Empowering teachers

Comparative research report:

Framework for the design of innovative peer-induction programmes

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EMPOWERING TEACHERS PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INNOVATIVE PEER - INDUCTION PROGRAMMES

Introduction

Europe faces the challenge of attracting a large number of new teachers in the coming years and continuously having to support those who are already in the career system motivating them to stay in the profession and share their knowledge with peers in multiple subject areas, including pedagogical aspects.

The current situation of teachers in European countries is similar: they are experiencing great professional instability, audiences increasingly challenging, a lack of resources and recognition, as well as fatigue, generated by their average age (OECD teachers average 44 years old). Moreover, on average across OECD countries, 39% of teachers want to leave teaching within the next five years (TALIS 2018 report). This could be explained by an ageing teacher workforce approaching retirement in certain countries since only 14% of teachers aged 50 years or less reported wanting to leave teaching within the next five years. On the other hand, relatively few young teachers are aged under 30. Young teachers make up 10% of the teaching population, on average across OECD countries (OECD, Education at a Glance, 2020). Considering this, the LOOP project focus is on improving teaching careers paths, in terms of rethinking career structure and guidance and also how to empower teachers to better navigate throughout the career system, creating opportunities to promote excellence in teaching at all levels, by continuing to support their professional development, improving the quality of the profession and the level of attractiveness.

It is ensured in the research that among all the phases of a teacher's career pathway, the early career years are those that deserve the greatest support and attention to ensure effectiveness and well-being. Trying to contribute to this project goal, seven national reports (in Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia and Germany)[1] were developed to analyse the current landscape at the national levels and their reflexes in the educational systems in terms of existing teachers induction formal programmes and informal practices (at macro and micro level) as well as of mentoring programmes for teachers. During the data collection stage, partners did a deep analysis of the national legislation, policy reports and literature review in scientific articles and thesis to set a common body of knowledge and highlight practices that have the potential to be used as good practices. To enhance this research, three surveys were launched, addressing school directors, experienced teachers and new/recent graduated teachers to better understand their perspectives and perceptions related to:

I.   existent induction programmes, levels of enrolment, strategies and resources for their implementation;
II.   existent/planned mentoring programmes for teachers and a better understanding of how are being implemented or how can be implemented;
III.   the expectations and needs of new/recent teachers and establish the key features and contents to be considered in the induction programme to be designed;
IV.   the "desirable" profile of a mentor to support and guide new/recent teachers throughout the induction programme;
V.   the key features, form and contents to be included in the mentoring programme allow experienced teachers to support and guide new /recent teachers throughout the induction programme.

Overall, 776 surveys were collected; 56 interviews were carried out by the research teams across partner countries, promoting a deep analysis and discussion of the results from the surveys collected; and 6 focus groups with a total of 64 participants were held to promote a joint analysis and discussion between teachers (experienced and new graduate).

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[1] National reports available on the project website

To explore the results of this wide-ranging desk research, this Comparative Research Report: *"Framework for the design of innovative peer-induction programmes"* presents a critical comparative analysis of the findings of the national reports and identifies the common aspects, and learning gaps and recommendations for the policy instruments design for WP2.

Apart from the Executive Summary, the report is structured into 3 sections, namely:

► The first section presents a summary of the teachers' career landscape in Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy, Croatia, Germany, and Slovenia, at policy and practices through an extensive literature review. It also highlights strategies and resources to implement induction activities, which actors need to be mobilized to this process, and what is the policy and legislation regarding induction programmes or any non-formal initiatives fostering the integration and guidance of new teachers in these countries.

► The second section focuses on the teachers' needs and motivations, namely their perception, satisfaction and motivation. An in-depth analysis of the results of the 776 questionnaires collected was carried out, highlighting the areas to be addressed in an induction programme and the desirable skills that a mentor should have.

► In the third section, the results of the interviews and the focus group are presented enabling us to understand better the new teachers' needs and challenges, as well as the structure, contents and practices of a future induction programme and mentoring programme.

Finally, the conclusions section presents some tips and guidelines for designing a teachers induction programme and a mentoring programme. This section also highlights some policy changes that will be needed to support the implementation of the teacher's induction programme in the school context.

Executive summary

Teachers undoubtedly play a very important role in the education and training of future generations in various dimensions: individual, collective, social, pedagogical and ethical and for that reason it is very difficult to characterise the profession and support needed. This report aims to do a comparative analysis of the main findings of the national reports related to the practices of integration, support and capacity building of newly appointed teachers in the school setting, at the policy and operational level; as well asidentifyg the needs and collect ideas from school principals, newly appointed and experienced teachers related to the structure, learning outcomes, contents and initiatives to be integrated into the induction and mentoring programmes.

The Executive Summary is organized into three main topics:

- ► Needs and challenges
  - o New teachers' needs and challenges
  - o Constraints in supporting new teachers
- ► Induction programme
  - o Definition of induction
  - o Activities to include in each area
  - o Contents to include in each area
- ► Mentoring
  - o Definition of mentoring
  - o Motivations to become a mentor
  - o Incentives to become a mentor
  - o Main competencies of a mentor
  - o Contents to include in the capacitation programme

[Needs and challenges]

Through the surveys, the interviews and focus groups, the new/recent teachers had the opportunity to express the needs and challenges they are facing in terms of their professional practice, well-being and formal policies and procedures required by the school settings. Despite the differences in the initial teachers' training in the countries under analysis and the fact that the procedures that teachers need to deal with are also different, there is a common understanding of the challenges teachers are facing: more support regarding the bureaucratic and administrative matters in the schools. This is directly related to their needs, that in almost all countries were revealed and grouped as: (a) financial incentives, (b) good working conditions that would urge teachers to leave their established routines, (c) an appropriate selection process, (d) practical skills, (e) Knowledge and skills to deal with stress and emotional distress. In detail, table 1 shows what are the main needs and challenges of the new teachers in each country:

New teacher's needs and challenges	
DE	New teachers need support in class management, teaching methods and a way of sharing experiences and knowledge on specific subjects with others.
EL	In Greece, the main needs and challenges regard bureaucratic/administrative matters and also issues related to diversity and inclusion.
ES	In Spain the main challenges new teachers face are the heavy workload and the lack of knowledge and expertise to manage class, especially regarding students' diversity. They also lack knowledge related to the

	content and how to manage and deal with stress to avoid emotional exhaustion. It is also important to highlight the need for training courses and seminars, a reduction of the teaching hours and co-teaching with experienced teachers/mentors.
HR	Croatian teachers feel that there is inadequate initial teacher training and an inability of keeping up with the fast-changing environment, which demands continuous training. New teachers lack practical skills in dealing with students and knowing how to evaluate them. They also need to know how to deal with students with special needs.
IT	Italian teachers lack digital skills and knowledge of bureaucratic and administrative procedures. There is also a need of learning more about classroom psychological dynamics and management.
PT	In Portugal, the most evidenced need is regarding bureaucratic issues and dealing with students with disabilities/ special needs. They also need to know how to effectively manage emotional problems revealed by students in different moments in the school setting.
SI	Slovenian teachers feel the need of getting more acquainted with basic psychology and didactics. They also would like to be welcomed in a broader environment as well as to have someone close and available to help them. In addition, they need more practical experience.

Table 1: Needs and challenges of new graduate teachers

On the other hand, experienced teachers and school directors had the opportunity to highlight the main constraints that schools and professionals must face while supporting new teachers. According to the participants in all countries, there is one common constraint to all: lack of time. Teachers have a heavy workload, and it is difficult to manage all the tasks they have with the students, their peers, the parents, the school board, and the public authorities. However, despite this, several teachers showed interest in becoming mentors of young colleagues and pedagogically supporting them at the beginning of their careers. However, to do so, some constraints need to be overcome, such as:

Constraints in supporting new teachers	
DE	Lack of time is the biggest problem.
EL	Time - programmes are not initiated at the school level and communities are not fostered.
ES	Time: to plan an effective programme, to design the training programme and the different agents involved (mentors, directors, and inspectors).
HR	The inability of schools to provide proper support.
IT	Support effective and functional methodologies to provide knowledge. Help from the bureaucratic and administrative point of view.
PT	New and experienced teachers are from different schools. Reduced support that new teachers feel from school leaders, concerning the ones that will be temporarily in the school. Reduced time for mentoring. Lack of stability in the profession and career (due to the continuous mobility of new teachers every year from school to school). A high number of students per class and frequent assignments in challenging classes. Permanent legal updates and shifts generate instability in the professionals of the schools.
SI	The mentor should receive some training in mentoring/ coaching/ psychology. They need to be relieved of some other obligations. The role of mentors should receive some formal recognition

Table 2: School and professionals' constraints in supporting new teachers

The desk research and fieldwork developed by the LOOP partnership highlight these needs and challenges of teachers at the beginning of their careers, as well as the main constraints that school directors and experienced teachers face to support them, to answer them through the design of an induction programme for new teachers based on mentoring by experienced colleagues, who want to share their knowledge, techniques, pedagogical methods, strategies that they have accumulated over the years of teaching students.

For this, an in-depth survey was carried out with new teachers, experienced teachers and school directors on the activities, contents, and structure that they consider most appropriate for an induction programme as well as for a mentor capacitation programme and, at the same time, response to the needs and constraints mentioned above.

[Induction programme]

The needs and challenges of the new teachers and the constraints that schools have in supporting these teachers expressed in the project desk research and fieldwork showed the relevance of having an induction period for the new teachers in the school context, as well as, the importance of shifting **the focus of induction from an administrative perspective – aimed at helping teachers start their careers formally – to a more pedagogical one, concerned with the promotion of excellence among teachers – both new and experienced – throughout their careers.**

Teachers' induction should therefore be understood as a systematic and prolonged professional development process, of a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and centred on the school context, the promotion of student learning and the development of the educational system. An effective induction programme allows teachers, at all stages of their careers, to observe their peers, be observed by them, and integrate learning communities that foster joint reflection and learning and address the quality of teaching and professional development, as a collective and not just an individual responsibility. The public authorities must try to evaluate supervisory resources in the evaluation processes, namely, through the implementation of induction programmes as part of teachers' continuous professional development, as the logical extension of initial training.

Induction based on mentoring at the early stages of their career allows teachers to develop their professional skills and fruitful links within the school environment. The LOOP partnership challenged teachers and school directors to share their understanding of what is an "induction programme". The survey presented 4 hypotheses, and the one that is more consensual to everyone is *"induction is a professional development programme that incorporates mentoring and is designed to offer support, guidance, and orientation for beginning teachers during the transition into their first teaching job",* emphasizing the mentoring activity in the programme. However, in Germany and Greece school directors and teachers (experience and new) highlighted that induction is *"a systematic and long-lasting process of professional development, of a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and focused on the school context, promoting student's learning and developing the educational system."* Having these definitions of what is and what to expect from an induction programme, either the school directors, the experienced teachers or the new/recent teachers agree that formal induction programmes are needed at the beginning of the teaching career to motivate teachers at the beginner level and to reinforce their competencies on the job.

After sharing the vision related to the definition of "induction", participants had the possibility of identifying the activities and correspondent content to be included in the induction programme. To do so, five areas of the teachers' profession were considered as possible to be covered by the induction programme:

- ► Didactical-pedagogical area
- ► Subject(s) area
- ► Bureaucratic/administrative area
- ► Emotional area
- ► Social/cultural area

In general, following the results of the research, all areas are considered relevant from the perspective of the target groups. However, there are some differences when valuing the relevance of each one of the areas per country. The only area that was common to all countries was the emotional one, as a fundamental and mandatory factor to be considered in the induction programme, followed by the didactic-pedagogical, the bureaucratic-administrative and the social/cultural (table 3).

