

# JoMiTE: Preparing Teachers as Learners in Europe's Educational Worlds

Katja Schröder, JoMiTE  
Department of Romance Languages, University of Regensburg, Germany

This paper pursues to give a short, but broad insight into the vision of JoMiTE – a European *Life Long Learning Project*. Funded by the European Commission, nine universities and six partner schools from different corners of Europe co-think and cooperate to establish a Joint Master in Teacher Education by 2010. Why, how and with which guiding visions they do that, and how JoMiTE can be seen as a sustainable motor of life long learning among European teachers, shall be of prime interest in the following project portrait.

## 1. Introduction: Life Long Learning in and for Europe

What is Europe, what is a European teacher – what is education in, for and beyond European classrooms? A truly and humanly united Europe needs not only the mobility of goods and services, but also of dynamical minds and ideas; it needs physical as well as mental and emotional border-crossings, especially in and through the field of education. That was also the underlying message of the *Life Long Learning Programme 2007-2013*, signed by the EU Parliament and the Council “to foster interaction, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the Community, so that they become a world quality reference”.<sup>1</sup>

As the European *LLP*-initiative tried to make clear from the very beginning, **education** is not something autonomous; it does not exist in a social vacuum, but, on the contrary, lies at the heart of Europe – at the core of its community and at the core of the future it might face. With programmes such as Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo or Grundtvig, it aims “to contribute through lifelong learning to the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge society, with sustainable economic development, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”<sup>2</sup> – conceiving education as something multidimensional and polyfunctional. JoMiTE is one of the projects which were made possible through the LLP funding – and tries to live up to those new **border crossings in education** as far and fully as possible.

A “new European way in education”, in this sense, goes beyond Bologna. It does not only aim at common degrees and shared standards, it is not merely about forms and structures, but focuses on the individuals who fill and follow them. It is about common objectives, learning outcomes and philosophies – about sustainable education in the broadest sense of the term. According to this understanding, education also goes beyond school or university realities. It should neither be spatially confined to classrooms, nor restricted to the time span of one's childhood and youth. As, if we conceive the complex structures of our world as dynamical and ever-changing learning environments, we all are, always, exposed to life long learning and teaching. – Maybe the somewhat artificial but more holistic term “**edification**” (with equivalents such as *kasvatus* in Finnish or *Bildung* in German) can better grasp and transmit this rather open

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index_en.html) (30.01.2009).

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/newprog/index_en.html) (30.01.2009).

concept of education: of an education which comprises each and every one of us, in all aspects and stages of our lives – as we are all learners, just as well as all teachers, at some point, of something, in the complex realities we constantly move in.

But when, where and how do we all learn *how* to learn, acquire the competences necessary to be the life-long-learners the world asks us to be? There is no doubt that school teachers play an essential role in this, actively and passively. No matter if we are in Joensuu, Finland or in Jerez, Spain; no matter if we look at primary schools or university seminars: it is mostly **teachers** who give first impulses and ideas for life-long learning. Yet, it is clear that in order to prepare students for life, for the world, teachers need to be paragons of life-long learning themselves. Obviously, they cannot foster young adults to cope with a world, with a Europe, with which they themselves have lost touch. Therefore, teachers also need to have learnt and internalized how to keep up with the ever-new changes, challenges and chances around them: During their studies, they need to acquire the attitudes and skills necessary to become teachers, in service, they need to gain experiences through which they grow and develop their potentials – as professionals and as versatile personalities. Thus, we should not only stress the importance of the teacher profession, but also and especially the value of its basis, of **teacher education** programmes as the cradle of our countries' educational cultures.

Although there seems to be a broad consensus about the core value of life-long-learning, the ways and methods to promote it – be it in the context of teacher education or in general – are not always unanimous or clear cut. Actually, they cannot be and should not be in the unique diversity which makes Europe what it is. Our continent is not only rich in languages, cultures and cuisines, but also in pedagogical and educational approaches: educational systems, pedagogical perspectives and teaching methods differ between countries and cultures. Our school systems, the ways in which they are organized and lived, show a variety of differences, which should not be perceived as a problem, but rather as a **mosaic of learning situations** themselves. Through the contact with different “normalities” we all – and students teachers especially – can engage in constant changes of perspectives, experience the relativity of any reality, and are thus encouraged to reflect upon the foreign as well as our own educational worlds.

