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WP4 – Building policy recommendations from the field activities

Deliverable 4.3 – Policy Brief 2

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

1. INTRODUCTION

This document, *LOOP Policy Brief 2: New policy instruments – a Model for Teachers Induction and Career Progression*, is a deliverable of the work package number 4 – *Building policy recommendations from the field activities*, of LOOP Project – Empowering Teachers.

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 system, creating opportunities to promote excellence in teaching at all levels, by continuing to support professional development, causing an increase in quality of the profession and the level of attractiveness.

In the first Policy Brief, it was recognised that teachers do not feel accompanied, socially recognised, nor adequately and sufficiently prepared to fulfil the responsibilities they face in the early years of the profession.

One of the reasons for this echo is associated with the lack of articulated actions between the places of professional learning (schools) and higher education institutions, and the link between practical knowledge and skills acquired in the context of academic training.

Thus, it was recommended that it is important to continue to broaden learning opportunities so that teachers, in addition to the intellectual and scientific skills appropriate to the new school realities, can develop personal, interpersonal, and socioemotional skills.

Teachers should be supported in dealing emotionally with the pressures of the school environment, communicating and cooperating, and ultimately overcoming professional administrative and bureaucratic challenges, and if possible, have support in the didactic/scientific-pedagogical domain.

It is understood that this action is only possible by intervening in the proximity between contexts (initial training entities - schools), ensuring a framework of quality trainers and human resources, and the availability of a set of relevant actions, such as the availability of time to develop collaborative work in the teacher's weekly schedule.

Induction programmes are therefore needed to fill the gaps in initial teacher education and the mismatch between theory and practice and as a way of accessing the teaching profession and maintaining its quality.

Teacher induction programmes are understood as a systematic, planned, and prolonged process of professional development, of a collaborative and formative nature, involving a network of experts from different sectors and focused on the school context.

For this reason, it is recommended that these programmes are based on mentoring, if possible guided by experienced teachers from the same school or subject group, trained to be mentors and able to adopt a collaborative and constructive attitude.

To ensure the success of these programmes, the role of the teachers implementing the induction programme and the role of the principal must also be considered, planned, and structured.

Training for mentors does not formally exist in most of the consortium countries. As the skills of mentors come from their theoretical knowledge and their willingness and desire to help colleagues, there is an urgent need for a certified training course offered as a continuous training programme.

As a result, **Mentor Training Programmes should be adopted as priority actions, sustained in true collaborative practices, and thought of as ways of transforming the teaching career**, since if understood as a motivating factor it could contribute to keeping valuable professionals in the system, and avoid their early retirement or dropping out, due to lack of options.

Mentoring support should therefore consider the reduction of other tasks, flexible working hours, salary compensation, inclusion in a European network of mentors and recognition, through a greater appreciation of especially important functions, including mentoring, with career benefits.

In this *Policy Brief 2* a Model for Teachers' Induction and Career Progression will be briefly presented and analysed, which includes the reference for the induction approach, as a multidimensional action to support teachers at the beginning of their professional activity, supported by a solid mentoring action, by certified mentors.

This model will pay particular attention to the induction and mentoring programmes, seeking to contextualise the differences between the various national contexts present in this project, looking to offer education systems a tool to support beginning teachers in adapting to the new workplace culture. The mentoring programme is designed to be recognised as an official continuous teacher training offer (nationally accredited training) in each country.

The perception will focus on these programmes, how they are organized, and the characteristics that differentiate them from other national programmes. This action will continue the process of implementation/experimentation, as a guarantee of increased accessibility and an effective improvement in the well-being and motivation of teachers for teaching, at the different stages of their professional career, with a perspective on the roles and responsibilities of the different actors.

2. THE FRAMEWORK OF THE POLICY BRIEF

2.1. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The LOOP aim is to construct a policy measure that will help enhance the development of formal mentoring and Induction programmes for teachers' professional development, supporting:

Peer-learning processes	Knowledge sharing and appropriation within a professional group	Teachers' motivation and passion for their profession	Retaining teachers in the system, assuring their social and cultural integration
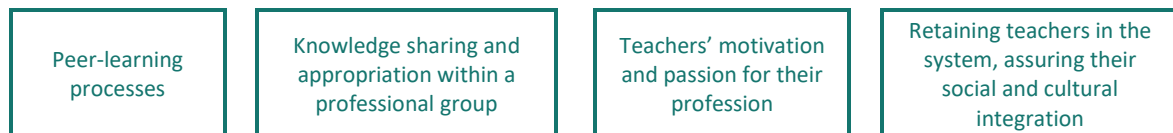
The key objective of the Policy Brief is to recommend ways of supporting teachers at different stages of their professional careers, facilitating their transition, drawing the attention of the different levels of decision-making to the urgency of implementing induction and mentoring programmes, taking as an evidence-based data and conclusions from the fieldwork done under the LOOP project, specifically:

i) the inputs gathered from the field (outcomes validated in the field);

ii) the objectives that new policies aim to address, representing the conditions of the educational system that are relevant criteria to evaluate policy (outcomes of interest);

iii) the risks and uncertain forces (external forces, vulnerabilities, including societal conditions).

This Policy Brief intends to propose a set of actions, in the following dimensions with aim of improving their current state in different countries of the consortium. Thus for:

► **Dimension 1 – Induction programmes**: the desire is to implement this type of programme effectively and improve its intentionality. The aim is to show that the focus of this type of programme is not only didactic-pedagogical, but also includes administrative-bureaucratic, socio-cultural, emotional, and disciplinary dimensions. This programme, supported by mentoring actions, carried out by certified mentors, aims to have a formative and practical character;

► **Dimension 2 – Mentors' capacity programme**: the purpose of this action is related to the provision of a formal mentoring programme, certified and/or accredited in the consortium countries, with a sustained structure, purpose, and definition. This programme will allow the training of mentors with competencies to apply the induction programme and support teachers in starting their professional activity, in the various dimensions of their action. This dimension includes the possibility of translation into new opportunities for career diversification for professional mentors.