The areas more valued by the target groups involved in the study	
DE	Emotional (classes management) Bureaucratic/ administrative
GR	Didactical-pedagogical (classes management) Emotional (relationship and communication with parents; classes management)
ES	Social-Cultural Emotional
HR	Didactical-pedagogical Emotional
IT	Bureaucratic/ administrative Emotional Didactical-pedagogical (secondary level)
PT	Bureaucratic/ administrative Emotional Social-Cultural
SI	Didactical-pedagogical (practice) Emotional

Table 3: Areas identified as the most relevant by the target-groups

So, in terms of *subjects*, the five main areas are crucial for the improvement and development of new teachers' performance, however, there is a common understanding among the three groups that the initial teachers' training doesn't prepare the new/recent teachers to work in a school context. In global, school's directors and teachers (experienced and new) consider that the initial teachers' training prepares new/recent teachers at scientific (subject) and didactical-pedagogic levels, but there is a lack of knowledge and experience about the organisation, structure dynamics and management procedures in schools. This indicates the need for strengthening the preparation of new/recent teachers at the bureaucratic/administrative level, specifically concerning the legislation and legal aspects related to the teaching profession, the school administrative procedures and class management administrative procedures, but also the teachers' duties and rights.

Based on these five areas and intending to design an innovative peer-induction programme, research partners proposed eleven activities to the target groups so they could identify the most relevant per each area. Doing a comparative analysis of the findings, all activities were considered relevant, however, some were more suitable for certain areas. Therefore, according to this list:

1. Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subjects
2. Assist classes of experienced teachers in other subjects
3. An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes
4. Regular 1:1 meeting with a mentor to discuss observed classes
5. Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices
6. Participate in classes simulation with teachers initiating their careers

7. Reflective learning portfolio
8. Participate in workshops provided by other experienced teachers
9. Observational visits to other schools
10. Be involved in a network of teachers
11. Integrate a school club/project

There were common aspects between the partners' countries and the following *activities* stood out as the most voted for in each area:

The practices more valued by the target groups involved in the study	
Didactical-pedagogical area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Subject(s) area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Bureaucratic/ administrative area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Emotional area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Social/Cultural area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools Integrate a school club/project

Table 4: The practices more valued per area

This does not mean that there were no discrepancies or that other activities were not selected for a specific area. In general, they were all voted on and even new activities emerged by target groups from Slovenia, such as:

► Design lessons, materials and work with students on the project, for the **subject area**;
► Have a coffee with the administrator/secretary, for the **Bureaucratic/administrative area**;
► Have team building, have school projects, have events, for the **Social/cultural area**.

Concerning the *contents* of the induction programme, based on the results from the surveys and interviews, it is possible to identify the common results for the contents of each area. Therefore, in the **didactical-pedagogical area**, all contents were selected, except for "managing curricula", however, those that had the highest number of votes of relevance were:

► Student's evaluation: continuous learning assessment
► Adapting classes & evaluations to students' different learning styles
► Strategies to improve & keep alive students' motivation
► Dealing with problematic behaviour students
► Dealing with students with special learning needs and/or disabilities

Regards the *subject(s) area*, all the contents suggested by the partnership were selected, however, two of them stood out to be part of the LOOP induction programme, namely:

► Updating my knowledge with the most recent advances with regards to the content of the school subject(s) I teach
► Adapting the content of the school subject(s) I teach to the readiness of my students

The *bureaucratic/administrative area* was one of the mentioned areas in which teachers felt less prepared and on which they would like to have more training. Therefore, in all countries, interest was expressed in knowing more about "class management administrative procedures" and "school administrative procedures". Nevertheless, topics on duties and legal rights and career development information are also welcomed.

The results of the survey also showed that all target groups agree that they were not well prepared by the university (initial teachers training) at the emotional and social/cultural levels. In general, school leaders and teachers also pointed out that formal induction programmes should include all the proposed aspects related to the *emotional area*, namely:

► self-confidence, conciliation between professional and personal life, dealing with fears and insecurities derived from students' misbehaviour and dealing with fears to cope with families (parents and guardians);
► dealing with fears and insecurities derived from working with peers and school leaders.

Besides the proposed practices and activities, the experienced teachers also believe that the induction programme should include matters of self-knowledge, self-esteem, conflict management and techniques to relax and reduce stress levels, aiming at providing psychological support to teachers at the beginning of their careers.

Last but not the least, all the content of the *social/cultural area* was considered relevant in all countries, however, "interacting with students" and "interacting with parents" stood out as the most relevant and one of the major concerns of the new teachers.

This wide-ranging desk research and fieldwork brought important knowledge and guidelines to strengthen the design of the induction programme of the LOOP project, accordingly to the needs of the teachers in schools.

[Mentoring Programme]

As mentioned above, teachers and school directors define induction in direct relation to mentoring, since they consider that to integrate new teachers into the school's culture, it is crucial to have experienced teachers who can explain school policies, regulations, and procedures; share methods, materials, and other resources; help to solve problems in teaching and learning; provide personal and professional support and guide them so that improvements can be made.

Despite the importance of having mentoring support, it is important to reflect on the concept of mentoring in the context of teachers' professional development and what this practice involves at the school level. Starting with the identification of the definition(s) of mentoring by the target groups from each country, when answering the surveys, all the three target groups have the same understanding of what mentoring means: "*is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth*". This means that teachers and school directors consider mentoring as a symbiotic relationship in which, new/recent and experienced teachers, would share, learn, grow, and cooperate. This definition was the

teachers from DE, EL, ES, IT and SI also selected this definition, however experienced teachers from PT selected
thother one that sees mentoring as "a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser
skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the less experienced person grow and develop
specific competencies". The three groups from Croatia (HR) understand mentoring as "a relationship between two
colleagues, in which one colleague supports the skill and knowledge development of another, guiding that
individual based on his or her own experiences and understanding of best practices" but highlighted that the most
common agreed definition could also be suitable.

The target groups were inquired to explore what is necessary to structure a formal capacitation programme for
mentors (addressing experienced teachers). The first thing they were asked was about the *time* to be dedicated
to mentoring activities. There was a consensus in all target groups from all countries to not consider mentoring as
a full-time duty. Experiences teachers must combine their teaching activities with mentoring keeping a balance
between both, once it would allow them:

- ► to do what they love, which is teaching, keeping the professionals motivated and fulfilled;
- ► to carry out their teaching experience, and consequently, to continuously be aware of the reality and
  innovative practices, a critical aspect of being a mentor;
- ► act as a role model for the new/recent teachers (that could then obtain better support to prepare their
  classes, assist to mentor's classes, cooperate in the organisation of complementary activities).

Nevertheless, to combine other activities with teaching, experienced teachers need incentives and motivation to
become mentors. In terms of motivation, in all countries, experienced teachers mentioned as a critical motivation
"the possibility of sharing my knowledge and experience with teachers initiating their careers". Other motivations
were also mentioned by some countries, as follows:

- ► The opportunity to diversify my teaching career, dropping my teaching responsibilities
- ► The opportunity to diversify my teaching career, but keep partially my teaching responsibilities
- ► Independently of other motivations that I might have to be a mentor, I would only become a mentor if a
  decrease in the total working time per week was offered

In other words, several countries highlighted the idea of reducing the time dedicated to teaching activities,
allowing experienced teachers to assume a role as mentors. This incentive to become a mentor combined with
the desire to diversify the teaching career leads to different types of motivations, whether personal, social or
professional, such as:

Incentives to become a mentor	
DE	Career development Reduced teaching time
EL	Diversification of responsibilities Contact with colleagues Reduced teaching time
ES	Official recognition: certificate Reduction of teaching hours and extra money The flexibility of the schedule Opportunity to share the experience
HR	Chance for participating in sharing of good practices The reduced workload in the classroom

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	Proper evaluation of mentors' work Recognizing the value of mentors formally
IT	Develop a personal network of teachers Diversify the school career
PT	Reduced lesson time Promote close cooperation and synergy between future mentors and the tutor to mutual prepare them to support new teachers Define legislation related to the distribution of responsibilities, identifying the time allocated to mentoring, teaching and non-teaching activities Career progression Increase salary
SI	Less other duties Additional payment Career progression

Table 5: Incentives to become a mentor identified by experienced teachers and school directors

In some countries, the target groups referred to the increase in salary as an incentive, but policy representatives of the consortium mentioned it is not possible to assure an increase in teachers' salaries as direct compensation. However, some alternatives were suggested such as integration of mentoring in teachers' career path (as progress in their career); reduction of the teaching time of mentors ("give" them time to be mentors as part of their duties); certification of the capacitation programme for mentors to count for their career progress.

Given this scenario, the experienced teachers were asked if they had the opportunity to be a mentor to new colleagues during their professional life, and most of them said no. In Portugal, a few stated that they have mentored new teachers when they were doing an internship or in their probationary period. In this context, it seems that what they know about mentoring comes from theoretical knowledge and from their goodwill and desire of helping their colleagues initiate their careers. Opposing this perspective, in Greece, only recently, (July 2021), the government passed a new law that reintroduces the role of mentor in the Greek system. Specifically, in each school unit, the school director has the responsibility of allocating the role of mentor to experienced teachers to guide and support during their induction period all the newly hired and the newly appointed permanent, substitute, and hourly-paid teachers with teaching experience up to five years.

Having in mind these realities, the opportunity of taking a training course to be a mentor in induction programmes is seen by many as essential for them to be able to mentor others.

Despite the differences regarding their motivations to become mentors, experienced teachers share similar opinions about what should be included in a training course for mentors, such as:

► Mentor in a mentoring (relationship): competencies, characteristics, and experience
► Instruments for observing classes and the type of feedback used by mentors
► How to establish and maintain a mentoring relationship
► Access to strategies and tools to be used for effective mentoring relationships
► Examples of good practices
► Understand the needs and specificities of working with beginning teachers.

Other examples of content were additionally referred by participants, such as:

► in-depth knowledge related to administrative and bureaucratic issues
► emotional intelligence, classroom observation, group work and consulting and legislation/legal aspects

► soft skills (problem-solving and lifelong learning), the bureaucratic and administrative procedures in school and the mentoring relationship.

Despite this positive attitude towards mentoring, the school leaders and teachers that have responded to the surveys, agree that the mentor profile must have certain characteristics and competencies, including:

► The domain of didactical-pedagogical strategies and practices
► Knowledge about the teaching subject that provides mentoring
► Professional experience in teaching and learning fields
► Willingness to invest the necessary time to support mentees
► High interest in being a mentor and supporting mentees
► Ability to actively listen and communicate effectively with me
► Ability to share experience and expertise
► Ability to provide constructive feedback.

In addition, in some partner countries, it was also highlighted that mentors should possess interpersonal skills and be motivated to do the job.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that a mentors' capacitation programme is needed to prepare experienced teachers to provide support to new colleagues. However, to assure that mentoring could be effective, a mentor should balance these tasks with the teaching time, not dedicating his/her full-time to mentoring. Also, the experienced teachers are willing to learn more, in practice, how can they deliver this role, what strategies they can use, and what activities to develop to support their colleagues in their role as a mentor.

Moreover, the school directors from all countries believe that schools would or, at least, might benefit from organizing mentoring programmes. Positive impacts were anticipated in areas such as "building/reinforcing the vision of the school as a learning organization", "increasing the quality of the education and learning provided by the school", and "promoting the knowledge about the activities taking place in the school and their impact on school results". Besides these main benefits, nearly all school directors foresee additional benefits as a result of organizing mentoring based induction programs for new teachers.

[Conclusions]

Induction and mentoring programmes should be adopted by the education system as policy tools to enable the much-needed improvement of the teaching profession, through the increase of the support mechanisms available for teachers initiating their careers.

The transforming potential of these policy changes will contribute to teachers' higher performance levels, to an increase in their motivation and thus, their well-being and school success. It is urgent to shift the mindset of the concept of induction, the way the regulations characterise it and legally incorporate the following features so that it is accessible at the beginning of the teaching career and sought after:

► a true peer-mentoring relationship by a period of induction practices, and not an evaluation process; definition of a clear set of duties of prospective mentors related only to the professional, pedagogic, social and psychological support of new teachers, fully disconnecting the role of mentors from teachers' evaluation;

► direct it for different phases of the teaching career, not only for teachers who have a recent vacancy on the board but also for teachers' beginners or teachers in mobility, even if in the temporary hiring status;

► include a systematic character to the concept, giving it a crucial role in the professional development process, in a logical extension of the initial training, as the entry point of the teaching career;

► shift the focus from an administrative perspective to a more pedagogical one, concerned with promoting excellence among teachers, complemented with other relevant dimensions, such as emotional or social-cultural;

► an open, transparent, and meritocratic selection process emphasizing the criteria related to teaching experience, emotional intelligence, innovative professional record and increased qualifications.