## 2. JoMiTE

### 2.1 General vision and philosophy

United by the vision that educational border crossings can foster holistic and sustainable learning processes, people from various corners of our continent have recently launched initiatives to establish joint programmes in teacher education. **JoMiTE** is one of these initiatives. Funded by the cited *Life Long Learning Programmes* Erasmus and Comenius, nine European partner universities<sup>3</sup> have engaged in an integrative and interdisciplinary approach to design a common teacher education program for secondary education. Led by the project coordinator, Dr. Jan F. Deinum from the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, they cooperate on different levels and with various means to think and “build” a common curriculum framework. Thereby they do not aim to eradicate national structures nor to do a way with their countries' educational pasts – on the

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<sup>3</sup> Project partners: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen; University of Edinburgh; Esterhazy Karoly College, Eger; Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; University of Joensuu; Charles University, Prague; University of Tartu; University of Helsinki; University of Regensburg.

contrary: by experiencing and comparing the educational structures in different places, they try to learn from the diversity they perceive, to strengthen innovative approaches they share and to reflect on ways and means to put those into practice.

In order to promote learning styles and environments without spatial, temporal or cultural borders, the project members share the conviction that student teachers should be “bridge builders” in different contexts and dimensions: between universities and schools, between theory and practice, between different realities and perspectives to perceive them. One essential means to achieve that is to do part of their university courses and of their school practice abroad, not only in order to widen their knowledge of different pedagogical and educational methods, but also to enrich their attitudes, skills and – professional as well as social – competences. Student teachers, especially, could learn from the educational diversity of Europe: they could adopt from others what they consider enriching for their own teaching, while sustaining and transmitting their own strengths and potentials. We expect this “intercultural exchange” to foster the cultural awareness of teachers, students and pupils alike – to improve their social and cultural competences and increase their knowledge about different pedagogies and educational methods.

Apart from fostering a dynamical and borderless learning culture in general, one particular added value of an international initiative such as JoMiTE is to make the omnipresent, yet often only vaguely defined concepts of “cultural sensitivity” and “intercultural education” something practicable, to turn them from theoretical constructs into real-life experiences and learning situations – not only for the professional and personal growth of student teachers, but, indirectly, also for the pupils those will educate.

## 2.2 Form and function

How does JoMiTE try to achieve its visions, in which form, filled with which contents? In order to account for the unity in diversity which we value and respect, JoMiTE does not aim for *one* rigid, identical curriculum. It does, however, pursue more than a random list of suggestions in teacher education (, which would strengthen diversity without guaranteeing a minimum of unity). Concretely, it tries to develop an orientation frame, a skeleton of shared standards, which can and shall then be filled by local universities.

Accordingly, the final aim of JoMiTE is the establishment of a joint master programme in teacher education, in which joint does not mean identical, but shared and compatible. To make this possible, the initiative tries to design a 60 ECTS programme in Teacher Education at academic master level, i.e. in the *second* cycle of higher education according to the Bologna process<sup>4</sup>

- for students who already have obtained, or will obtain knowledge about their subject(s) on Master level
- with 30 ECTS covered at the home university, 15 ECTS in a university in country A and 15 ECTS in a university in country B
- with focus on evidence based education

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<sup>4</sup> For further reference see <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/> (29.01.2009).

- while the student teacher has practice experience and university courses in all three countries
- on the basis of diversity and autonomy of the local universities.<sup>5</sup>

The project partners are well aware of the fact that the question of how to level and structure teacher education may cause many debates, as programmes are designed very differently in individual educational systems. Yet, although one might argue that teacher education cannot be on master level, if, as in some countries, there is no bachelor to build on, it is more a question of intentions and interpretations than of possibilities.

If we consider the findings of the *Joint Quality Initiative*<sup>6</sup> and the *Tuning Project*<sup>7</sup>, both founded to turn the Bologna “ideas” into viable concepts and standards, we can agree that the master level does – at least and independent of any subject – mean a higher level of skills and thinking than is required on bachelor level. That does not necessarily require a bachelor in the same field; it does, however, require any bachelor (or equivalent national) degree to proof certain capacities, competences and levels of thought. In this context, it seems helpful to refer to the qualifications described for this cycle by the *Joint Quality Initiative* in the so called *Dublin Descriptors*<sup>8</sup>:

**“Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle are awarded to students who:**

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that is typically associated with bachelor’s level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
- can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
- have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
- can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;

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<sup>5</sup> For further reference see: JoMiTE Curriculum Frame (Draft), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.jointquality.nl> (28.01.2009).