The ambition is to intervene in the aforementioned dimensions, through the constitution of evidence-based policy instruments, such as this publication, whose intention is **to**:

► Attract and increase the motivation of beginning teachers by contributing to their social and cultural inclusion, increasing the capacity of the schools in integrating them, and providing support to experienced teachers;

► Launch or put into practice Induction programmes already defined by national laws in partners countries;

► Reinforce and innovate national training offers for teachers' professional development;

► Integrate principles of peer-to-peer learning and evidenced-based training in teachers' professional development programmes, as a strategy to assure knowledge management and intergenerational learning in schools;

► Promote Induction and Mentoring programmes as high-impact professional development activities;

► Establish and strengthen teaching career paths and opportunities through the development of teachers' Induction programmes based on mentoring activities;

► Make known the opportunities for teachers' career diversification, analyse the implementation characteristics (normative and accessibility) and their main actors, increase access and quality of offer;

► Recommend ways of supporting teachers at different stages, facilitating their transition, and drawing the attention of different levels of decision-making to the urgency of implementing Induction and Mentoring programmes;

► Align the objectives and results with European goals;

► Extend the scope of the LOOP project to other territories.

2.2. POLICY-WORKING GROUP

The Policy-Working Group created within the scope of the project is a body that guarantees the permanent adjustment of the project's results to the interests of its target groups, enabling change through the creation of methodological and collaborative spaces and structures.

To assure that LOOP results are translated into policymaking at a national level, the consortium integrates:

► Public Authorities with competencies to take the strategic leadership of the call and project topics;

► Researchers in partners countries that will carry out independently and robustly the research/field trials, while acting as the main point of contact between the Coordinator and the Public Authorities;

► One partner with strong expertise in experimentation and evaluation will act as an "external assessor", despite being a full partner of the consortium (will not be involved in the implementation of the field activities), and he will lead the building block 4 dedicated to Building Policy Recommendations from the field.

This Policy-Working Group fostered strict cooperation between the research organizations and the public authorities (ministries or ministries representatives) intending to reach desirable results, reflecting overall experimentation, and consolidating the findings of the project in building layers of knowledge and evidence-based results.

2.3. TARGET OF THE POLICY BRIEF 2

The Policy Brief 2 address:

► stakeholders that play a role in the adoption of new educational policies in the teaching profession/career and school management, and this including representatives of the national, regional and local authorities (Ministries, Directorates-General or others and Regional Directorates-General related to educational area; Regional Governments and Municipalities, etc.);

► universities and institutes that offer initial teachers training;

► organizations and institutes that offer continuous teachers training;

► entities responsible for the certification, accreditation and supervision of the teacher's continuous training;

► representatives of teachers' unions and/or professional associations of teachers;

► school leaders;

► beginning teachers;

► experienced teachers;

► all direct and indirect actors and organizations connected or interested in the improvement of the education system.

3. METHODOLOGY

The reality of the education system, as a living system, is complex, dynamic, and interactive, since the educational phenomenon takes place in a social context, has a historical context and includes important aspects such as beliefs, values and meanings that are not directly observable and are therefore difficult to analyse, but strongly influence the state of equilibrium of the system. For this reason, the methodology selected and applied in this Policy Brief was of a qualitative nature that seeks to perceive the phenomena under study in the natural context and aims to explain them in the context of the action of the LOOP project, giving them a meaning that can be easily appropriated by its targets.

The methodology has the intention, at this stage of the LOOP Project, to enlighten these programmes in more detail, namely about their legal/regulatory framework, characterisation, implementation, monitoring and impact on the exercise of teaching activity.

The methodology, that enables the design of LOOP Policy Brief 2, focuses on the following documents, considering their objectives and contents:

► Comparative report of the WP 1: Preparing the soil;
► Framework of the national contexts;
► Model for Induction and Career Progression of the wp2: Participatory design of policy instruments;
► Teachers induction programme and its resources of the wp2;
► Mentors´ capacity programme and its resources of the wp2.

Thus, it is considered pertinent to resort to the following sources of information and procedures:

► Questionnaire on induction and mentors' capacity programmes answered by a representative from each country[1];
► Analysis of the essential dimensions and activities for building the induction and mentors capacity programmes contained in the comparative report resulting from wp1;
► Analysis of the result of wp2 on the induction and mentoring programmes.

Therefore, the different moments and particular actions carried out by the methodology that allowed the construction of this PB are described.

3.1. QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire with 34 questions and whose main objective is to characterise the induction and mentoring programmes existing in the different countries (regulatory framework, structure, those responsible for implementation and compliance, among others) was shared by email

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[1] In the case where the partner country has a ministry or a representative integrated in the partnership, as is the case of Portugal, Greece and Slovenia, the questionnaire was answered by a member of that organisation. In the case of Spain, Croatia and Italy, the questionnaire was answered by the partner whose function is research.

► 1st part concerning the characterisation of the induction programmes;

► 2nd part concerning the characterisation of the mentoring programmes.

3.2. ANALYSIS OF THE WP1, PREPARING THE SOIL

At this stage the Comparative Report was analysed about:

► Dimensions identified as essential to be included in the induction programme;

► Typology of induction programme activities;

► Dimensions identified for mentoring activities;

► Profile of the mentors.

3.3. ANALYSIS OF THE WP2, MODEL FOR INDUCTION AND CAREER PROGRESSION: PARTICIPATORY DESIGN OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS

At this stage the outcomes (induction and career progression model and induction and mentors capacity programme) of WP2 were analysed regarding:

► Purpose/objectives and aims of the programmes;

► Structure of the programme (size/activities/duration);

► Suitability to the country/educational context/mentor and mentee profiles;

► Target of the programmes;

► Roles/responsibilities of the actors involved (mentor and mentee);

► Needs to be expected in the implementation phase (all countries);

► Difficulties perceived during its construction (all countries);

► Difficulties envisioned in the implementation phase (all countries).

3.3.1. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES

The strategy also included the definition of a set of questions to support reflection on induction programmes as described below:

A. HOW TO MAKE THE INDUCTION PROGRAMME AVAILABLE TO GUARANTEE ACCESS?

▪ How to ensure that teachers access and benefit from the induction programme (conditions: regulations, support)?

▪ Who can benefit from/be eligible for the induction programme?

▪ Which teachers can implement the induction programme and how to identify/select them?

▪ What needs must be ensured for effective implementation?