► define clear institutional support for Mentors and teachers and training, defining everyone's roles;

► highlight the important role of Mentors as colleagues with more experience that want to transfer their know-how, to sum up, a co-construction professional knowledge;

► legislation of incentives for those who would like to play the role of mentor (career incentives, relief from some school duties, a small allowance, reduction of teaching time, etc);

► training of the mentors in basic principles of mentoring including adult education principles, emotional intelligence, reflexive and transformative learning, etc;

► establishment of a regional list of accredited mentors among which new teachers can freely choose if he/she serves at /her school. In cases of small schools in remote rural areas or cases where there is no accredited mentor of the same specialization as the mentee in a specific school, e-mentoring could be applied.

The integration of an induction programme based on mentoring in schools is seen as beneficial to schools and all their professionals, once it will allow making all teachers, new and experienced, the best professionals they can be. That is why it is crucial to develop it, to fight the lack of strategies and practices in schools to guide and support new/recent teachers in their integration in schools; as well as to improve the perception that new/recent teachers have about their preparation and ability to be successful in the teaching profession, namely in what concerns the: bureaucratic and administrative procedures and responsibilities; ability to manage students' emotions and behaviours; ability to interact, ask for support and cooperate with other teachers.

Despite this, there are some constraints and challenges that need to be overcome so that the implementation and integration of an induction programme based on mentoring in schools can be a reality (in operational terms):

► provision of specific arrangements in terms of organizing the school schedule to allow the induction programs to be adequately implemented in every school;

► facilitating teachers' transition into the profession by providing individual support and by to enable them to better cope with the challenges they may face in their initial teaching years and not only when they have entered the career;

► include a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and centred on the school context;

► assure that teachers that did not have professionalization and enter the teaching career after several years of professional experience, can have access to an induction programme too ;

► the geographical spread of new/recent teachers, difficulting with the implementation of the programme at the local level and by teachers from the same school (regional scope);

► excessive teachers' workload, in particular the experienced teachers, can compromise their availability and motivation to be mentors. Also, new teachers cannot have a full schedule of teaching, otherwise won't have time for mentoring activities;

► the mobility of new/recent and some experienced teachers can compromise the constitution of a pool of mentors and the match between new/recent teachers and experienced teachers.

Some suggestions to overcome these challenges were presented by directors and teachers and are related to:

► Creation of conditions and incentives to motivate and mobilize experienced teachers to become mentors – allocation of time specifically for mentoring activities (by law) with a correspondent reduction of the teaching time, specification of the activities and responsibilities of mentors, the establishment of flexible induction programme in terms of duration and timeline;

► The geographical scope of implementation of the programmes – promote the capacitation programme of mentors at the regional level, promote the induction programme in clusters or groups of schools, and settle a loop of mentors responsible for clusters of schools.

Concerning the design of the induction programme the target groups consider that:

► The programme should have a minimum duration of 1 school year

► The workload per week should be flexible. There should be a total number of hours for mentoring support that must have a flexible and progressive weekly or monthly charge in the school year, according to the needs of those involved.

► The 5 areas identified by the consortium are considered relevant to directors and teachers: didactical-pedagogical, subject, bureaucratic-administrative, emotional social and cultural.

1. The teacher's career in the partners' countries

This section intends to present a summary of the teachers' career landscape in Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy, Croatia, Germany and Slovenia, taking into account the importance of the current context and situation of the education system in the different countries, examining its challenges and policy response.[2] It will give a short overview of the system, a characterization of the local/regional/national Educational structures and their responsibilities, a short description of the initial training of teachers, a characterization of the continuous training of teachers focused on any forms of induction and mentoring as an opportunity for career diversification, as well as policy and legislation regarding induction or mentoring programmes or any non-formal initiatives fostering the integration and guidance of new teachers.

1.1 Portugal

In Portugal, the induction period is many times confused with the so-called Probationary year implemented in 2009/2010. However, they are not the same since the goal of both is different. The induction programme is a systematic and prolonged professional development process, of a collaborative nature. It refers to a development dimension and corresponds to the beginning of the professional activity of the recent graduate teachers, while the probationary period is designed to verify the teacher's ability to adapt to the required professional performance profile, it has a minimum duration of one school year and it is carried out at the educational or teaching establishment. The Probationary period can take place during the first year of teaching duties and before entering the career.

According to the Teaching Profession Career Statute (TPCS), during the Probationary period, the teacher is accompanied and supported in didactic, pedagogical, and scientific terms by a teacher of the 4th level or higher, from the same recruitment group, who was awarded a grade equal to or higher than Good in the last performance evaluation. The non-teaching component during this period will be allocated, for as long as necessary, to attending training sessions, attending classes given by other teachers or carrying out group work as indicated by the supervising and support teacher.

If a teacher on provisional appointment concludes the Probationary period with an evaluation of performance equal to - or above - Good, he or she will be definitively appointed to a permanent position, otherwise, the teacher may be invited to repeat the year or be dismissed.

The teaching career is divided into ten levels and the progression consists of a change in salary index throughout the career. The recognition of the right to progression in the career depends on the cumulative verification of several requirements. Progression to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, and 10th levels occurs on the date the teacher completes the required number of years in each level, provided that he or she has fulfilled the performance evaluation requirements, including class observation (compulsory in 2nd and 4th levels) and continuous training. Progression to the 5th and 7th levels occurs on the date the teacher is offered a vacancy for progression.

The initial training of kindergarten teachers and elementary and secondary education teachers is, currently, under the responsibility of 61 universities and polytechnic higher education entities, public and private, from which 201

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[2] In case you are interested in knowing more about the teacher's career in each country please check the national reports available on the project website

initial teaching courses are held. Teaching implies the acquisition of a set of competencies and qualifications, in which higher education is required, it fits in the context of learning throughout life, includes mobility and is based on partnerships. The key competencies for teaching are the ones that enable working with information, technology and knowledge, people (students, co-workers, and other education partners) and society at a local, regional, national, European and Global level (Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications, 2010)[3].

Master's degrees in the specialities of preschool education and teaching of elementary education have as a specific entry requirement a degree in Elementary Education.

The study cycles that aim at acquiring the professional qualification for teaching have as benchmarks:

- ► The general principles present in the Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo Português (Basic Law of the Portuguese Educational System)[4];
- ► The curricular orientations for pre-escolar education[5] and the curriculum[6] and curricular matrices of elementary and secondary education[7];
- ► The programmes and curricular goals[8];
- ► The general orientations of educational policy.

The study cycles aimed at acquiring professional qualifications for teaching include five training components, ensuring adequate integration according to the demands of professional performance.

- ► Teaching area
- ► General educational area
- ► Specific Teaching
- ► Cultural, social and ethnic areas
- ► The initiation to professional practice is organized according to the following principles:

i. Includes the observation and collaboration in education and teaching situations and the supervised practice in the classroom, in the kindergartens and schools, including the professional internship, subject to a final report;

ii. Provides the trainee teachers with the experience of planning, teaching and evaluating, according to the roles assigned to the teacher, inside and outside the classroom;

iii. It takes place in groups or classes of different levels and education and teaching cycles, covered by the recruitment group for which the study cycle prepares. It may take place in more than one education and teaching establishment, whether or not of the same group of schools or principal entity, in the case of private and cooperative education

iv. It is conceived in a perspective of training for the cooperation between the knowledge and the way of transmitting it, aiming at learning;

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[3] Available in https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/common-european-principles-teacher-competences-and-qualifications (accessed on 25.05.2021).

[4] Decree-Law no. 46/1986, of October 14, adjusted by Laws no. 115/97, of September 19, no. 49/2005, of August 30, and no. 85/2009, of August 27. [5] Available in https://www.dge.mec.pt/orientacoes-curriculares-para-educacao-pre-escolar (accessed on 25.05.2021).

[5] Available in https://www.dge.mec.pt/orientacoes-curriculares-para-educacao-pre-escolar (accessed on 25.05.2021).

[6] Available in https://www.dge.mec.pt/curriculo-nacional-dl-1392012 (accessed on 25.05.2021).

[7] Available in https://www.dge.mec.pt/organizacaogestao-curricular (accessed on 25.05.2021).

[8] Available in https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Basico/Metas/Portugues/pmcpeb_julho_2015.pdf (accessed on 25.05.2021).

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v. It is conceived from a perspective of professional development of the trainee teachers, promoting an attitude oriented to a permanent enhancement in students' learning.

At the end of the course that certifies and professionalizes teachers, with a master's degree, these are qualified for the public recruitment of teachers for the provision of school schedules. However, the definite nomination to a place in the pedagogical zone depends on the completion of the probationary period, with a performance evaluation equal to, or higher, than Good, as soon as they enter the career, a step that can take several years.

Also, continuous training is mandatory for teachers to progress in their careers and meet the requirements set for performance evaluation, so it is compulsory that the component of continuous training focuses at least 50% on the scientific and pedagogical dimensions and that at least four-fifths of the training is accredited by the Scientific-Pedagogical Council of Continuing Education - SPCCE. The continuous training aims at promoting personal and professional development, within the framework of lifelong training, to find pedagogical answers, coherent with the schools' challenges and the national and European recommendations. Like initial training, teachers must experience training paths that integrate devices, procedures, and strategies similar to those intended to be implemented with their students. The professional development of teachers in Portugal involves continuous training and specialized training. Ongoing training, protected in Portuguese law as a right and a duty, is supported by a set of conditions that allow for the permanent updating of professional knowledge; intends to differentiate teachers qualitatively concerning their initial training, regardless of the length of service or career position, providing the expansion of their professional culture. Specialized training is defined as increased training that qualifies teachers for performing other educational functions necessary for the functioning of schools and the development of the educational system. Having this in mind, conditions are established for updating professional knowledge, but there are no training courses to diversify the teacher's career, for example, as mentors, developing and improving their competencies to do peer-mentoring with their youngest colleagues.

It is important to reflect on how the national framework can evolve to integrate formal teachers' induction programmes and mentoring programmes. Most school leaders and teachers are open to different types of practices and activities, including a formal induction programme.

1.2 Greece

In Greece, to qualify as a teacher, one must meet the following requirements:

a) hold a university first cycle degree and,

b) hold a specific certificate of pedagogical and teaching proficiency (only for secondary teachers).

With regards to criterion (b) for university graduates to be appointed as educators, they should possess a certificate of attendance of a special programme of studies of at least six months in length (which is provided by one or more cooperating faculties to graduates who possess the qualification for appointment in the primary or/and secondary education).

The Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP), at the request of the Ministry of Education based on the recorded educational needs, announces and conducts, every two school years, a procedure for the preparation of a ranking list of teachers, Special Education Staff and Special Education Support/Assistant Staff, in priority order

by branch and specialization, so that they can be appointed as permanent teachers or employed as substitute teachers in primary and secondary schools.

In particular, teachers' appointment/employment is based exclusively on rating tables, including the names of those who have the qualifications. Pedagogical and teaching proficiency, academic qualifications, social criteria, and actual prior teaching service are taken into consideration for the ranking. The ranking lists of candidates are valid until the end of the second school year, following the end of the school year in which they were published in the Government Gazette. The classification lists are in descending order, because of the cumulative scoring of these criteria. The modification of data, in the interim period, is not permitted.

Over the last decade due to the deep financial crisis that hit the country, there has been a 'freeze' in the recruitment of permanent teaching staff. Indeed, even though teaching needs were increasing over the last years due to the massive retirement of the older cohort of teachers (it is estimated that 4.000-6.000 teachers were retired each year over the last decade), the Ministry of Education did not appoint permanent teachers but instead covered the vacancies by employing provisional staff, a substitute, or hourly-paid teachers.