<sup>7</sup> <http://unideusto.org/tuning/> (28.01.2009).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.jointquality.nl/content/descriptors/CompletesetDublinDescriptors.doc> (28.01.2009).

- have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.”<sup>9</sup>

For JoMiTE, the Dublin Descriptors do not only count as one more document, but provides important information and guidance with regard to its curriculum’s focus and content specification. Accordingly, the descriptors mentioned above are used for the finding and formulation of the envisioned **learning outcomes**. For a more detailed approach, the project’s Core Curriculum Group additionally used the standards described by a workgroup of the *Tuning initiative*, which make the descriptors more concrete with regard to certain disciplines and fields. For the second cycle of studies they draw the attention to the following points<sup>10</sup>:

### **Key subject specific competences (for Teacher Education and Education Sciences/Studies)**

- Competence in collaborative problem solving of educational issues in a variety of contexts;
- Ability to adapt practices to specific educational contexts;
- Development of knowledge and understanding in their chosen area of professional specialization in a major educational field – educational management and administration; curriculum studies; educational policy; adult education; learning difficulties; children's literature;
- Ability to use research appropriate to discipline to inform their practices;
- Ability to reflect on values appropriate to educational activities.

### **Key subject specific competences (for Teacher Education and Educational Sciences)**

- Research skills;
- Leadership skills;
- Communication skills, including ability to communicate in advanced professional registers;
- Ability to reflect upon and evaluate own performance;
- Development of advanced cognitive skills associated with knowledge development and creation.

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<sup>9</sup> The descriptors may be downloaded under:

<http://www.jointquality.nl/content/descriptors/CompletesetDublinDescriptors.doc> (28.01.2009).

<sup>10</sup> <http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=126> (28.01.2009).

As the overview of certain qualifications and competences was supposed to illustrate, the aim to establish a master programme is not only a question of a certain structure or format, but follows the intention to set (and require) certain standards. That does not mean that these standards need to be *formally* fulfilled by all – current and future – project partners in exactly the same way. Aware and respectful of different educational systems and realities, JoMiTE might be realized at different paces, in varying formats and in different stages of a University’s teacher education programme.

The JoMiTE core group does, however, require certain academic standards and requirements to be met. Browsing over the different qualifications and competences listed above, one sees that many of them are not only specific of teachers, but form essential components of a well-rounded education – and, thereby, also key competences of what can be understood as life-long-learning, i.e. as an umbrella of any sustainable education initiative.

In order to promote those qualifications, JoMiTE tries to make them not only visible, but also viable and practically enforceable through its curriculum framework. As it shall be outlined below, JoMiTE aims for a teacher education from the bottom to the top, from real life into university curriculum structures and school practice regulations: i.e. a teacher education programme following a competence-approach, which deduces curriculum components and individual course contents from favourable learning outcomes – as well as from the competences those should help to build and strengthen.

## **2.3 Structure and sub-projects**

Stressing the interdependence of theory and practice for any learning experience, at home and abroad, “JoMiTE” can be seen as the uniting roof of two individual yet linked columns: **JoCiTE** (ERASMUS project, focussing on university curriculum development) on the one, **SPriTE** (multilateral COMENIUS project, focussing on school practice) on the other hand.

## **3. JoCiTE**

### **3.1 General objectives: curriculum framework “bottom-up”**

The objective of **JoCiTE** (Joint Curriculum in Teacher Education) is to develop the above mentioned competence-oriented framework of a – not identical, but mutually compatible – teacher education program (60 ECTS). Not a list of random courses, but a holistic and practice-based approach asks first for the roles which young teachers should flexibly fulfil in the European classrooms of today (and tomorrow), then for the essential competences related to them, and, finally, for course structures, contents and methods to achieve them.

One of its basic tenets and cross-sectional components is the concept of the “teacher as learner” – implying that the knowledge which student teachers are to gain in, during and through their study years should be built upon and followed by continuous learning experiences. Thus, the envisioned JoCiTE curriculum stresses the acquisition of “sustainable skills” – which are not the final end of this initial stage of teacher education, but rather a starting point, a basis of life-long learning in and outside the classroom.