B. **How to enrich the induction programmes to ensure the effective immersion of teachers into teaching careers?**

- What structure, duration and format should be considered?
- What dimensions should be considered in the induction programme?
- What are the best induction practices?
- How can teachers be supported before, during and after the induction programme?
- What are the responsibilities of all stakeholders?
- How flexible are the programmes to the contexts and profiles of the mentees?
- What kind of support can be provided by schools, teacher training centres and other bodies? What is the role of each in its implementation?
- What difficulties can be anticipated in the implementation phase and how can these be overcome?

3.3.2. Mentors' Capacity Programmes

The strategy also included the definition of a set of questions to support reflection on the Mentors' capacity programme as described below:

A. **How to make the mentors' capacity programme guarantee access?**

- How to ensure that teachers access and benefit from the mentoring programme (conditions: regulations, support)?
- Who can benefit from/be eligible for the mentoring programme?
- Which teachers can implement the mentoring programme? How to identify them?
- What needs to be ensured for its effective implementation?

B. **How to enrich the mentors' capacity programme to ensure the training of good mentors capable of sustaining the induction of teachers into the teaching career?**

- What structure, duration and format should be considered?
- What dimensions should be considered in the mentors' capacity programme?
- What are the best practices in mentoring?
- How to support teachers before, during and after the mentors' capacity programme?
- How to support the mentors before, during and after the induction programme?
- What are the responsibilities of all stakeholders?
- How flexible are the programmes to the contexts and profiles of the mentors?
- What kind of support can be provided by schools, teacher training centres and other bodies? What is their role in implementation?
- What difficulties can be anticipated in the implementation phase and how can these be overcome?

4. KEY CONCEPTS

► **Induction programmes**: set of strategies oriented to support the socialization and professional development of teachers in the initial phase of their professional activity (or in a new professional context.

► **Mentors' capacity programmes**: are training courses designed to equip mentors with the skills and resources needed to support the growth and development of their mentees.

► **Mentoring**: a professional relationship, in which an experienced professional (the mentor) supports another (beginning professional) in developing skills that will enhance the professional and personal growth of the less experienced teacher.

► **Mentor**: designation given to a more experienced professional who is assigned the roles of guiding, mentoring and advising. The mentor has a role that goes beyond study orientation and "learning to learn", pursuing not only the objectives of the programmes but the achievement of personal objectives. It, establishes a complex and multifaceted relationship, seeking interpersonal, psychosocial, educational and professional development. It is also seen as a relationship of exchange and reciprocity.

► **Mentee**: a person who is guided and supported by a mentor in his/her process of professional development.

► **Mentorship relationship:** a person who is in a mentorship relationship, receiving guidance, advice, and support from a mentor.

► **Beginning teacher**: in the initial phase of their professional activity.

► **Experienced teacher**: a teacher with more than 20 years of experience.

► **Initial teacher training**: academic training obtained in a higher education institution, specifically designed for a teaching qualification.

► **Teacher professional development**[2]: continuous process, which develops throughout the career, to which multiple learning situations contribute, whether self-regulated or in response to the demands of the contexts in which teachers develop their activity. This process, subject to reflection and informed by solid theoretical bases, allows teachers to reconfigure their actions and improve their practice.

► **Policy recommendation:** a proposal for a specific course of action. It is based on research and analysis and is intended to guide decision-makers toward effective policies. Policy recommendations are not binding but can influence the final policies and programs implemented.

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[2] The same as teachers' continuous training.

5. CHALLENGES

The challenges that were expected to be encountered were varied, which forced a constant search for solutions. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the challenges were overcome to some extent because situations were anticipated in advance and a set of actions were planned to mitigate the occurrences. For this purpose, it was important to ensure that:

► **Policy-Working Group possesses knowledge about the area of action in question**: overcome, by ensuring that the members of the Policy-Working Group had the right profile, knowledge, and experience and can draw on the support of a network of partners;

► **Results of the LOOP can be relevant and aligned with European policies and strategies**: overcome, by investing in a strategy of constant updating that allows the alignment of action to contextual needs, and it seeks the explicit improvement of the European and international educational framework, taking into account, among other things, the state of the art;

► **Target groups show motivation and interest and participate in the activities**: throughout the project, awareness-raising initiatives are planned, and the network of contacts that supports LOOP is to be continuously expanded to attract interested parties, who will find the results of the project. Their motivation can also be ensured by the topic of the actions, which aim to improve the career conditions of teachers (more stability, more recognition,...) and educational success;

► **Documents produced to find a sufficient number of teachers for the recommendations to make sense**: this can be achieved by increasing the geographical area of action, which can be accomplished by changing the characteristics of the target teachers, namely age and/or years of experience and/or career position;

► **Produced work may find top interlocutors who recognize the validity of this action and are interested in its implementation**: ensuring that the action carries a set of supports and resources and the certification of the actions and their actors;

► **Ministries find the necessary support and can implement the actions**: ensuring meaningful, relevant, and pertinent actions.

6. DIMENSION 1 - INDUCTION PROGRAMMES

Over the decades, researchers dedicated to the topic of education have drawn attention to the challenges that teachers face, particularly when they start their professional activity. These activities are strongly associated with the lack of support and guidance for an effective induction into professional activity, a reality different from that of other professionals (Waller, 1932; Tyack, 1974; Lortie, 1975).

Although the teaching profession involves taking on a range of highly complex tasks that involve intensive interaction with a range of stakeholders (pupils, teachers, coordinators, principals, assistants, parents and other members of the community), the work of these professionals takes place in isolation. Researchers and reformers have long stressed that such isolation is especially difficult for beginning teachers. Faced with the roles they are assigned, they are adrift from success and failure, confined to a new reality – and experience often felt as a kind of 'lost at sea' or 'sink or swim' (Johnson, 1990; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

In addition to this feeling of loneliness, these teachers often must cope with the most challenging classes, as well as the most laborious, bureaucratic, and unstimulating tasks - akin to a "trial by fire" (Lortie, 1975; Sizer, 1992). Some researchers even exacerbate this experience to the point of claiming that teaching is an occupation that "cannibalizes its young" (Ingall, 2006).