Thus, the reality in Greece is difficult due to the financial crisis and instability in the country and it has an impact on the recruitment of permanent teaching staff for the teaching career. Also, over the last years, the teaching needs were increasing due to the massive retirement of the older cohort of teachers.

Newly appointed teachers do not acquire a permanent status immediately after an appointment. They serve for two years as probationary teachers. At the end of the second year, they are evaluated to become permanent. The procedure and the criteria for judging the suitability of the newly appointed teacher are determined by a Ministerial Decision according to which the school head prepares a report on the teacher's performance of duties during the two years probationary period and submits it to the relevant Regional Service Council. Following the Council's proposal, the new teacher acquires the status of a permanent teacher with an Act issued by the relevant regional Director of the Directorate of Primary or Secondary Education. In practice, this procedure is a mere formality since it has never led to the loss of the status of a permanent teacher until now.

Greece has a flat career structure where teachers cannot move to higher levels, other than that of a school principal, an educational advisor (corresponding to only a few hundred posts) or a local/regional director (corresponding to about one hundred posts in total).

In Greece, the Minister of Education is the higher authority for the teachers. Also, the Greek education system remains one of the most centralized systems in OECD countries. At the local level, the educational policy is implemented and specified by the Directorates of primary and secondary education under the competence of the regional directorate of education.

The only initiative for introducing mentoring in the Greek Legislation until recently was undertaken in 2010. This legislation previewed that the teachers who would become mentors should be selected by the educational advisor in cooperation with the school principal and they should preferably serve at the same school unit with the newly appointed teachers, but only in cases of new teachers serving at remote rural schools e-mentoring could be applied. The teachers selected would be trained by a centrally organized course. Unfortunately, the reality is that in the relevant articles of the law, mentors were not attributed any evaluative role. In July 2021, the government gave a new law to reintroduce the role of mentor in the Greek system, to help teachers with integration and the environment in the school.

In Greece, there is a National Induction Programme that starts at the beginning of the school year, focused on specialized induction training courses to be provided to newly appointed teachers at the regional or even the local

level. The regional or local induction courses to be more relevant they could be designed based on a prior need assessment exercise among the interested new teachers.

According to the report, some studies show that in general there does not seem to exist any structured procedure for the induction of new teachers. So, when the new teachers go to school for the first time, they feel some obstacles and challenges and to help teachers with the challenges they find at the schools, their only resources are informal advice from more experienced and trustful colleagues and external sources. The informal advice helps teachers develop a good social environment in the school setting.

"It should be noted though that even when this induction programme was offered it did not produce the expected outcomes since as it mostly failed to bring about either conceptual change or change of teachers actual classroom practices." (Kourkouli, 2015)

1.3 Spain

The topics of teacher education, teacher professional competencies, the organization of the initial teacher preparation (ITP) system and teacher progression in Spain have received increasing attention during the last 10 years. Education governance in the Spanish system is a contested field, with remarkable differences in some policies, while in other policy areas differences in policymaking among regions are very limited. As result, initial teacher preparation (ITP) policies scarcely differ in Spanish regions.

Although some international reports wrongly assume that the Spanish ITP system has a one-year, formal induction program, this "probation time" is a bureaucratic accreditation process required to get a position in a public school, a process in which newly qualified teachers are mostly alone, with isolated support activities. Further, it illustrates loneliness that characterizes the entrance into teaching in Spain is largely present in the whole teacher career.

Currently, one in four Spanish school teachers has an interim contract, the highest rate since 2009. This feature has been largely ignored in teacher policies and helps to explain why induction programs have been mostly irrelevant in the Spanish educational landscape.

The Spanish system is further characterized by a flattened curve in teachers' professional careers and a segmented initial preparation system. While pre-primary and primary school teachers (ISCED 02 and 1) follow a 4-year bachelor's degree focused on pedagogy and teaching in which candidates are simultaneously exposed to theory and practice, secondary school teachers (ISCED 2, 3 and 4) follow a consecutive model: first, a 4-year bachelors' degree in a specific area of knowledge, and secondly a 1-year Masters' degree in teaching and pedagogy.

Spain shares one of the largest proportions of teachers that do not receive any form of support (75%, OECD average is 62%) while only 15% of teachers report having participated in a formal induction programme in their first assignment. Similarly, the proportion of school heads who report having formal induction programmes for recruits is similar in primary and secondary schools, with only one in three schools being involved in such initiatives.

While existing formal induction and mentoring programs in Spain are somehow discouraging, there are non-formal supportive resources and local, scattered initiatives that can be acknowledged as "de facto" induction and mentoring approaches. This review has identified three different trends that can be considered first attempts towards the design of a wider, more coherent, and tailored system of support for new teachers. First, ITE providers

create more opportunities grounded in practice; second, the advancement of residency models; and third, schools create cultures of practice anchored in teachers' collegiality.

1.4 Italy

In Italy, the career stages of each teacher depends on the subject taught, and the order and grade of the school in which he or she instructs. Indeed, to teach in kindergarten and primary schools, there is the obligation to obtain a master's degree in primary education sciences at the end of a five-year course of study, with internships starting from the second year of the course. On the other hand, to teach in first-grade secondary school and second-grade secondary school, achieving the title of master's degree with the acquisition of at least 24 ECTS in a specific educational field, are indispensable conditions for access to a particular competition.

Concerning formal and non-formal induction programmes, all the experienced Italian teachers interviewed had benefited from a formal induction programme, describing it as a "training path" and "comprehensive." On the other hand, teachers from the complementary target group (new teachers) had never done a formal or informal induction programme. The cause of this clear differentiation is the change in the Italian legal framework. Furthermore, new teachers suffered a major shock when they took on a role in the educational system, confirming the crucial need for induction programmes that lead new teachers onto a virtuous path.

Each Italian school determines its in-service training programmes, developing networks with other schools in the area. Activities must be aligned with the school's three-year educational offer plan, the self-evaluation report, and school improvement goals, as outlined in the Ministry of Education's goals in the National training plan, issued every three years. The priorities of topics for teacher training were defined by the Ministry of Education, covering areas related to improving knowledge of foreign languages, digital skills, raising awareness on inclusion, disability, and globalization. In addition, teachers have the right to have five days of exemption from service during the school year to participate in training initiatives.

As regards the continuous teachers' training opportunities, Italy establishes the principle of in-service training for permanent teachers as a "mandatory, permanent and structural" action. Nevertheless, there are still disagreements with the social partners, not yet resolved, concerning the placement and mandatory nature of the hours devoted to training within the overall framework of the hours provided for the teaching function.

As part of the activities related to the training course for newly hired teachers, a series of actions have been launched to support the training process, involving the newly hired teachers and the tutor teachers assigned to them. The Ministry of Education has defined the overall duration of the course, quantified in 50 hours of commitment, considering:

- ► Face-to-face training activities/workshops.
- ► Observation in the classroom, Tutor-Teacher and vice versa (to be also structured employing specific operational tools).
- ► Professional re-elaboration, which makes use of the tools of the "skills assessment", the "professional portfolio", and the "pact for training development".

Specific training activities have been activated for the tutor teachers, carried out in collaboration with local universities and identified following the acquisition of a specific expression of interest.

A relevant aspect is the role and use of digital platforms for mentoring and tutoring activities. In fact, to facilitate and interconnect new aspiring teachers and tutors, the online platform INDIRE has been set up to enable this network. The digital aspect of teacher training at all career stages is fundamental to the strategic plans of the Italian Ministry of Education. In addition, the digital platform includes the "Toolkit" section that contains valuable materials and tools for teachers, tutors, and referents. Regional experiences have been made available to tutors' models of the training agreement, in-person and remote observation models, observation grids, and formats for the final report. Furthermore, this section is constantly enriched throughout the year with new content and materials.

According to the Italian report, teachers are oriented to the awareness of the unavoidability of the mentor and the benefits that an induction program can provide in the first years of the teaching career.

1.5 Croatia

The education system in Croatia is seen as a coherent whole in which all participants and institutions - kindergartens, primary schools, gymnasiums, vocational and art schools and dormitories – both have a high degree of autonomy and receive appropriate support, but also take great responsibility for quality and outcomes of their work. The concept of teacher's autonomy is of high significance, as the Croatian system intends to reduce the standardization of teacher's work to achieve an optimal level of autonomy, i.e. giving greater powers to educators and institutions in deciding on the curriculum, but also on the organization of teaching, learning and work of the school as a whole.

In Croatia, all preschool teachers, and primary and secondary school teachers are trained at the tertiary level (including the requirement of 60 ECTS in pedagogical education), and according to educational level i.e. the age of children they work with. All future teachers must undergo study programmes leading to higher pedagogical education and teacher qualification. After they graduate, teachers are obliged to undergo a one-year traineeship under a mentor's supervision, and after they pass the licensing exam, they become qualified teachers. For our context, it is significant to highlight this formal right and obligation that every teacher is ensured with the mentored introduction to the profession for one year.

Also, all teachers have both the right and the obligation to develop, ensured by the state and implemented by various education agencies and other authorised bodies continuously professionally. Thus, continuing professional development is compulsory for all teachers in Croatia (including school heads and their deputies) at all education levels, and the basic goal of organized continuing professional development is to use and enhance educational workers' potential to improve the educational process and pupils'/students' results, in line with values, educational goals and principles of National Curriculum Framework. To achieve this goal, the basic competencies of preschool teachers, primary and secondary school teachers, expert associates and principals are to be strengthened in the following areas:

- ► educational policies;
- ► subject-specific knowledge;
- ► pedagogy, didactics and methodology;
- ► psychology;
- ► organization;
- ► communication and reflection;

► inclusive education.

Regarding the non-formal practices, it is necessary to understand the importance of the Education and Teacher Training Agency, as the main body responsible for the professional development of educators at all levels of general education. The teachers need to implement some activities to progress on his/her career, like sharing examples of good practice in the application of innovative teaching methods, joint learning and teaching activities or for example leading a professional association. According to the report from Croatian partners, all these activities are evaluated through a system of points.

In Croatia, there are two formal levels upon which mentoring/induction programmes are implemented. The first one is during the teacher's initial training (at universities), while the second mentoring practice (to be more understood as an induction programme) begins with the first year of practice of working in schools. Students educated in the teaching profession during their studies are provided with two types of mentoring:

► the first is through the mentoring at the tertiary institution they attend, by the university teachers who are experts in teaching methodology and didactics. These university teachers serve to teach their students basic methodologies and skills on how to educate.
► Secondly, one of the prerequisites of gaining a teacher diploma is formal practice, as students are obliged to go to primary and secondary level schools, where they gather experience and training, and where one of the school's experienced teachers is provided to them through the role of mentor (formal obligations that one must satisfy to become a mentor will be explained in next sections). Teachers of primary education teach Croatian language, Mathematics, subjects called "Nature and Society", physical and art education. For each subject, future teacher of primary education has one mentor in Faculty and one mentor in schools. Similarly, for higher grades and for students training to become teachers in secondary education, they are also provided with mentors for teaching their subjects both at the tertiary institution they attend, as well as in the school in which they conduct their practice for their respected subjects (e.g., Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Philosophy...).

The second mentoring practice, which can be understood as a formal induction programme (as its frame is legislatively defined by the Ministry of Science and Education) begins with the first year of practice of working in schools. Both, primary education teachers and Master of Education must undergo the same process of beginning to work in schools. First-year of working in a school, trainee teacher, receives a mentor to guide them through working in schools, but also as a preparation for professional state exam which trainees must pass after one year period to be able to receive their teaching licences. The mentor is usually from the school in which the trainee teacher work, and has to satisfy a set of criteria based on the "National Legislation on the Progress of Teachers, Professional Associates, and Principals in Primary and Secondary Schools and Student Homes" to be able to take upon the title. To become a mentor, the teacher must gather a set of points; although most of the rules are formal and are difficult to achieve, the most common activities that are scored for a teacher's advancement are summarized here:

► Organization and/or implementation of competitions
► Mentoring pupils, students, and trainees
► Lectures, workshops and education
► Professional articles, teaching materials and educational content
► Teaching assignment
► Short-term joint staff training events
► Participation in education at the state level

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► Participation in education at the international level
► Work in professional councils, associations, etc.
► Contribution to the profession through work in professional associations
► Projects on improving the education system

1.6 Germany

Teacher training in Germany comprises several training phases for all teaching posts: studies, preparatory service, and in-service training for teachers in the school service. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) has defined key points for the mutual recognition of qualifications in teacher training courses. Applicants who have completed a teaching degree under the requirements of the KMK receive - regardless of the federal state in which the degree was obtained - equal access to the preparatory service for the type of teaching profession corresponding to their degree. Nevertheless, due to the different types of schools and teacher training courses in the federal states, it can be an advantage if the study and preparatory service are completed in the federal state in which a later position in the school service is sought. This should be considered when choosing a university.