### 3.2 Overall curriculum concept: competence-based approach

The joint curriculum framework covers 60 ECTS (depending on national timelines, this equals between one and two study years), divided into the above mentioned four blocks (of 15 ECTS each). According to the competence-based approach, each of the four blocks is “headed” by a specific theme, i.e. the focus on one specific role, which is not exclusively but predominately emphasized during that particular study period<sup>11</sup>:

- **Teacher as Instructor:** focusing on the fundamental knowledge and skills which student teachers should acquire in order to *instruct* learners (activation of learning, use of basic methods and learning materials etc.). This block is an entry requirement for all three other blocks.
- **Teacher as Coach:** focusing on the fundamental – specially pedagogical and psychological – knowledge and skills which student teachers should have internalized in order to be not only instructors, but coaches of pupils.
- **Teacher as Developer:** focusing on the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary to analyse learning situations, design learning materials and to use differentiated, complex teaching methods.
- **Teacher as Researcher:** focusing on the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary to be able to translate scientific research in his subject into learning opportunities for learners.

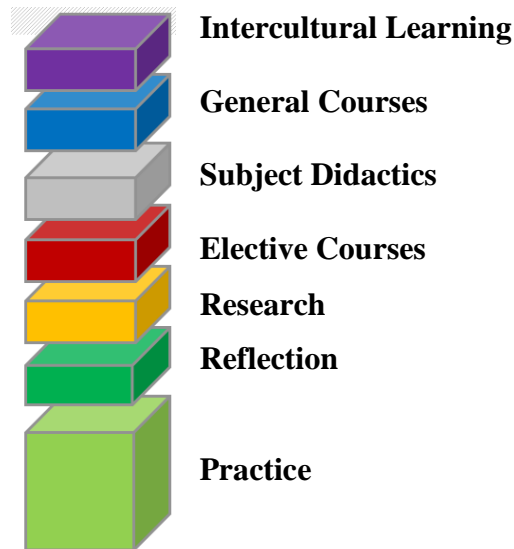
### 3.3 Structure of individual “blocks”

Each of the four blocks has a similar structure, consisting of seven core components: intercultural learning (ICL-course), General Courses (Psychology, Pedagogy, Sociology and/or ICT), Subject Didactics, Elective Courses, Research, Reflection and Practice.

The **intercultural learning course** is vital for the project’s “added value” of educational border crossings in the spatial and cultural sense. The blended learning course is to *really* foster cultural sensitivity in student teachers and their pupils alike. Based on general insights into theories of culture, culture contact and culture studies, students shall also be equipped with special information about the countries they go to. Thus, while all students take the same obligatory basic modules, they can freely choose and design the country specific modules according to where they live, study and teach during their blocks abroad.

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<sup>11</sup> Note: Within the role themes, learning outcomes are formulated which serve as guidance according to which local institutions are free to develop their own program.



**General courses** are courses that are not directly related to a certain subject, but to the fundamentals of teaching and learning in general. They include, for example, disciplines such as psychology, pedagogy and media education.

**Subject didactics** focus on theories and methodologies of teaching a certain subject, while considering student teachers own impressions and insight as well as general (pedagogical, psychological, didactical) and subject-related research trends. In a later stage, shared JoMiTE online materials and activities shall be offered by the partners, which also students not involved in JoMiTE or even teachers who are already in service can use and thus benefit from the project's sources.

**Elective courses** are not really optional for students, but are courses which can be freely chosen and designed by local institutions. In that way, different local programme structures and priorities can be taken into account without damaging, but rather by enriching, the common frame.

**Research** skills shall not only be taught in theoretical courses, but also be trained by (small) research works, like observations, interviews with learners or evaluation tasks. Thereby, students should learn key research components such as observation, inventory, evaluation and problem analysis.

**Reflection** is vital for student teachers in order to be conscious of their learning processes by means of analysis, talks, portofolio writing etc. In this context, they shall also see and strengthen the link between their theoretical education at university and their practical learning opportunities in school service. Getting used to reflect upon their own teaching as well as about themselves and their developments in general, can help students throughout their career.

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<sup>12</sup> JoMiTE Curriculum Framework (Draft), p. 10.

