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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

Subject: High-quality teachers - the cornerstone of a successful European
Education Area: Teacher shortages and the challenge of attracting,
upskilling and retaining qualified and well-trained teachers and trainers
- Policy debate

Following consultation of the Education Committee, the Presidency has prepared the attached background note, which is submitted as the basis for the policy debate to take place at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting on 7 March 2023.

High-quality teachers - the cornerstone of a successful European Education Area:

Teacher shortages and the challenge of attracting, upskilling and retaining qualified and well-trained teachers and trainers

Presidency background note

Qualified and well-trained teachers are at the heart of our education systems. They are necessary to provide high-quality education to our children, students and citizens.

The Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)¹ puts forward a number of concrete issues and actions in selected priority areas, one of which focuses on enhancing competences and motivation in the education profession.

In the Commission communication on progress towards the achievement of the European Education Area², it is clearly stated that, in Europe as a whole, teacher shortages are largely due to the ageing teacher workforce and perceptions about the profession's low attractiveness. The situation is continuing to worsen across the EU, representing a serious risk to the quality and equity of education. It is clear that we need to continue to intensify our efforts at both national and European level to strengthen the attractiveness and status of the teaching profession.

Attracting, upskilling and retaining qualified teachers and trainers is a common challenge for the Member States and is key to achieving the European Education Area. It is an issue of joint concern, to which there are a number of possible policy solutions. In light of the above, the Presidency invites Ministers to consider the questions below for a discussion on the topic.

¹ OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p.1.

² COM (2022) 700 final.

Questions for the discussion:

1. What concrete issues or challenges that exist in your country regarding teachers could be fruitfully discussed in the context of the European Education Area? What would be the added value of further cooperation on this specific issue in a European context?
2. What could be done at the European level to contribute to the challenge of attracting, upskilling and retaining qualified and well-trained teachers and trainers?