Teachers are in need in many federal states - that is the result of almost all forecasts of teacher needs in the coming years. But despite the forecasts, there is no automatic or blanket job guarantee for high school graduates who are now starting their teaching degree and who will apply for employment in five to eight years. This is mainly because ttheyneed for teachers depends on the federal state, the type of school and the combination of subjects.

Training of teachers at all types of schools is regulated by Land legislation. Responsibility for teacher training rests with the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs and Ministries of Science of the federal states which regulate training through study regulations or training regulations and examination regulations or corresponding statutory provisions. The First and the Second State Examinations are conducted by the state examination authorities or boards of the federal states.

The teacher training is divided into two stages, a course of higher education including periods of practical training and practical training in a school setting. Teacher training courses are offered at universities, Technische Hochschulen/Technische Universitäten, Pädagogische Hochschulen (colleges of education) and colleges of art and music. Practical teacher training in the form of a Vorbereitungsdienst (preparatory service) takes place in teacher training institutes (Studienseminare) or comparable institutions and training schools. The share of practical training in schools in higher education courses has substantially increased in recent years. For study courses at universities, in all federal state institutions (e.g. centres for teacher training) have been established to coordinate teacher training between the faculties and guarantee an adequate relationship to teaching practice.

Additionally, the organisation of the induction period for newly qualified teachers has been a central topic of the Gemischte Kommission Lehrerbildung of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. According to the recommendations, the expert commission made in 1999, the provisions for the deployment of young teaching staff are to aim at a gradual development of professional competence. Furthermore, a system of support for the induction period for newly qualified teachers is to be established, including measures of in-service training particularly adjusted to the needs of newly qualified teachers. In the majority of federal states, concepts are currently being developed or have been put into practice for the organisation of the induction period. In the case of didactical and methodical problems, especially newly qualified

teachers have the option to ask training staff from teacher training institutes or institutions for in-service teacher training for advice.

Nowadays, in primary and secondary, education school supervisory authorities exercise Fachaufsicht (academic supervision), Rechtsaufsicht (legal supervision) and Dienstaufsicht (staff supervision) within the school system. Special educational support and academic evaluation are provided in school pilot projects carried out by the school supervisory authorities and the institutes for school development (Landesinstitute für Schulentwicklung) of the federal states. Accompanying research examines the effectiveness of the reform measures and the framework that should be created if they are to be successfully implemented.

The introduction of new curricula is often preceded by a test phase. In some federal states, for example, teachers are surveyed to establish whether the new guidelines have proved successful or require amendment. By providing advice and assistance and recommending changes in schools and by reporting to higher-ranking education authorities, the school supervisory authorities and institutes for school development are to contribute to the evaluation and further development of the school system. In almost all federal states, schools are evaluated by external quality or evaluation agencies and inspection procedures.

1.7 Slovenia

In Slovenia, the initial teacher education is carried out by universities, as well as single higher education institutions. The study programmes that offer teacher training qualifications can be concurrent (study programmes of one or two subjects of teaching leading to the professional title of professor of one or two subjects -a second cycle study programmes, leading to the professional title Magister Professor or Professor, or a study programme that includes the relevant professional content) or consecutive (study programmes, which impart necessary knowledge about the subject of teaching or the field of education, but do not provide the necessary professional courses for acquiring the required teaching skills). To obtain relevant pedagogical knowledge a person must complete a postgraduate non-degree teacher training programme (supplementary study programme), amounting to a minimum of 60 ECTS).

So, all teaching professionals receive their initial training at the appropriate institutions offering tertiary education. There are however many pedagogical studies that are offered by other faculties from their respective professional fields. Combining the pre-bologna reform programmes and the ones currently being implemented 170 studies can enable a graduate to receive a pedagogical degree (for all levels of education).

For a teacher to be considered fully qualified, they must – in addition to their formal initial training education – pass the professional examination. To be able to approach the examination, he/she must have the appropriate formal degree, enough hours of work experience, and the approval of his mentor and headteacher based on the required lesson implementations.

Teachers in Slovenia enter the pedagogical profession in two ways: through induction programmes or by applying for open recruitment job positions advertised by schools. The induction system is not compulsory and schools may – on vacancies – hire teachers beginners (with finished adequate initial teacher education) who have yet to take the state professional examination to be fully qualified. Schools must hire teachers already holding the professional certification and can hire applicants without it only if no teachers with qualifications have applied.

According to the Slovenian report, there are two formally induction programmes implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Under those programmes new/recent teachers enter the profession by initially undergoing practical training under the mentorship of an experienced teacher, gradually taking over more responsibility. In the induction programme, they familiarise themselves with the contents so they can work independently and prepare for the teaching professional examination. The induction programme is prepared by the mentor who must comply with certain requirements ensuring their expertise in cooperation with the teacher beginner. The mentor is appointed by the school headmaster.

The induction programme includes the familiarisation with the actual subject-specific teaching processes in the pre-school institution or school and with various methods and forms of teaching. Teacher beginners deepen their knowledge of and improve their skills in subject-specific didactics. They learn to design lesson plans, prepare lessons, and execute them while observing the mentor's lessons and other teachers. They cooperate with classroom management and the leadership of the school, organising parent meetings and consultations. In addition, they gain knowledge and skills outside their pre-school institution or school, particularly in areas important to the teaching professional examination. The headteacher appoints a mentor for trainees for 10 months.

When teachers start the profession, the initial work is still based on the interaction with a mentor and headteacher. According to the report, this interaction is important for the initial work. About the informal practices at the induction programmes, in Slovenia, the report shows that 48% of teachers report that they were not included in formal and informal practices at the schools. Explain that, this evidence is compared to 58 % in the OECD. Other evidence we can see is that only 5% of teachers in Slovenia have a mentor in the induction period to their profession.

About the induction programmes, teachers are especially interested in getting experiences, skills, and advice on integrating into their regular work, caring for the students with greater needs as well as those with talents, and developing interesting and engaging materials for all of them. Teachers don't have a formal mentoring programme. Teachers have the freedom to participate in Continuous Professional Development programmes.

NOTE: The National Institute for Education has been developing a programme for both new teachers and mentors in recent years which was brought to the attention of the project partners in the period concluding with this national report. The Ministry has taken appropriate steps to include this public institution more fully in the project national consortium. It needs to be emphasized that the Ministry being the public authority with the power to promote legislation and regulations has serious intentions in reforming the system to better ensure some level of concrete induction (not only time passed) to be a requirement to approach the professional examination and to include mentoring as one of the conditions to progress a teacher's career.

This means that in the Slovenian context this project will have to work hand in hand with the reform of the regulations to the formal teacher career progression path (which is underway) and to coordinate in part with the universities providing initial training and the National Institute for Education when it comes to the existing structures in Slovenia. This is both a limiting factor to the freedom that we will have within the consortium in our national context and a potential benefit that could help us reach greater potential and greater systemic impact.

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2.   Teachers' needs and motivations for their career

With the focus on the teachers' needs and motivations for their career, namely their perception, satisfaction and motivation, this section presents an in-depth analysis of the results of the 776 questionnaires collected by the LOOP partnership, the 56 interviews and the 6 focus groups to raise awareness of policies, practices and needs related to the preparation and promotion of induction programmes based on mentoring practices. As previously mentioned, the questionnaires were distributed to new/recent graduate teachers, experienced teachers and school directors.

Although the teacher's situation in Europe is similar, with teachers experiencing great professional instability, audiences increasingly challenging, lack of resources and recognition, as well as fatigue, generated by the average age, regarding the **perception, satisfaction, and motivation about the teaching career in general**, most of the experienced teachers felt empowered, motivated, and committed to their job, as well as integrated and supported by their peers in the tough decisions of their daily work. Looking to the future, most of them are happy with being a teacher during their whole career, however, they would like to have the opportunity to diversify their teaching career options, embracing other roles rather than teaching, for example, have the chance to become mentors of other teachers initiating their career.

When it comes to the new/recent teachers, the majority feel empowered and committed to their job, since they are eager to learn more and put into practice what they learned in the initial training. However, regarding motivation, the majority feel motivated about their job, but not all of them, and the reasons behind it are related to career progression and the lack of support the teachers felt in their daily activities.

Analysing the responses from both new and experienced teachers, it is possible to conclude that when it comes to teachers' views on investing in their career, they feel empowered, motivated and committed to their job, even though they would like to undertake additional roles and responsibilities within the teaching job (as being a mentor for teachers initiating their career sharing their know-how), they would be happy to remain as a teacher, since they feel confident in their ability to vary instructional strategies in their classroom.

Needs, challenges, and constraints

Through the surveys, the interviews and the focus groups, the new/recent teachers had the opportunity to express the needs and challenges they are facing in terms of their professional practice, well-being and formal policies and procedures required by the school settings. Despite the differences in the typical procedure teachers shall know and follow in each country, as well as, the formats and contents of the teacher's initial training courses and approaches, there is a common understanding of the challenges they are facing: the vast majority call for more support regarding the bureaucratic and administrative matters in the schools. This is directly related to their needs, that in almost all countries were revealed and grouped in the following categories: (a) financial incentives, (b) good working conditions that would urge teachers to leave their established routines, (c) an appropriate selection process, (d) practical skills, (e) Knowledge and skills to deal with stress and emotional distress.

On the other hand, experienced teachers and school directors had the opportunity to highlight the main constraints that schools and professionals must face while supporting new teachers. According to the participants in all countries, there is a common constraint to all, the lack of time teachers has due to a heavy workload. It is difficult to manage all the tasks they have with the students, their peers, the school board, the parents and the public authorities. However, despite this, several teachers showed interest in becoming mentors of young

colleagues and pedagogically supporting them at the beginning of their careers. However, to do so, some constraints need to be overcome. In detail, table 6 shows what are the main needs and challenges of the new teachers in each country and the constraints identified by the experienced teachers and school directors.

	New teachers' needs and challenges	Constraints in supporting new teachers
DE	New German teachers need support in class management, teaching methods and a way of sharing experiences and knowledge on specific subjects with others.	Lack of time is the biggest problem.
EL	The main needs and challenges regard bureaucratic/administrative matters and also issues related to diversity and inclusion.	Time - programmes are not initiated at the school level and communities are not fostered.
ES	The main challenges new teachers face are the heavy workload and the lack of knowledge and expertise to manage class, especially regarding students' diversity. They also lack knowledge related to the content and how to manage and deal with stress to avoid emotional exhaustion. It is also important to highlight the need for training courses and seminars, a reduction of the teaching hours and co-teaching with experienced teachers/mentors.	Time: to plan an effective programme, to design the training programme and the different agents involved (mentors, directors, and inspectors).
HR	Croatian teachers feel that there is inadequate initial teacher training and an inability of keeping up with the fast-changing environment, which demands continuous training. New teachers lack practical skills in dealing with students and knowing how to evaluate them. They also need to know how to deal with students with special needs.	The inability of schools to provide proper support.
IT	Italian teachers lack digital skills and knowledge of bureaucratic and administrative procedures. There is also a need of learning more about classroom psychological dynamics and management.	Support effective and functional methodologies to provide knowledge. Help from the bureaucratic and administrative point of view.
PT	In Portugal, the most evidenced need is regarding bureaucratic issues and dealing with students with disabilities/ special needs. They also need to know how to effectively manage emotional problems revealed by students in different moments in the school setting.	New and experienced teachers are from different schools. Reduced support that new teachers feel from school leaders, concerning the ones that will be temporarily in the school. Reduced time for mentoring. Lack of stability in the profession and career (due to the continuous mobility of new teachers every year from school to school). A high number of students per class and frequent assignments in challenging classes. Permanent legal updates and shifts generate instability in the professionals of the schools.
SI	Slovenian teachers feel the need of getting more acquainted with basic psychology and didactics. They also would like to be welcomed in a broader environment as well as to have someone close and	The mentor should receive some training in mentoring/ coaching/ psychology. They need to be relieved of some other obligations. The role

Table 6- Needs, challenges, and constraints

Overall, the new/recent teachers consider there is an inadequate initial teacher training and an inability of keeping up with the fast-changing environment, which demands continuous training and demonstrates a lack of practical skills to work daily, especially at the school bureaucratic procedures and class management. They also stated their concerns about their self-confidence in dealing with students' emotional problems, how to deal with problematic students, students with special needs, and how to speak assertively with their parents and their families. It is not just about trying to get to know the school's culture better but developing skills to do it in practice, this is the biggest constraint for beginning teachers.