**Practice** refers to the student teachers' practice in the partner schools. Obviously, teaching is essential in this context, but just as important are other activities, such as tutorials and the observation of lessons given by other students and experienced teachers.

### 3.4 Visualised Curriculum Draft



#### Curriculum Frame (Draft)

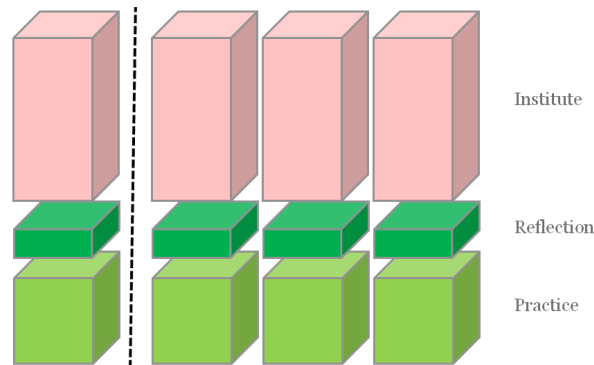
Blocks:	Instructor at home)	Coach	Developer	Researcher	ECTS
	Cultural course	Cultural course	Cultural course	Cultural course	15
	Subject didactics	Subject didactics	Subject didactics	Subject didactics	14
	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	13
	General courses	General courses	General courses	Research thesis	12
	Research	Research	Research	Research thesis	11
					10
					9
					8
					7
					6
Learner →	Reflection 1	Reflection 2	Reflection 3	Reflection 4	5
	Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Practice 4	4
					3
					2
					1
					<b>Total</b>
Cultural course	1	1	1	1	4
Subject didactics	2	2	2	2	8
Elective by institute	3	3	3	3	12
General courses	2	2	2	0	6
Research	2	2	2	4	10
Reflection	1	1	1	1	4
Practice	4	4	4	4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>60</b>

Curriculum Frame: Draft Overview<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> JoMiTE Curriculum Sketch, Teacher Education Dep., Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2008.

### 3.5 Institutional spheres: Student teachers between school and university

The JoMiTE Curriculum Frame can be seen as a multidimensional structure: not only does it consist of separate “blocks” (see below), but it can also be seen divided into different “spheres”: beside university courses there is school practice and, as link and gravitation center in between, there is the reflection of the student teachers themselves (by e-portfolio etc.).



Curriculum Frame: Spheres<sup>14</sup>

The reflection part focuses especially on students’ learning processes and on the related relevance of theory and practice. As school practice is an essential part of the JoMiTE programme, even in the first semester, university studies and school service cannot really be perceived as separate entities, but form complementary constituents of an integrative programme. Student teachers are “in service” once they begin to study – and learn.

## 3. SPriTE

### 3.1. General vision

**SPriTE** (Shared Practice in Teacher Education) emphasizes the importance of learning through practical experiences in multiple contexts. The project partners – for SPriTE not only the mentioned universities, but also six partner schools<sup>15</sup> – do not only consider it as important that student teachers observe and give lessons from the very start of their university studies, but that they do that in varying contexts (i.e. in different countries and cultures). Therefore, JoMiTE students are supposed to live, stay and teach two of their “blocks” abroad. By observing and teaching in the classrooms of three different countries, they are continuously confronted with multiple educational environments, which allow them to gain different impressions, insight and experiences. Thereby, they cannot only deepen their methodological skills, but also learn to react flexibly to new circumstances, demands and challenges.

In order for JoMiTE students to go abroad, they – as well as their mentor teachers – need orientation about what they can expect there as well as what might be expected from them.

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<sup>14</sup> JoMiTE Curriculum Framework (Draft), p. 10.