It is therefore not surprising to note that the dropout rate of teachers in their first five years of activity is significantly higher when compared to other professions, such as lawyers, engineers, architects, nurses, and pharmacists (Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll & Perda, 2011). It is therefore important to understand the reasons behind these figures, to reverse this trend, which, together with the fact that this professional class has a very high average age, makes it very difficult for the education system to renew its teaching staff.

Research on professional life cycles has already shown that professional induction is a decisive time for teachers (Huberman, 1989; Nóvoa, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c). But then, why is this period so neglected? According to Nóvoa (2017), this reality has two explanations: first, because schools do not have the conditions, and second, because it is still difficult to differentiate teachers and recognize the role that the most experienced can and should assume with those who have less experience.

Induction programmes, according to Zey's (1984) theory of professional development, are based on the principle that teaching is a complex task and that initial training is insufficient to ensure that the future teacher has the knowledge and skills necessary to perform his/her new role successfully. Furthermore, a significant part of the new professional's development depends on the learning they acquire in a real context, a situation which is therefore different from the concepts of initial training and vocational training.

That is why in the last decades a growing number of European countries have regulated, developed, and implemented induction programmes to support teachers at the beginning of their professional activity. However, in some countries, the implementation of these programmes is foreseen for

probationary periods[3], and is therefore a normative act of certification of competencies, carried out when the teacher finds a permanent position in the public education system. However, this period normally occurs when the teacher already has many years of service, not having as such the more formative and supportive character of the teacher at the beginning of the professional activity.

Given the different realities existing in the various countries that make up the LOOP consortium, the comparative analysis presented below focuses on identifying the respective legal framework and the objectives corresponding to each of the countries, as well as the application of induction programmes, whether they are associated with the so-called probationary period.

6.1. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES REGULATION FRAMEWORK

In Portugal, the regulations which references about the induction period[4] can be found are the Teaching Profession Career Statute, the legal regulations governing the assessment of teachers and their career progression and, more specifically, the regulations concerning the clarification of the procedures on the implementation of the periods. To know the nature of the programmes in Portugal, the following regulations should be used:

► Decree-Law n. º 139-A/90, of 28 of April and updates (Decree-Law no 41/2012 in the Portuguese official document Republic Area n. º 37/2012, Set I of 2012-02-21) - Teaching career statute;

► Decree-Law n. º 240/2001, of 30 August - National standards of teaching qualification;

► Order n. º 13981/2012, of 26 October - National standards for evaluation teaching practice;

► Regulatory Decree n. º 26/2012 of 21 February - Teacher evaluation;

► Order n. º 9488/2015 of 20 of August - Article 30 – from ECD - states that the first appointment to a post of induction is for the completion of the probationary period, herein referred to as Teacher induction;

► Order n. º 16504-A/2013 of 19 December – lays down the conditions and procedures relating to the probationary period for primary and secondary school teachers, here referred to as Teacher induction.

In Spain, in Catalunya, the induction programme is regulated by the norms related to access to the teaching career, namely the eligibility criteria for access to the competitions for access to the same. The specific regulations are:

► Royal Decree n. º 276/2007, of 23 February - approving the Regulations on entry, access and acquire new specialities in teaching bodies[5];

► Resolution n. º EDU/3018/2019, of 14 November - regulating the practice phase provided;

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[3] Designation attributed to the time when the teacher's capacity to adapt to the required professional performance profile is verified.

[4] The Career Statute does not refer to induction, but to the probationary period. In Portugal, there is no induction process previewed, but a probationary period, which has different outlines, although this aspect will be clarified in point 6.3.1.

[5] This is a state regulation.

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► Resolution n. º ENS/2742/2017, of 21 November - on the call for competitive examinations for entry and access to the public teaching service and the acquisition of new specialities[6].

In Croatia, the main document for the induction programme for teachers is the Rulebook on passing the professional examination of teachers and professional associates in primary education and teachers in secondary education (NN 88/2003).

In Greece, Decree-Law 4823/2021, more specifically article 93, regulates the right of a teacher with up to five years of experience to be accompanied by an experienced teacher. This teacher is called a pedagogic advisor mentor.

In Slovenia, the Induction programme (traineeship) is determined by the Organisation and Financing of Education Act and the Rules on Traineeship for Professional Staff in the Field of Education issued by the Minister of Education. The Organisation and Financing of Education Act regulate traineeship for education staff in kindergartens or schools. It states that a trainee can be an education staff member who takes his or her first job that is relevant to the field and level of the respective professional educational qualification at a kindergarten or school to train for independent job performance, and stipulates that during the traineeship, a trainee performs educational work in cooperation with the education staff and prepares for the professional examination. Additionally, The Rules on Traineeship for Professional Staff in the Field of Education defines traineeship as the planned, organised and professionally monitored practical training of graduate teachers with storing them for independent work in the field of education.

In Italy, the regulations of teaching staff recruitment are in the process of evolving. This change is aimed at improving teacher training, as well as stabilizing schoolteachers. Currently, the model includes as foundational elements the figure of the mentor, training workshops (further reducing the frontal and transmissive approach in favour of laboratory teaching), and the reflection and documentation of one's professional path (through the tools of the "skills assessment", "professional portfolio", and the pact for training development). Starting next school year, Decree-Law n. º 79 of June 29, 2022, containing teacher recruitment reform, will establish a 60 ECTS[7] qualifying pathway administered by universities and activated based on tenure requirements, with a final test including a written test and a simulated lesson. When fully implemented, this will be the only way aspirants to teachers can obtain the habilitation. The habilitation will enable access to the scholastic competitions for which the selective tests (open-question tests) have been reformulated.

6.2. ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDUCTION PROGRAMME

The implementation of the programmes is, in general, the responsibility of entities integrated into the organic structure of the Ministries of Education of the different countries.

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[6] This is a regional – Catalonia – regulation.
[7] European Credit Transfer System.

In Portugal, the Directorate-General for School Administration is the entity responsible for supervising the fulfilment of its[8] implementation and ensuring its access, so its action includes:

► Training sessions for mentors and teachers, at the beginning and the end of the induction programme;

► Clarify perspectives, objectives, and organisational procedures, based on the development concept of induction.

Schools and in particular their principals are also involved in the implementation of the programmes, essentially with a supporting role in their operationalisation.

In Spain, this is the responsibility of the inspection services and schools are responsible for its implementation. In Croatia, the *Education and Teacher Training Agency* is responsible for observing its operation.