The desk research and fieldwork developed by the LOOP partnership highlight these needs and challenges of teachers at the beginning of their careers, as well as the main constraints that school directors and experienced teachers face to support them, to answer them through the design of an induction programme for new teachers based on mentoring by experienced colleagues, who want to share their knowledge, techniques, pedagogical methods, strategies that they have accumulated over the years of teaching students.

3.   Teacher's induction programme

The analysis of the needs and challenges of the new teachers and the constraints that schools have in supporting these teachers showed that is crucial to have an induction period for new teachers in the school, helping them in a didactical, pedagogical, administrative, emotional and social way, not only at the beginning of their career but concerned in promoting excellence among teachers throughout their careers.

Teacher induction should therefore be understood as a **systematic and prolonged professional development process, of a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and centred on the school context, the promotion of student learning and the development of the educational system**. An effective induction programme allows teachers, at all stages of their careers, to observe their peers, be observed by them, and integrate learning communities that foster joint reflection and learning and address the quality of teaching and professional development, as a collective and not just an individual responsibility. The public authorities must try to evaluate supervisory resources in the evaluation processes, namely, through the implementation of induction programmes as part of teachers' continuous professional development, as the logical extension of initial teachers' training.

Induction based on mentoring support at the early stages of their career allows teachers to develop their professional skills and develop fruitful links within the school environment. The LOOP partnership challenged teachers and school directors to share their understanding of what is an "induction programme". In the survey, there were presented 4 hypotheses, all directly connected with induction:

- ► "A systematic and long-lasting process of professional development, of a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and focused on the school context, promoting student's learning and developing the educational system."
- ► "Allows teachers, at all stages of their careers, to observe their peers, be observed by them and integrate learning communities that foster joint reflection and learning and face the quality of teaching and professional development as a collective responsibility and not just an individual one."
- ► "A complete academic year of professional practice, continuously supported by the school's curricular department, through a teacher from the same recruitment group and with recognized professional experience."
- ► "Induction is a professional development program that incorporates mentoring and is designed to offer "support, guidance, and orientation for beginning teachers during the transition into their first teaching job."

Table 7 presents the main ideas exchanged between school directors, experienced teachers and new/recent teachers of the partner countries related to the concept of induction:

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		1			2			3			4		
		D	E	N	D	E	N	D	E	N	D	E	N
	DE	X	X	X									
D – School directors	EL	X	X	X									
	ES										X	X	X
E – Experienced teachers	HR				X							X	X
N – New/recent teachers	IT										X	X	X
	PT			X							X	X	X
	SI										X	X	X

Table 7- Definition of Induction Programme

As it can be seen, the more consensual definition is the last one "**induction is a professional development programme that incorporates mentoring and is designed to offer support, guidance, and orientation for beginning teachers during the transition into their first teaching job**", emphasizing the mentoring activity in the programme. However, in Germany and Greece, the school directors and teachers (experienced and new) highlighted that induction is "a systematic and long-lasting process of professional development, of a collaborative nature, involving a network of teachers and specialists and focused on the school context, promoting student's learning and developing the educational system".

Having these definitions of what is and what to expect from an induction programme, either the school directors, the experienced teachers or the new/recent teachers agree that formal induction programmes are needed at the beginning of the teaching career to motivate teachers at the beginner level and to reinforce their competencies on the job.

Structure, contents, and activities of induction programmes

Regarding the activities and respective content to be included in the induction programme, five areas of the teachers' profession that would be covered by the induction programme, were considered, namely:

- ► Didactical-pedagogical area
- ► Subject(s) area
- ► Bureaucratic/administrative area
- ► Emotional area
- ► Social/cultural area.

In general, following the results of the research, all areas are considered relevant from the perspective of the target groups. However, there are some differences when valuing the relevance of each area from country'sry perspective. The only area that was common to all countries was the emotional (7), as a fundamental and mandatory factor to be considered in the induction programme, followed by the didactic-pedagogical (4), the bureaucratic-administrative (3) and the social/cultural (2) (table 8).

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The areas more valued by the target groups involved in the study	
DE	Emotional (classes management) Bureaucratic/ administrative
GR	Didactical-pedagogical (classes management) Emotional (relationship and communication with parents; classes management)
ES	Social-Cultural Emotional
HR	Didactical-pedagogical Emotional
IT	Bureaucratic/ administrative Emotional Didactical-pedagogical (secondary level)
PT	Bureaucratic/ administrative Emotional Social-Cultural
SI	Didactical-pedagogical (practice) Emotional

Table 8: Areas identified as the most relevant by the target-groups

Despite considering that the five main areas are crucial for the improvement and development of new teachers' performance, the participants valued the areas they feel less prepared to work in a school. Generally, school directors and teachers (experienced and new) consider that the initial teachers' training prepares new/recent teachers at scientific (subject) and didactical-pedagogic levels, but there is a lack of knowledge and experience about the organisation, structure dynamics and management procedures in schools. This indicates the need for strengthening the preparation of new/recent teachers at the bureaucratic/administrative level, specifically concerning the legislation and legal aspects related to the teaching profession, the school administrative procedures and class management administrative procedures, but also the teachers' duties and rights. Also, the three target groups mentioned the need of being more prepared at the emotional and social level, especially the new/recent teachers who manifested they would like to develop social-emotional skills during the induction programme to learn: how to deal with stress, empathy, self-confidence, persistency, management of personal and professional dimensions. They also revealed their anxiety in dealing with students with learning disabilities, challenging backgrounds or a history of bad experiences/results in schools.

Based on these five areas and intending to design an innovative peer-induction programme, 11 activities were proposed to the target groups for them to identify the most relevant per each area. Doing a comparative analysis of the findings, all activities were considered relevant, however, some were more suitable for certain areas. Therefore, according to this list:

1. Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s)
2. Assist classes of experienced teachers in another subject(s)
3. An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes
4. Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
5. Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices
6. Participate in classes simulation with teachers initiating their careers
7. Reflective learning portfolio
8. Participate in workshops provided by other experienced teachers
9. Observational visits to other schools

10. Be involved in a network of teachers
11. Integrate a school club/project.

There were common aspects between the partners' countries and the following *activities* stood out as the most voted for in each area:

Didactical-Pedagogical											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DE	X		X	X	X						
EL				X	X					X	
ES		X	X	X				X	X		
HR	X			X	X					X	
IT		X				X	X			X	X
PT	X		X	X	X	X		X			
SI	X			X							

Table 9 – Activities identified by the target groups as more relevant for the didactical-pedagogical area.

Subject Area											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DE	X			X	X						
EL	X			X	X	X	X			X	X
ES	X	X	X					X		X	
HR	No answer										
IT		X		X							
PT	X			X	X	X		X			X
SI	Design lessons, materials and work with students on a project										

Table 10 - Activities identified by target groups as more relevant for the subject area.

Bureaucratic/ Administrative											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DE	X		X	X	X						
GR				X		X			X		
ES								X	X		
HR	No answer										
IT	X										
PT	X			X	X				X		
SI	Have a coffee with the administrator/secretary										

Table 3 - Activities identified by target groups as more relevant for the bureaucratic/administrative area.

Emotional											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DE				X	X					X	
GR				X	X					X	X
ES				X	X					X	
HR	No answer										
IT	X	X									
PT	X			X	X			X	X	X	X
SI	X			X	X						

Table 2 - Activities identified by target groups as more relevant for the emotional area.

Social/ Cultural											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DE				X	X					X	
EL					X					X	X
ES					X						X
HR	No answer										
IT	X			X							
PT				X	X			X	X	X	X
SI	Have team building, have school projects, have events										

Table 13 - Activities identified by target groups as more relevant for the bureaucratic/administrative area.

As can be seen in the tables above, activity 4 (Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes) was identified as being relevant in all areas. Considering that this activity is related to the discussion of observed classes, it makes sense to consider as an activity also, the observed classes (activities 1 or 2). In the case of the

areas of didactical-pedagogical and subject, all activities were identified, at least, by one country. In the other three areas, some of the activities were not selected by any country.

For each area, is also possible to identify the 3-4 activities most selected by the target groups:

The practices more valued by the target groups involved in the study	
Didactical-pedagogical area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Subject(s) area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Bureaucratic/ administrative area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Emotional area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Social/Cultural area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools Integrate a school club/project

Table 14: The practices more valued per area

This does not mean that there were no discrepancies or that other activities were not selected for a specific area. In general, they were all voted on and even new activities emerged by target groups from Slovenia and Portugal, such as:

► Design lessons, materials and work with students on the project, for the *subject area*;
► Have a coffee with the administrator/secretary, for the *Bureaucratic/administrative area*;
► Have team building, have school projects, have events, for the *Social/cultural area*;
► Access to simple information and short-duration training related to administrative aspects to approach **Bureaucratic /administrative area**;
► Take part in moments to get familiar with the school and community, to approach **Emotional and Social/cultural areas**.

Concerning the *contents* of the induction programme, based on the results from the surveys and interviews, it is possible to identify the common results for the contents of each area.

Didactical-Pedagogical area

1. Managing curricula
2. Student's evaluation: effective assessment of learning outcomes Vs students' final evaluation
3. Student's evaluation: continuous learning assessment
4. Adapting classes & evaluation to students different learning styles
5. Strategies to improve & keep alive students' motivation
6. Strategies to engage less participative students
7. Preparing appealing educational resources, exercises, and other support materials
8. Managing group/collaborative work in the classroom
9. Dealing with students lacking discipline in the classroom
10. Dealing with problematic behavior students
11. Dealing with students with special learning needs and/or disabilities
12. Planning/preparing classes using mixed teaching methods

Figure 1 – List of contents identified by the partnership for the didactical-pedagogical area.

Didactical-Pedagogical												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DE		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
EL			X	X	X			X		X		
ES		X		X	X					X	X	X
HR										X		
IT	Support during mentor's lectures											
PT			X	X	X							
SI					X		X					

Table 4 - Contents identified by target groups as more relevant for the didactical-pedagogical area.

In the *didactical-pedagogical area*, all contents were selected, except for "managing curricula", however, those that had the highest number of votes of relevance were:

► Student's evaluation: continuous learning assessment
► Adapting classes & evaluations to students' different learning styles
► Strategies to improve & keep alive students' motivation
► Dealing with problematic behaviour students
► Dealing with students with special learning needs and/or disabilities

Subject Area					
	1	2	3	4	5
DE	X	X	X	X	
EL			X	X	X
ES			X		
HR	Keeping up with the subject content				
IT	No answer				
PT		X	X	X	X
SI			X		

Table 16 - Contents identified by target groups as more relevant for the subject area.