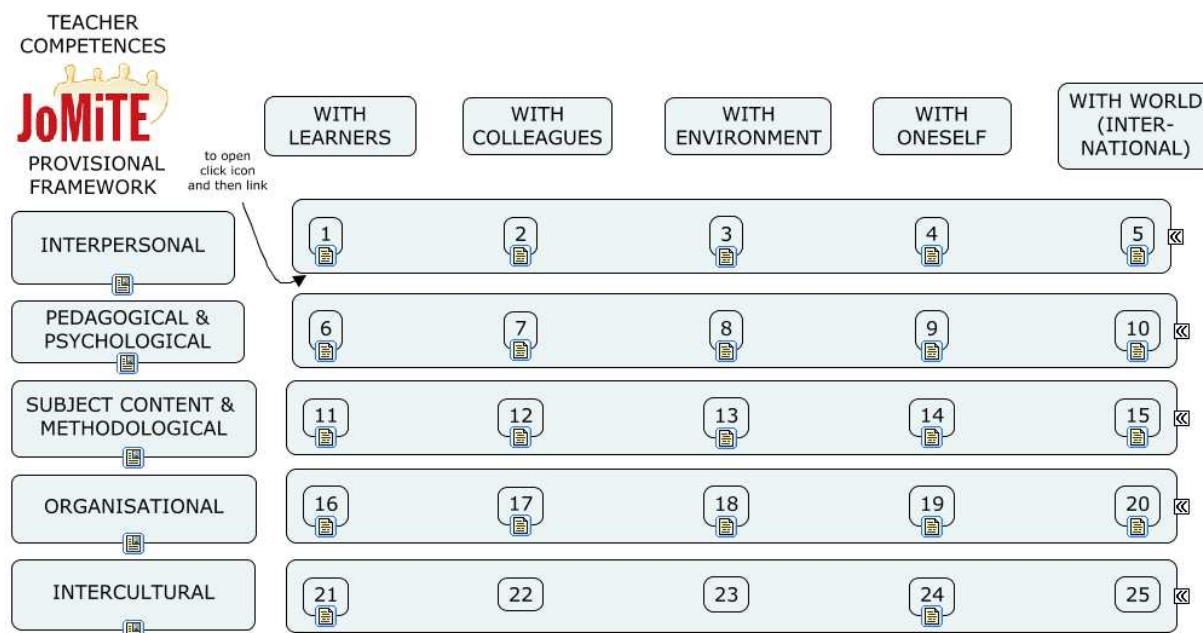
<sup>15</sup> The SPriTE partner schools are Dr Nassau College, Nassau; Akademické Gymnázium Stepánská/ Prague; Mina Harma Gymnasium, Tartu; Institut d’Educació Secundària, Sabadell; Joensuu Normaalikoulu, Joensuu; EKF Training School, Eger.

Therefore, in order to guarantee shared standards and compatible programmes of school practice, SPriTE seeks to develop a sort of “Practice Framework”, defining certain standards for the organisation, enforcement, documentation and evaluation of student teachers – in their home countries and abroad. Concretely, the project seeks to define

- a **list of competences**, which students should be able to demonstrate and perform at the end of the programme
- a pedagogical **framework for the supervision and assessment** of student teachers at home and abroad
- an **e-portfolio framework** as a tool for self-reflection, supervision and assessment
- a **blended intercultural learning course** (see JOCiTE) to prepare student teachers for their stay and service in schools abroad.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2. Guiding concept: competence-based Approach

Just as JoCiTE, SPriTE follows a competence-based approach, deducing envisioned practice expectations and learning outcomes from the realities of a typical classroom environment. Based upon the European Commission’s “Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications”<sup>17</sup> and papers written by the partner universities, a SPriTE **competence-framework** was agreed upon, of which interpersonal, pedagogical, subject-related, organizational and intercultural competence form the basis:



SPriTE: Competence Structure<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> For further reference see: SPriTE Project Contract and Partner Agreement, Supplement, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> For further reference see: ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\_en.pdf (27.01.2009).

<sup>18</sup> JoMiTE Competence Framework, Barcelona Model 2008.

**Subject content and methodological competences** may be one of the most obvious and basic competences of a “good” teacher – but by far not the only ones. Another rather general qualification teachers should prove is a certain degree of **organisational competences**, referring not only to the awareness, but also to a certain degree of control about *what* is happening *where* and *when* in the classroom environment.

A teacher is not only a subject-expert, but he or she is also a coach, a guide. Therefore, any teacher needs to show certain **pedagogical and psychological competences**, in order to support learners with guidance and motivation in their development as young personalities. Not only with learners, but also with their parents as well as with fellow colleagues and professionals from other fields should a teacher be able to communicate and cooperate. Thus, general **interpersonal competences** are vital to train the ability to interact in the school environment.