In Greece, besides the Ministry of Education, and the Institute of Educational Policy, Regional and Local Educational Directorates are also responsible.

In Italy, the role is assigned to the University, the Regional Authority and some Private Companies.

In Slovenia, the Ministry responsible for education advertises traineeship posts (no less than once a year), and selects and assigns candidates. The method and procedure for the selection and assignment of trainees are specified by the Minister. Upon assigning, the Ministry considers the interest of a kindergarten or school and the preferences of a candidate. Schools are responsible for the implementation of induction (principals organise mentorship for their trainees and assign a mentor to the trainee and the mentor develops the traineeship programme in cooperation with the trainee).

6.3. OVERVIEW OF INDUCTION PROGRAMMES

6.3.1. ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

The moment at which a teacher can access an induction programme is different in different countries.

In Portugal, Spain, Greece and Italy, the programme is intended to verify the teacher's ability to meet the professional performance profile required for the fulfilment of his/her duties. In other words, it is necessary to demonstrate that he/she possesses the appropriate characteristics to be granted the status of a civil servant, with a permanent place in the education system. This process, which in these countries is recognised as a probationary period, has a strong evaluative component. For this reason, the teacher accesses this programme only when he or she finds a permanent post in the civil service and enters a teaching career. Most of the time the beginning of professional activity does not coincide with obtaining a 'permanent position' or entering a career, leaving teachers who start professional activity unsupported.

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[8] Related to the probationary period.

In Croatia and Slovenia[9], the teacher has access to the programme after completion of initial training. Induction as such relates to the training that enables them to begin exercising the teaching profession independently and, at the same time, to prepare for the examination for access to the profession. In Slovenia, this is a form of certification and has the particularity of being a state examination, through which the candidate obtains the professional qualification and access to the exercise of duties as a qualified teacher.

So, the requirements to access the programme, related to the conditions to be eligible for the programme are quite different in the countries.

In Portugal, Spain, Croatia, and Slovenia, teachers are required as a minimum qualification to work as professional teachers to hold a master's degree.

In Portugal and Greece, to obtain a permanent teaching post, a probationary period is required if the teacher has less than five years of professional practice. At the end of the probationary period, if the assessment of the suitability of the teacher's profile for the teaching profession is at least *Good*, the former provisional post becomes a permanent post.

In Spain, the condition for access to the career or activity as a teacher, the teacher must have completed initial training relevant to these functions and passed an examination.

6.3.2. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES CHARACTER

These programmes have a formal character, in the sense that they are sustained by an internal structure organised and supported for the achievement of the objectives for which they were created, with assessment having a significant weight in the whole process. Although they have this classification component, by aiming to assess the candidate's profile for exercising teaching functions, they demonstrate some formative and supportive characteristics, namely by giving the participant feedback and the possibility to improve his/her skills.

In the table below is the categorisation of the different country programmes.

PT	SP	HR	GR	SI	IT
Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Optional	Mandatory
Formal	Formal	Formal	Formal	Formal	Formal
Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Formative	Formative and summative	Formative

Table 1: Characteristics of the induction programmes

6.3.3. INDUCTION PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The main objective of induction programmes is to improve teachers' performance and increase their retention levels in the profession, although others can be identified in the different countries

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[9] It is not compulsory, the teacher can enter the profession also by applying for open recruitment job positions advertised by schools. Teacher beginner who is employed on the free job position can take the professional examination after completing 840 hours of educational work and five successful performances of direct teaching assessed by the mentor and principal.

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of the consortium. Among the objectives of the different programmes, the table below identifies those in which the emphasis is on the socialisation of teachers and their professional development, although it is clear that the vast majority of them value the verification of the suitability of the profile for exercising the function and therefore they have an evaluation dimension.

Conceptual analysis		PT	SP	HR	GR	SI	IT
Suitability	To access the adequacy of teacher performance to professional national standards, to meet the required professional performance profile.	X	X			X	X
	To familiarise myself with the work and learn about all content needed for independent teaching (design lesson plans, prepare lessons and execute them).			x		X	
Socialization	To ensure school integration, enculturation and adaptation to the educational community.	X			X	X	
Development	To offer support, and guidance and give constructive feedback, with the perspective of gain experience.	X[10]			X	X	
	To train beginning teachers for independent teaching in class, improving their skills.			X	X	X	
	To be observed and observe activities carried out by more experienced.					X	X
Assessment	Supervise and evaluate teachers' aptitude, namely their scientific and pedagogical competencies.	X	X				
	Obtain the legal requirements in force in the country, considered necessary to enter the profession.	X[11]	X[12]	x[13]	X[14]	X[15]	

Table 2: Conceptual analysis of the induction programmes' objectives

This selective, evaluative, and supervisory component of the induction programmes, which tends to seek the exclusion of those who are less suited to the function, is based on a hierarchical relationship between mentor and mentee. There is a strong imposing nature of the induction programmes, except for the Slovenian[16] one, which is essentially evaluative, given the objective of obtaining the legal requirements to attain a permanent position in the civil service, thus marking the entry into the professional career or the certification to start working as a professionalised teacher.

6.3.4. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES' STRUCTURE AND DIMENSIONS

A look at the characterisation of the programmes shows some differences in the structure and dimensions they cover, as well as in their duration.

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[10] It is recommended that teachers be accompanied by a more experienced teacher, whose designation is "accompanying teacher".

[11] To obtain at least a minimum of Good in the end.

[12] Report from the principal and inspectorate.

[13] To be prepared to the final examination

[14] To have at least 3 classes observations.

[15] To be prepared to the final examination and have at least 5 classes observation.

[16] The main objective is induction and training for independent teaching and work in school, only at the end comes the evaluation and passing of the professional examination.

In terms of duration, in most countries' induction programmes run for one year. The Italian case is, however, different in that it presents a programme lasting fifty hours.