Subject area

1. What can I take from other subjective areas that are useful for my classes
2. Identifying and promoting competences associated with key learning outcomes
3. Updating my knowledge with the most recent advances with regards to the content of the school subject(s) I teach
4. Adapting the content of the school subject(s) I teach to the readiness of my students
5. Integrating the school strategies during the curriculum implementation

Figure 2 - List of contents identified by the partnership for the subject area.

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Regards the **subject(s) a**rea, all the contents suggested by the partnership were selected, however, there were two that stood out to be part of the LOOP induction programme, namely:

► Updating my knowledge with the most recent advances with regards to the content of the school subject(s) I teach
► Adapting the content of the school subject(s) I teach to the readiness of my students.

Bureaucratic/Administrative area

1. Legislation and legal aspects related to the teaching profession
2. School administrative procedures
3. Class management administrative procedures
4. Duties and rights (legal)
5. Career development information

Figure 3 - List of contents identified by the partnership for the bureaucratic /administrative area.

Bureaucratic/Administrative					
	1	2	3	4	5
DE			X	X	
EL		X	X	X	X
ES		X	X		
HR			X		
IT	No answer				
PT	X	X			X
SI			X		

Table 17 - Contents identified by target groups as more relevant for the bureaucratic/administrative area.

The **bureaucratic/administrative area** was one of the mentioned areas in which teachers felt less prepared and on which they would like to have more training. Therefore, in all countries, interest was expressed in knowing more about "class management administrative procedures" and "school administrative procedures". Nevertheless, topics on duties and legal rights and career development information are also welcomed.

Emotional					
	1	2	3	4	5
DE	X		X	X	
EL	X		X	X	X
ES				X	X
HR	Mitigate the initial shock				
IT	No answer				
PT	X	X		X	X
SI	X			X	

Table 58 - Contents identified by target groups as more relevant for the emotional area.

Emotional area

1. Self-confidence
2. Conciliation between professional and personal life
3. Dealing with fears and insecurities related to students misbehavior
4. Dealing with fear to deal with families (parents & guardians)
5. Dealing with fears and insecurities related to working with peers and school leaders

Figure 4 - List of contents identified by the partnership for the emotional area.

The results of the survey also showed that all target groups agree that they were not well prepared by the university at the emotional and social/ cultural levels. In general, school leaders and teachers also pointed out that formal induction programmes should include all the proposed aspects related to the **emotional area**, namely:

► self-confidence, conciliation between professional and personal life, dealing with fears and insecurities derived from students' misbehaviour and dealing with fears to cope with families (parents and guardians);
► dealing with fears and insecurities derived from working with peers and school leaders.

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Besides the proposed practices and activities, the experienced teachers also believe that the induction programme should include matters of self-knowledge, self-esteem, conflict management and techniques to relax and reduce stress levels, aiming at providing psychological support to teachers at the beginning of their careers.

Social-Cultural									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
DE	X			X	X	X	X		X
EL		X			X	X	X		X
ES	X		X			X			
HR	Intercultural competencies, communication with parents and peers								
IT	No answer								
PT			X	X			X	X	
SI							X		

Table 19 - Contents identified by target groups as more relevant for the social-cultural area.

Social-cultural area

1. Know-how to act according to the values and principles of the teacher's profession
2. Know-how to manage the curricula, planning the work and the key learning outcomes
3. Assimilate the school culture
4. Knowing the school code of conduct
5. Interacting with peers
6. Interacting with parents
7. Interacting with students
8. Interacting with local school authorities and other external stakeholders
9. Dealing with students with diverse cultural background

Last but not the least, all the content of the *social/cultural area* was considered relevant in all countries, however, "interacting with students" and "interacting with parents" stood out as the most relevant and one of the major concerns of the new teachers.

Figure 5 - List of contents identified by the partnership for the social-cultural area.

This wide-ranging desk research and fieldwork brought important knowledge and guidelines to strengthen the design of the induction programme of the LOOP project, accordingly to the needs of the teachers and the perspectives of the school leaders. Nevertheless, when questioned about the **duration of the induction programme**, it was common agreement that it should take, at least, one school year, allowing new teachers to experience a full school year. Some of them mentioned that new/recent teachers should have access to the induction programme immediately after ending initial training. In what concerns the time per week to be dedicated to activities and initiatives of the induction programme, however, there is no consensus, not by target groups, not by countries. Overall, some teachers consider that one to two hours per week won't be enough, however, they also consider that dedicating more than one to two hours per week to the induction programme can be difficult, considering the workload of all teachers. Others consider that three to four hours per week would be the desirable time to invest in an induction programme. In the end, the target groups agree with the idea of structuring a flexible induction programme in terms of time and intensity (like a bank of hours), ensuring:

► The programme combines meetings and moments of joint reflection and cooperation with the class' assistance (new teachers assisting experienced teachers' classes and experienced teachers assisting new/recent teachers' classes).

► More time (teaching and non-teaching) dedicated to the induction activities at the beginning of the school year, which will be reduced following the activities foreseen in the school, the flow of the activities to be assured by teachers and the needs of new/recent teachers.

► The promotion of group and individual meetings/sessions between mentors and related mentees.
► The progressive and increased autonomy of new teachers during the school year.

This "bank of hours" may be distributed according to the new/recent teachers' needs, for example, more time dedicated to the induction programme at the beginning, which progressively would be reduced to one or two moments per week following the needs. It is important to highlight that to guarantee this kind of implementation, experienced teachers would need to have time formally and legally dedicated to mentoring to avoid more workload and, consequently, demotivation related to the process. In fact, despite all interviewed teachers recognise the relevance of schools integrating an induction programme based on mentoring practices, to efficiently and successfully support new/recent teachers, some mandatory requirements were suggested, namely the existence of:

► experienced teachers in the school with the profile, competencies and motivation adequated to the function;
► legislation related to the distribution of responsibilities, identifying the time allocated to mentoring, teaching and non-teaching activities;
► Training and support to prepare experienced teachers to be a mentor, including content information about the principles of mentoring relationships, interpersonal relationships and multicultural challenges (differences related to the coexistence of different generations, with complementary training, experience and didactical-pedagogic approaches).

4. Mentoring programme

As previously mentioned, teachers and school directors define induction in direct relation to mentoring, since they consider that to integrate new teachers into the school's culture, it is crucial to have experienced teachers who can explain school policies, regulations, and procedures; share methods, materials and other resources; help to solve problems in teaching and learning; provide personal and professional support and guide them so that improvements can be made. As such, the results of this section are only related to the organization of the mentoring programme, the motivation and added value of mentoring to experienced teachers, mentors' desirable profile and challenges that they will need to face.

To design a mentoring programme, it is crucial to reflect on the concept of mentoring in the context of teachers' professional development and what this practice involves at the school level. Four definitions of mentoring were considered in the surveys:

1. "A deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the less experienced person grow and develop specific competencies."
2. "Mentorship is a relationship between two colleagues, in which one colleague supports the skill and knowledge development of another, guiding that individual based on his or her own experiences and understanding of best practices".
3. "Mentoring is a crucial part of a teacher's professional development, and it can also provide an important professional and social bond between colleagues at a school".
4. "Mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth."

The following table presents the main choices of the target groups in the different countries related to the concept of mentoring:

D – School director

E – Experienced teacher

N – New/recent teacher

	1			2			3			4		
	D	E	N	D	E	N	D	E	N	D	E	N
DE										X	X	X
EL							X			X	X	X
ES		X								X	X	X
HR				X	X	X						
IT					X					X	X	X
PT		X								X		X
SI						X				X	X	X

Table 206 – Definition of mentoring

As it can be seen, all the three target groups have the same understanding of what **mentoring** means "**a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth**". This definition is the one most selected by the directors and new teachers from DE, EL, ES, IT, PT and SI. Experienced teachers from DE, EL, ES, IT and SI also selected the 4th definition, however experienced

teachers from PT selected the 1ˢᵗ one. The three groups from HR the 2ⁿᵈ definition but highlighted that the 4ᵗʰ could be also suitable.

Both school directors and teachers (experienced and new/recent) were inquired about what is necessary to **structure a formal capacitation programme for mentors**, namely the *time* to be dedicated to mentoring activities. All target groups from all countries agreed to not consider mentoring as a full-time duty and combine it with their teaching activities keeping a balance between both, once it would allow them to continue doing what they love and being motivated; also while carrying out the teaching they will be continuously aware of the reality and innovative practices, a critical aspect of being a mentor. Nevertheless, to combine other activities with teaching, experienced teachers need incentives and motivation to become mentors. In terms of motivation, in all countries, experienced teachers mentioned as a critical motivation "the possibility of sharing my knowledge and experience with teachers initiating their careers". Other motivations were also mentioned by respondents in the different, as follows:

► The opportunity to diversify my teaching career, dropping my teaching responsibilities
► The opportunity to diversify my teaching career, but keep partially my teaching responsibilities
► Independently of other motivations that I might have to be a mentor, I would only become a mentor if a decrease in the total working time per week was offered,

A common aspect can be identified in the three motivations identified above: the idea of reducing or dropping the time dedicated to teaching, allowing experienced teachers to assume a role as mentors. This idea was also referred to by participants as incentives to become a mentor:

Incentives to become a mentor	
DE	Career development. Reduced teaching time.
EL	Diversification of responsibilities, contact with colleagues, reduced teaching time
ES	Official recognition: certificate. Reduction of teaching hours and extra money. Flexibility of schedule. Opportunity to share the experience.
HR	Chance for participating in sharing of good practices. The reduced workload in the classroom. Proper evaluation of mentor's work. Recognizing the value of mentors formally.
IT	Develop a personal network of teachers. Diversify the school career.
PT	Reduced lesson time. Promote close cooperation and synergy between future mentors and the tutor to mutual prepare them to support new teachers. Define legislation related to the distribution of responsibilities, identifying the time allocated to mentoring, teaching and non-teaching activities. Career progression. Increase salary.
SI	Less other duties. Additional payment. Career progression.

Table 21 – Incentives to become a mentor identified by experienced teachers and directors in which one of the countries of the partnership.

In some countries, the target groups referred to the increase of the salary as an incentive, integration of mentoring in teachers' career path (as progress in their career); reduction of the teaching time of mentors ("give" them time to be mentors as part of their duties); certification of the capacitation programme for mentors to count for their career progress.

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Given this scenario, the experienced teachers were asked if they had the opportunity to be a mentor during their professional life, and most of them said no. In Portugal, a few stated that they have mentored new teachers when they were doing an internship or in their probationary period. In this context, it seems that what they know about mentoring comes from theoretical knowledge and from their goodwill and desire of helping their colleagues initiate their careers. Opposing this perspective, in Greece, recently, (July 2021), the government passed a new law that reintroduces the role of mentor in the Greek system. Specifically, in each school unit, the school director has the responsibility of allocating the role of mentor to experienced teachers to guide and support during their induction period all the newly hired and the newly appointed permanent, substitute, and hourly-paid teachers with teaching experience up to five years.

Many of the interviewed teachers in different countries, mentioned that the key expression to characterize the mentoring relationship between new/recent and experienced teachers is collaborative work. One interesting aspect that stood out was that the three groups consider mentoring as a "symbiotic" relationship in which, new/recent and experienced teachers, would share, learn, grow and cooperate. But there are some challenges that the participants highlighted that mentors would face:

- ► Pedagogical flexibility, once mentors will need to guide different new teachers, adjusting to different contexts, realities and situations.
- ► Lifelong learning and continuous improvement, to be better prepared and updated to deal with a world of permanent change, progress and growth at social, technological and scientific levels.
- ► Lack of motivation of new teachers towards the teaching career as a consequence of the reduced social value generally attributed to education and teachers.
- ► A personal clash between new and experienced teachers will require experienced teachers to use useful strategies to reach and engage new teachers in their insecurity (or excess of security), demotivation (or exacerbated desire to change) and lack of preparation (or excess of theory).
- ► The initial experience of new teachers in terms of their preparation to be integrated into the school, recruitment process and labour/teaching conditions.

Considering these challenges it is important to ensure that the mentor has an adequate profile and set of competencies, to make the mentoring relationship a success. Having these in mind, **the opportunity of taking a training course to be a mentor in induction programmes is seen by many as essential**.

