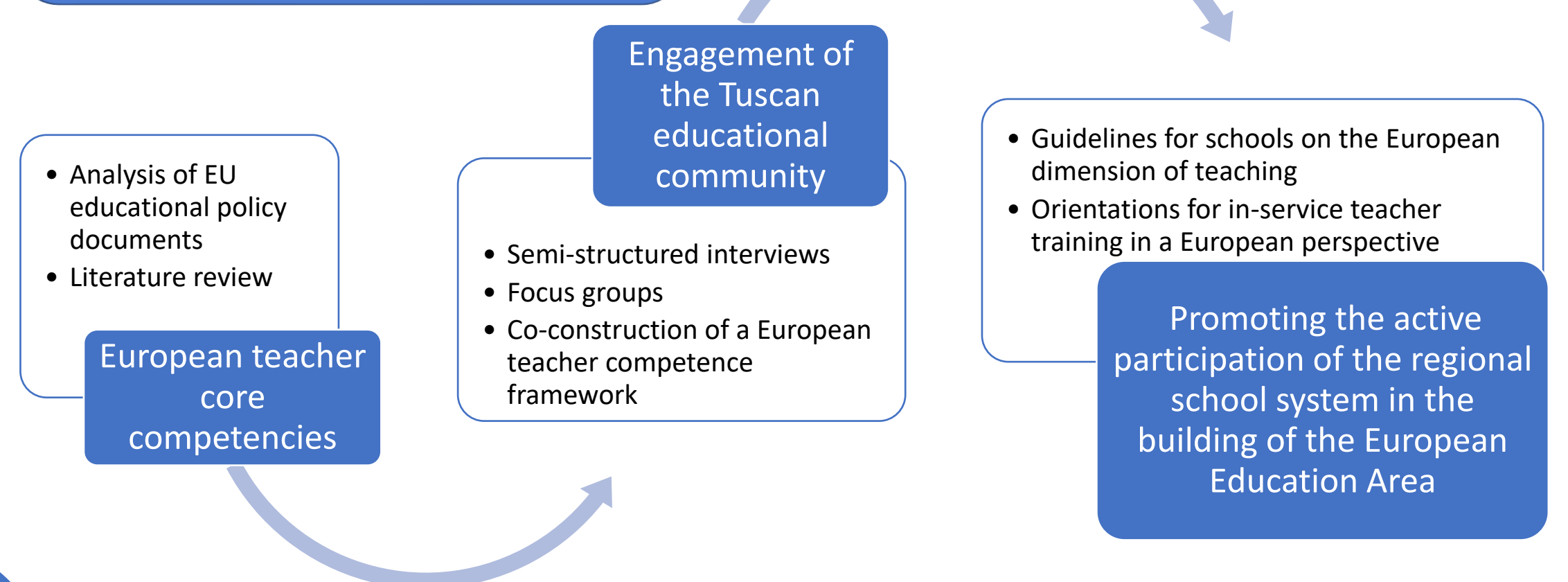
- what is the professional profile of the "European teacher", i.e. a teacher working within a European context of professionalism?
- how does European mobility (physical and virtual) support the professional development of the European teacher?

## Method

In our research, as an industrial PhD, Europeanisation of the national education system will be analysed from a bottom-up perspective, i.e. that of the 'Tuscan educational community', with a focus on the role of the Regional School Office.

Method: qualitative. Tools: focus group and semi-structured interviews with teachers and headmasters with many years of experience in the internationalization of curricula and active participation in European programmes (Erasmus+ and eTwinning).

## Research design and aims



## Preliminary results and discussion

The literature review and the analysis of the key policy documents on education since the Maastricht Treaty have highlighted:

- in Supranational Education studies, the Europeanisation of education systems is mainly approached from a top-down perspective as a political process and in its regulatory aspects;
- despite the central role played by teachers in the integration of national education systems into the European Education Area, the profile and the key competencies of the "European teacher" have not been defined in UE policy documents;
- the active involvement of teachers and Italian schools in the European teaching and learning community contrasts with the absence of up-to-date ministerial guidelines.

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