PT	SP	HR	GR	SI	IT
One year[17]	One year	One year	One year	10 months[18]	50 hours to be completed in a year

Table 3: Induction programmes' duration

About the action dimensions that characterise the various programmes, supervision, support and monitoring, training and evaluation are essentially identified:

► **Supervision** - the programmes have a vertical supervisory character, under the responsibility of a teacher who, due to his/her professional, practical and training background, offers competence and educational quality to guide the less experienced teacher at the level of his/her professional and personal development; however, it is possible to identify, although in a residual way, some aspects of horizontal supervision in the Portuguese and Slovenian programmes; this evidence suggests that supervision uses mechanisms that favour self-supervision and self-learning, not the mere transmission of knowledge[19];

► **Teacher support and monitoring involves** -

- Provision of support in the preparation of individual work plans - in the Portuguese and Italian cases privileges support in the scientific and pedagogical domains; in Slovenia the mentor prepares the programme in cooperation with the trainee (individualized programme), and other dimensions are included, resulting from the diagnosis made by the experienced teacher to the colleague starting his/her professional activity in the implementation phase of the programme;

- Classroom work - involves supporting the development of lesson plans, their operationalisation and even preparing the students' assessment process; being observed or observing lessons are two components foreseen in the programmes; this activity can be carried out by colleagues or the mentor[20];

- Support for the development of non-curricular activities – *e.g.* mentoring students in research tasks, individual assistance to students, replacing an absent teacher in the classroom, participation in field trips etc.;

- Collaborative work - in the Italian case, it must contain at least twelve hours of the total fifty hours on which the induction programme is based;

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[17] Teachers' Career Statute (n.º 1, article 31.º) – the probationary period, lasting one school year, corresponds to the initial phase of the teaching career development process (Order n.º 9488/2015, de 20 de August). The probationary period is not a continuing education programme for teachers.

[18] Under special circumstances it can be extended or shortened. A trainee enters into an employment relationship at a kindergarten or school for the duration of the traineeship.

[19] Which has as its evidence the writing of a diary. In Portugal, is expected that a report will be drawn up by the accompanying teacher and a self-assessment report by the probationary teacher.

[20] In Slovenia includes teach at least 30 lessons in a classroom, 5 lessons are monitored and evaluated also by the principal.

► **Training** - with guidelines for professional development and training, which can be provided by colleagues, as is the case in Portugal and Spain, by the supervising teacher and/or experts, in Slovenia, in actions such as:

- Seminars or lectures about:
  - Subject-specific didactics, psychology and pedagogics and other professional fields of expertise;
  - Slovenian language;
  - Constitutional arrangements of the Republic of Slovenia, the regulation of the institutions of the EU and its legal system, and regulations governing education in Slovenia;
- Consultations with the mentor and other staff responsible for the implementation of specific tasks specified with the traineeship programme;
- Individual study of the literature advised by the mentor, using online content; the INDIRE platform made available to induction teachers in Italy guarantees the fulfilment of twenty hours of compulsory induction activity;
- Training Laboratories and Visiting locations throughout the region, through the Polo Schools, is another activity provided for in the induction programme in Italy, which comprises twelve hours of the total programme.

► **Individual performance assessment** - may include the production of performance reports, as is the case in Slovenia, as well as the processing of observation data, as is the case in Portugal and Spain.

These dimensions, which comprise a set of actions operationalised by different actors (mentors, trainers, induction teachers) are, in the Slovenian context, accompanied by the reduction of the teaching load. It should also be noted that, in the development of these areas of action, there are working hours dedicated to individual and joint meetings, among other activities. In the Italian case, the accounting of these hours is strict, so the teacher is obliged to demonstrate compliance with the hours for the various activities.

6.3.5. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES' STRENGTHS

Induction programmes under development in different countries have the following strengths:

► In Portugal, the probationary period allows the teacher, after the diagnosis phase, to acquire new skills, by coming into contact with a set of good teaching practices, suggested by the supervising teacher; this action allows the adequacy of the programme to the teacher in induction; on the other hand, it is also a very positive point that the teacher can resort to the support of the supervising teacher during a school year, enjoying the possibility of guided practice in a real work [21], context, which can result in very significant professional development opportunities;

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[21] Teaching Profession Career Statute – n.º 1, Article 31.

► In Spain, there are no strong points to highlight as this is not an induction programme but rather an administrative procedure for access to a teaching career;

► In Croatia, it is considered a positive point the possibility given to the teacher to take ownership of a set of rules that make it easier for him/her to pass the examination for access to the profession;

► In Greece, the main positive point is that the programme is based on the real context and the needs of the beginning teacher;

► In Slovenia, the induction period allows a smoother contact with the profession, transforming the transition phase between initial training and professionalization into a progressive immersion, since there is a reduction of the teaching load assigned to the induction teacher; during the 10 month period, the teacher has the possibility to access the guidance and support of a mentor, as well as the principal and other education professionals; This opportunity allows the knowledge of the different interlocutors to be shared, making the induction experience even more enriching; on the other hand, all the activity is developed according to the planning, jointly elaborated by the mentor and the mentee, which is a very significant action for the professionals concerned; the activities developed are varied and include, among others, class observation and participation in initiatives in other teachers' classes; this configuration makes the teacher an active agent in his/her own development process;

► In Italy, and given that the programme set up in the country is still very recent, as it is the result of a new reform of the teaching career, it is not possible to identify the strong points objectively.

6.3.6. INDUCTION PROGRAMMES' OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Opportunities for improvement are noted in several countries, most notably:

► In Portugal, it is recognized the need for induction in the profession to occur at the beginning of the teaching activity, to ensure the development of professional skills and autonomy; on the other hand, it is admitted that it is also essential to adapt the programmes to the profile of their actors, as well as to the different professional contexts. Similarly, it is understood that the professional development opportunities should be standing by dimensions - social, cultural, economic, technological, ... adjusted to the needs of teachers, removing the evaluative character;

► In Spain, the urgency of defining a real induction programme is highlighted; in this sense, it would be important to ensure that, during one year, the beginning teacher could have the opportunity to improve his/her skills in several areas: context analysis, development of learning strategies, classroom behaviour management, evaluation and socio-emotional management; in addition, the mentor should be assigned a sufficient reduction of hours to ensure the successful implementation of the programme;

► In Croatia, the main opportunity for improvement is the need to provide training for mentors so that they can properly accompany teachers and prepare them for the final examination, thus ensuring better quality support;