Despite this positive attitude towards mentoring, the school leaders and teachers that have responded to the surveys agreed that the mentor profile must have certain characteristics and competencies. A list of potential competencies was provided (figure 6.), from which the target groups selected the most relevant ones (table 22):

1. Knowledge about the teaching subject in which provides mentoring.
2. The domain of didactical-pedagogical strategies and practices.
3. Knowledge of legal and bureaucratic aspects of the teaching profession and career.
4. Professional experience in teaching and learning fields
5. Willingness to invest the necessary time to support mentees.
6. High interest in being a mentor and supporting mentees.
7. Value lifelong learning and continuous professional development.
8. Knowledge related to the process of continuous professional development of the country.
9. Ability to actively listen and communicate effectively with me.

10. Ability to establish a trustful and friendly relationship with me.
11. Ability to share experience and expertise.
12. Ability to respect different perspectives and positioning.
13. Ability to motivate me to accomplish the goals defined.
14. Ability to encourage me to take risks and have initiative.
15. Ability to provide constructive feedback.
16. Capacity to provide concrete feedback
17. Ability to overcome challenges and solve problems.
18. Ability to work in a team and embrace collaborative cooperation.
19. Ability to create a friendly and encouraging environment.

Figure 1 – List of competences of a mentor as identified by the consortium.

Main competencies of a mentor																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
DE	X	X		X	X	X			X						X	X			X
EL		X				X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
ES		X		X	X				X		X							X	
HR	X	X		X							X								
IT					X	X	X			X	X				X				
PT	X	X									X		X		X				
SI	X	X		X	X	X			X										

Table 22 – The competencies of a mentor more selected by the target groups in the surveys and focus group.

The competence "domain of didactical-pedagogical strategies and practices." was the most appointed by the target groups from six of the seven countries of the partnership, followed by the competencies:

► Knowledge about the teaching subject that provides mentoring
► Professional experience in teaching and learning fields
► Willingness to invest the necessary time to support mentees
► High interest in being a mentor and supporting mentees
► Ability to actively listen and communicate effectively with me
► Ability to share experience and expertise
► Ability to provide constructive feedback

Some competencies and characteristics that a mentor should have were also mentioned by interviewed teachers, as being important to highlight the following:

► Communication skills, that include active listening, non-verbal language comprehension and the ability to provide feedback with assertiveness;
► Ability to establish and maintain trustful and respectful relationships, including the ability to manage conflicts and stressful situations:
  o Ability to adopt a deontological and humanist posture in line with teaching activity;
  o Ability to take risks and share experiences, practices, knowledge and "arena";
► Ability to reflect on practices, methodologies and critically discuss them with peers with different backgrounds and experiences:
  o Willingness to (re)think and improve practices in cooperation with new teachers;
  o Ability to adapt a different perspective and test new strategies and methodologies;
  o Proficiency in the use of digital devices and tools.

Thus, all target groups agree that it would be important to create a mentors' capacitation programme to train experienced teachers to mentor new/recently graduated teachers in formal induction programmes. Looking to the practical implementation, mentorship would only be effective if the mentor could balance the mentoring time with teaching time, not dedicating his/her full-time to mentoring (which would require a reduction of their effective teaching time).

Given this scenario, it is important to focus on the contents to be included in the mentor's capacitation programme. As such, from a list also provided by the consortium (Figure 7) and based on the inputs provided by the experienced teachers in the surveys and focus group, the contents identified in table 23, are the ones considered more relevant.

1. Definition and characterization of mentoring (relationship)
2. Process and actors in a mentoring (relationship)
3. Principles of a mentoring (relationship)
4. The mentor in a mentoring (relationship): competences, characteristics and experience
5. Understand the role and relevance of mentors in schools
6. How to establish and maintain a mentoring relationship.
7. Benefits of being a mentor
8. How to start/be a mentor
9. Access to strategies and tools to be used for effective mentoring relationships

10. Access to documents and supports to be used during a mentoring process
11. Examples of good practices
12. Instruments for observing classes and the type of feedback used by mentors.
13. Participate in groups of discussion with other mentors (peer-mentoring).
14. Have regular meetings with a school's leaders to discuss the mentoring.
15. Participate in forums/blogs to exchange experiences, strategies, know-how and supports with other mentors.
16. Understand the needs and specificities of working with beginning teachers.
17. Prepare a plan for developing your work as a mentor.

Figure 2 – List of contents to be included in the mentoring capacitation programme.

Contents to include in the capacitation programme																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
DE	X	X	X		X				X	X		X				X	X
EL		X		X		X			X		X	X					
ES				X					X		X	X			X	X	
HR				X		X					X	X				X	X
IT				X		X				X							
PT	X		X	X		X			X								
SI				X					X		X	X			X	X	

Table 23 – Contents for the mentoring capacitation programme more selected by the target groups in the surveys and focus group.

The content "mentor in a mentoring (relationship): competences, characteristics and experience" was selected by the target groups from six of the seven countries of the consortium, followed by:

► Instruments for observing classes and the type of feedback used by mentors
► How to establish and maintain a mentoring relationship
► Access to strategies and tools to be used for effective mentoring relationships
► Examples of good practices
► Understand the needs and specificities of working with beginning teachers.

Other contents were additionally referred by other countries, such as:

► the in-depth knowledge related to administrative and bureaucratic issues
► the emotional intelligence, classroom observation, group work and consulting and legislation/legal aspects
► soft skills (problem-solving and lifelong learning), the bureaucratic and administrative procedures in school and the mentoring relationship.

Moreover, the school directors from all countries believe that schools would or, at least, might benefit from organizing mentoring programmes. The areas of the school function that would benefit the most from mentoring programmes are those of "building/reinforcing the vision of the school as a learning organization", "increasing the quality of the education and learning provided by the school", and "promoting the knowledge about the activities taking place in the school and their impact on school results". Besides these main benefits, nearly all school directors foresee additional benefits as a result of organizing mentoring based induction programs for new teachers.

5. Conclusions: Key messages to improve teachers' induction and mentoring programmes.

The integration of a teachers induction programme based on mentoring practices is seen as beneficial to schools and all their professionals, once it will allow making all teachers, new and experienced, the best professionals they can be. This report shows that the LOOP approach of having an induction programme based on mentoring is needed in the school context as presents as main strengths:

► The formal and non-formal strategies and practices to guide and support new teachers in their integration in schools;
► The perception of new teachers have about their preparation and ability to be successful in the teaching profession in terms of responsibilities with the administrative procedures and school management;
► The ability of new teachers to manage students' emotions and behaviours;
► The ability of new teachers to interact, ask for support and cooperate with other teachers;
► The willingness of experienced teachers to be part of the answer and contribute to the capacitation of new teachers, improvement of the quality of the education and contribute to the success of students' learning;

► New teachers recognize that initial training does not adequately prepare them for the profession;
► New teachers and experienced teachers recognize the importance of mentoring from experienced teachers;
► Experienced teachers recognize relevance to mentoring and see a mentoring capacitation course as necessary.

Despite this, there are some constraints and challenges that need to be addressed so an induction programme based on mentoring can be implemented:

► Teachers' workload, particularly experienced teachers, but also new teachers, can compromise their availability and motivation to be mentors;
► Mobility of new and some experienced teachers can pledge the constitution of a pool of mentors and the match between new teachers and experienced teachers;
► Increase the opportunities for new teachers to get familiar with a school and collaborate with other teachers (adjust the workload, match the schedules, provide conditions to mentors);
► Increased support from school directors to new teachers;
► Increase the match between the recruitment of new teachers and the beginning of the school year.

Some suggestions to overcome these challenges were presented by school directors and teachers and are related to:

► Definition of a formal induction programme as an entry point in the teaching career, regulated by law, to motivate teachers to the career while improving their level of performance from day1. This would require also preview time specifically for induction with a reduction of the teaching time (regulated by law or managed at the school level),

► Creation of conditions and incentives to motivate and mobilize experienced teachers to become mentors – allocation of time specifically for mentoring with a reduction of the teaching time (regulated by law or managed at the school level), the inclusion of mentorship as a career option in the teaching career (regulated by law), specification of the activities and responsibilities of mentors, the establishment of flexible induction programme in terms of duration and timeline, etc-

► The geographical scope of implementation of the programmes – promote the capacitation programme of mentors at the regional level, integrate the induction programme in clusters of schools, and settle a loop of mentors responsible for clusters of schools.

A few ideas were suggested by participants of the study, concerning the **design of the formal induction programme**. In general, target groups consider that:

► The programme should have a minimum duration of one school year.

► The time per week dedicated to the activities of the induction programme should be flexible, being more intense at the beginning and reduced following the increased autonomy of new teachers.

► The five areas identified by the consortium are considered relevant to directors and teachers:
  ► Didactical-pedagogical area
  ► Subject(s) area
  ► Bureaucratic/administrative area
  ► Emotional area
  ► Social/cultural area

In general, all areas are considered relevant from the perspective of the target groups. In terms of *subjects*, the five main areas are crucial for the improvement and development of new teachers' performance, however, there is a common understanding among the three groups that the initial teachers' training doesn't prepare the new/recent teachers to work in a school context. In global, school's directors and teachers (experienced and new) consider that the initial teachers' training prepares new/recent teachers at scientific (subject) and didactical-pedagogic levels, but there is a lack of knowledge and experience about the organisation, structure dynamics and management procedures in schools. This indicates the need for strengthening the preparation of new/recent teachers at the bureaucratic/administrative level, specifically concerning the legislation and legal aspects related to the teaching profession, the school administrative procedures and class management administrative procedures, but also the teachers' duties and rights.

Based on these five areas and intending to design an innovative peer-induction programme, teachers and school directors were challenged to share which activities are more suitable to develop for each area. There were common aspects between the partners' countries and the following *activities* stood out as the most relevant in each area:

The practices more valued by the target groups involved in the study	
Didactical-pedagogical area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Subject(s) area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) An experienced teacher of the same subject(s)assisting my classes Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes
Bureaucratic/ administrative area	Assist classes of experienced teachers of the same subject(s) Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Emotional area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools
Social/Cultural area	Regular 1:1 meetings with a mentor to discuss observed classes Regular group meetings with teachers initiating their careers to exchange experiences and practices Observational visits to other schools Integrate a school club/project

Table 24: The practices more valued per area

About the **mentor's capacitation programme**, the main results obtained are related to the mentors' competencies and the possible content/modules for the programme. Also, it was highlighted that the main concern is not about the technical aspects of being a mentor, instead, the mentor's capacitation programme will focus on developing the mentors' soft skills, strongly connected with the relationship between the experienced teacher with the new teacher. After exploring in-deep the competencies considered more relevant for a mentor, seven modules' main topics were identified for the mentoring capacitation programme:

Topics	Related competences
1. Communication skills and active listening	• Ability to actively listen and communicate effectively with new teachers • Ability to respect different perspectives and positioning • Capacity to provide concrete feedback • Ability to provide constructive feedback
2. Soft skills	• Ability to overcome challenges and solve problems • Value lifelong learning and continuous professional development
3. Interpersonal skills	• Ability to establish a trustful and friendly relationship with new teachers • Ability to create a friendly and encouraging environment • Ability to work in a team and embrace collaborative cooperation • Ability to motivate new teachers to accomplish the goals defined
4. Pedagogical and didactical skills	• Knowledge about the teaching subject which provides mentoring • The domain of didactical-pedagogical strategies and practices

5. The teaching profession and continuous professional development	• Professional experience in teaching and learning fields • Knowledge of the teaching profession and career • Ability to share experience and expertise
6. Bureaucratic and administrative procedures in school	• Knowledge of legal and bureaucratic aspects of the teaching profession and career
7. Mentoring relationships and process	• High interest in being a mentor and supporting mentees • Willingness to invest the necessary time to support mentees

Table 25 - Modules identified for the mentoring capacitation programme

Induction and mentoring programmes should be adopted by the education system as policy tools to enable the much-needed improvement of the teaching profession, through the increase of the support mechanisms available for teachers initiating their careers.

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