In some way a special dimension of interpersonal competences, but more than that, is the **intercultural competence**, which JoMiTE seeks to stress particularly. Aspects such as tolerance, intercultural empathy, the ability to abstract to one’s own roles and take the perspective of others etc. are all better internalized in (school) practice abroad than by mere theoretical reflection.

### **3.3. Supervision, assessment, self-Reflection**

Generally, SPriTE intends to promote the key competences mentioned above through a fortified link between theory, practice and the reflection upon both, i.e. between university, school and the students themselves. In this context, the **SPriTE competence framework** is to serve as an orientation for the different agents involved in the school practice: first and foremost for the student teachers and their mentor teachers.

Teaching practice is common throughout Europe – for the students as well as for their mentors, teacher trainers, supervisors or however we want to name them. Just as there are different terms and concepts for the teachers in charge of student teachers, however, there are various concepts and procedures related to them. The existing variety of systems, structures and methods used is certainly fascinating, but it also calls for certain commonalities and shared standards to make them comparable, if not compatible. Therefore, the SPriTE group on supervision currently designs a basic **supervision “toolbox”** of common and comparable supervisions tools and objectives.

Furthermore, an electronic **portofolio** shall be used, where student teachers can add materials (such as lesson plans etc.) and reflect upon their own impressions, insights and experiences throughout their practice periods. In that way, different sections of the portofolio cannot only serve as a mirror of students’ developments to others (such as supervisors), but also and especially for themselves. The impulse to reflect constantly and consciously upon one’s own teaching and learning progresses, be it in the mentioned portofolio or in different tutorials or student teachers groups (online and in “real life”), should not only help student teachers to improve their performance and obtain better grades, but may serve as the basis for their personal and professional development in general.

### 3.4. Shared practice: Example Regensburg-Barcelona 2009

The **pilot exchange between the University of Regensburg and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona** may serve as an example for the present stage of SPriTE: it can show how German and Catalan teachers alike benefit from the mutual exchange of observations, insights and ideas. As the contact is not only one of international student teachers, but, at least indirectly, also of their colleagues, mentor teachers, advisors and students, the shared learning experience can further involve people and dimensions beyond the project's borders.

## 4. JoMiTE as Motor of Life-Long-Learning in and for Europe

JoMiTE's special value as an innovative and sustainable initiative in teacher education does not only lie in the skeleton of its structures. Rather, it is the attempt to value different teacher education approaches across Europe, to make them compatible for a "joint" programme, to cross borders and bridge our national systems with transnational ideas and innovations. Considering teacher education as the capital of our educational systems, educational "border crossings", with all the above mentioned dimensions, cannot only give impetus to openness and life-long learning among current students teachers, but, indirectly, also influence their future pupils and, thereby, our nations' learning and teaching culture in general.

As the portrait of JoCiTE intends to illustrate, university curriculum and school practice, academic and in-service learning of (students teachers) are not separate, but interdependent and interlinked aspects of one and the same process: of the holistic development of teachers as persons and professionals. Therefore, it seems vital not to neglect the contributions and aims of JoCiTE when talking of JoMiTE's value for the life-long-learning among teachers. As the role-model of the JoCiTE curriculum framework shows, it is also and especially during their university years, that student teachers develop the cognitive capacities, thinking patterns and reflection strategies to connect theoretical knowledge with practical experiences. It is during this stage that they can and should acquire skills and methods on which they can later build upon to become and stay dynamical, competent and versatile teachers. Seen from this perspective, there is no split between studies and service, between school and university – student teachers serve when they study, and continue studying and learning once they serve in the classroom.

Not isolated from JoCiTE, but interdependent with the latter, SPriTE can promote a new, open and sustainable teacher education approach in the field of school practice. It supports student teachers to be better prepared for teaching experiences in different countries, cultures and languages. The added value of this tri-national school experience can then not only be felt by our JoMiTE student teachers, but also by local pupils and teachers who get into contact with them, their different perspectives, values, methods and pedagogical approaches. Accordingly, in the long run, the beneficiaries of JoMiTE could be students, pupils and students all throughout Europe.

At this point, in February 2009, JoMiTE is still a vision, a plan, a draft – the next year of project work will show how much of the ideas might find their way into local structures and minds, must prove in how far the envisioned curriculum framework can and will be traduced into national systems. Already now, however, small steps taken in the first period of JoMiTE can be

considered as little milestones, as innovative and sustainable evolutions of the educational structures we currently live in.