► In Greece, the results of the LOOP project are expected to be an opportunity to improve the current induction programme; from the implementation of the pilot programme, a new field of knowledge and evidence is expected to be built to contribute to an effective operationalisation of the programme, which is already foreseen by law, but has not yet materialised; on the other hand, the fact that the induction programme of the LOOP project is based on mentoring, can be presented, not only as a support to the programme but also as an innovation factor, since the structuring of a training programme for mentors can guarantee support to the work to be developed and give more quality to the service provided;

► In Slovenia[22], there is a need to improve the current induction programmes: firstly, their optional character should be changed, since this provision makes it impossible to achieve the intended results and undermines the importance of the implementation of the programme itself; at the same time, there is a need for the development of a comprehensive induction programme to respond to the different competence profiles of the induction teachers; another opportunity for improvement lies in the idea that the support of the induction teacher should be guaranteed by two assigned mentors: one mentor would have a more general intervention, in subjects of transversal character, and the other mentor more practical oriented and from the same field of the beginning teacher; it is also important the selection of candidates, being understood this should be made by the school as a guarantee of better matching between the mentor's profile and that of the future teacher[23]; moreover, the support that is currently provided in the entire period[24], should be extended for all the beginning teachers;

► In Italy, it is important that the new programmes are carried out in an effective practice context and that mentors/tutors of new teachers have adequate training to perform the role assigned to them; professional training of mentors is, therefore, crucial since the success of these programmes depends on the quality of the mentor/tutor accompanying the induction teacher.

6.4. LOOP AIM: CHANGE THE CONCEPT OF THE INDUCTION PROGRAMMES

As part of the research carried out by the LOOP consortium, formal induction programmes and informal practices (at the macro and micro level), based on mentoring activities, were characterised to find out the perceptions related to teachers' expectations and needs regarding induction programmes.

6.4.1. GENERAL SETTINGS

The programme should, according to the participants, last at least one academic year and focus on flexible work management (based on the definition of an average weekly workload).

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[22] This match between the mentor's profile and that of the future teacher is already guaranteed. School (the head teacher) assigns a mentor to the trainee from among the teachers who perform the work for which the trainee is being trained.

[23] Mentor must perform the work for which the trainee is being trained.

[24] Mentor is assigned for two months only when the teacher does not go through the traineeship programme.

The needs and challenges facing teachers and schools show the importance of implementing an induction programme, not based on an administrative perspective - aimed at helping teachers formally start their careers - but rather on a more pedagogical perspective, concerned with promoting excellence among teachers throughout their careers. Formal induction programmes are needed not at the start of a teacher's career, but at the beginning of their professional activity, since by the time teachers enter their careers they already have several years of service under their belts.

An effective induction programme enables teachers at all stages of their careers to observe their peers, be observed by them and be part of 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.

6.4.2. DIMENSIONS AND CONTENTS

The LOOP induction programme includes five dimensions of teacher professionalism[25], which were relevant to the research in the LOOP project:

► Didactical-pedagogical;
► Subject;
► Bureaucratic and administrative;
► Emotional;
► Social and cultural.

It is important to mention that the emotional dimension was mentioned in all countries as an area to consider in the development of teaching professionalism, as well as the bureaucratic/administrative dimension, regarding access to legal aspects related to the teaching profession, the administrative procedures of the organisation and the administrative procedures related to class management, for example, but also about the duties and rights of teachers.

Regarding the contents that each of the 5 dimensions of the induction programme could focus on, the following were highlighted:

Didactical-pedagogical	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(s)	Updating knowledge with the most recent advances about the content of the school subject(s)
	Adapting the content of the school subject(s) to the readiness of students
Bureaucratic and administrative	Class management administrative procedures
	School administrative procedures
	Duties and legal rights
	Career development information

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[25] Associated with a type of performance and specific knowledge that is constantly being reconstructed according to the prevailing historical and social scenario, also presupposing belonging to a collective body (Gorzoni, S. and Davis, C., 2017).

Emotional	Self-confidence
	Conciliation between professional and personal life
	Dealing with fears and insecurities derived from students' misbehaviour
	Dealing with fears to cope with families (parents and guardians)
	Dealing with fears and insecurities derived from working with peers and school leaders
	Self-knowledge and self-esteem
	Conflict management and techniques to relax and reduce stress levels
Social and Cultural	Interacting with students
	Interacting with parents

Table 3 - Contents most valued by the participants in the LOOP research

6.4.3. LOOP INDUCTION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

► Purpose/objectives and aims of the programme

The LOOP Teacher Induction Programme is divided into fourteen modules covering the dimensions: Didactical-pedagogical, Subject(s), Bureaucratic/ administrative, Emotional, Social and Cultural with the provision of a set of activities to support the beginning teacher and the mentor during the induction period.

The programme has been developed within the LOOP partnership following field research and aims to fill in the gaps in the different induction programmes in the countries, in line with the needs listed by the induction teachers, teachers with over twenty years of experience and school leaders who participated in questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. The LOOP induction programme aims to enable the mentor to offer the beginning teacher induction in different dimensions, using a range of materials that have been designed within the partnership with the support of groups of teachers from different subject areas and years of experience.

The induction programme aims to:

- Provide new teachers with an induction opportunity;
- Provide a quality induction programme;
- Reduce teachers' anxiety when starting work in a new organisation;
- Empower teachers with the knowledge to perform their duties successfully, relating positively to all individuals, responding to the needs of the organisation, and the context;
- Facilitate the transition in an integrated way from initial training to working life and the successful integration into the school team;
- Increase teachers' motivation to perform their function and consequently their retention.

► Structure of the programme (size/activities/duration)

The LOOP Induction Programme consists of fourteen modules spread over four domains and is intended to last six months but it can be extended on time, due to its flexible nature. The modules contain short descriptions and a set of annexes, which describe the proposed activities.

The modules vary in length, have no precedence, can be adapted in their entirety to the needs of the mentee and the context, skipped and revisited as needed and only has three modules compulsory – the first three ones.

22

Objectives:

-Welcome new teachers

-Define mentoring objectives

-Establish a mentoring relationship

-Establish communication channels

FRAMEWORK

1. Welcome Kit
2. Identification of motivation and interest
3. Planning and defining objectives

4. Authority and confidence in the classroom
5. Dealing with pressure and managing stress
6. Personal and professional life
7. Learning styles, use of ICT, development of resources and methodologies
8. Learning opportunities

ME AS A TEACHER

Objectives:

-Develop emotional intelligence

-Strengthen didactic and pedagogical skills

-Creating opportunities for the co-construction of pedagogical materials

Objectives:

-To strengthen teaching-learning management competencies

-Developing competencies for inclusion

-Strengthening the capacity to support students

9. Classroom management
10. Dealing with student diversity
11. Assessment and feedback

ME IN RELATION WITH THE STUDENTS

12. Working with parents
13. Working with the community
14. Administrative responsibilities, European framework for co-operation in education

THE WORLD BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Objectives:

-To contribute to the strengthening of local partnerships

-Strengthen global and integrated education

-Planning responses to the needs of students and families

Figure 1 – Loop induction programme structure

► **Suitability to the country/educational context/mentor and mentee profile**

The programme has the following features:

- **Flexible**: the modules can be explored without a specific order;
- **Optional**: the modules, except for the first three, are selected and carried out according to the choice of the mentee and the mentor, they are not compulsory;
- **Coherent**: based on logic and coherence, its structure is based on a set of principles such as: positive differentiation, professional insertion, intergenerational cohesion, complementarity, unity, decentralisation and participation;
- **Systemic**: capable of responding to all the dimensions on which the professionalism of the teacher is based.

The induction programme can be applied to different national contexts and needs as it has the characteristics described above. To this end, each country must design the most appropriate

policies for the implementation of the programme, defining who can benefit, the conditions for implementation, duration, dimensions, activities to be implemented and criteria for impact assessment.

► **Target of the programmes**

Teachers can be part of the programme according to the following criteria:

- Up to 8 years of service in teaching;
- Up to 8 years of service in the subject group;
- Up to 8 years of service time in the teaching cycle;
- Have not held a teaching post (for at least 10 years).

► **Roles/responsibilities of the actors involved (mentor and mentee)**

The task for the beginning teacher is to reflect on the dimensions in which the induction programme should have a greater impact. The induction programme incorporates a set of optional activities and according to the teacher's profile and the tasks to be performed, they can choose to explore some of them to the detriment of others. At the same time, it is up to the beginning teacher and his/her mentor to set the pace of work, to agree on decisions and to cooperate on tasks and challenges. It should be added that the implementation of the programme also depends on national policy, as does the regulation of the different roles to be assigned to the induction teacher, the mentor, the organisation, and the regulatory body.

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7. DIMENSION 2 - MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMMES

In recent decades, mentoring programmes have become a dominant activity in teacher induction (Britton, Paine, Raizen, & Pimm, 2003; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009; Strong, 2009), and it is common to use the two terms interchangeably: mentoring and induction.

In the framework of the LOOP project, *mentoring* is:

► to Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal (excepted experienced teachers), and SIovenia "… a professional relationship in which an experienced person (mentor) assists another (mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance less-experienced person's professional and personal growth";

► experienced teachers from Portugal and Spain "… a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with an agreed-upon goal of having less experienced person grow and develop specific competencies";

► all three groups' participants from Croatia "… a relationship between two colleagues, in which one colleague supports the skills and knowledge development of another, guiding that individual based on his or her own experiences and understanding of best practices".

The objectives and contents of the existing mentoring programmes are intended to regulate the induction process. The following is an overview of the situation in each of the LOOP countries, as well as the regulatory provisions governing the role of the mentor, including the designation and appreciation of the mentor's role.

In all LOOP countries, teachers have access to the support of a more experienced colleague. This professional is given different names depending on the context: *supervisor*[26], *tutor*[27] and *mentor*[28]. The term mentor appears in Croatia and Slovenia, while in Italy the word tutor is used. In Portugal, Spain and Greece, the most experienced teacher is called a supervisor.

The semantic proximity between the names may cause some confusion, not only because it is difficult to define the conceptual limits of each one of them, but also due to the existence of different educational actors with those designations and different roles. Therefore, to facilitate understanding, only the term mentor is used in this document, whether or not it is used in a particular national context.

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[26] In the literature, supervisor is the one who directs, controls, watches and takes responsibility for the correction of actions and their safety. The supervisor assesses and develops the knowledge and skills of early career professionals in their respective contexts.

[27] The teacher who is concerned with teaching 'learning to learn' through the use of problem-based learning. Tutor (from Latin tutor, oris) is a term from Roman law, attributed to the one who was in charge of taking care of someone less capable. More recently, the word tutor is used to refer to one who, in addition to teaching techniques and skills, assists in knowledge building and assessment, as well as advising and supporting tasks.

[28] It is the designation given to a more experienced professional who is assigned the roles of guiding, mentoring and advising. The mentor has a role that goes beyond study orientation and "learning to learn", pursuing not only the objectives of the programmes, but the achievement of personal objectives. It therefore establishes a complex and multifaceted relationship, seeking interpersonal, psychosocial, educational and professional development. It is also seen as a relationship of exchange and reciprocity.

7.1. MENTORS PROFILE

Mentors, regardless of each of the realities, must have a set of requirements and meet some conditions to assume their role. As a rule, they are selected according to the legal provisions in force, such as: seniority, position in the professional career, assessment obtained in previous academic years, positions held and, in some countries, the official recognition of their role, through obtaining certification of the relevance of the work carried out. However, other selection criteria are also informally established, such as the manifestation of a set of professional and personal competencies that validate the suitability for the performance of the role of mentor.

In Portugal, teachers who can be mentors must cumulatively

► be on the 4th scale in the teaching career or higher and

► have obtained the minimum rating of Good in the job performance evaluation.

Still, on the selection criteria, it is understood that the mentor preferably teaches the same subject as the beginning teacher. It is also important that the mentor has experience and training/qualification in one of the following areas: educational organization, curriculum, teacher education, and supervision of professional practice.

In Spain, mentors[29] must have professional competencies that guarantee the achievement of the programme's objectives.

In Croatia, it is necessary to have at least five years of experience in teaching and to be an official mentor according to the rulebook Education and Teacher Training Agency. Mentors must meet a set of conditions and fulfil a certain number of requirements to become mentors. This includes guiding mentees and publishing professional articles, lectures, projects, etc..

In Greece, the teacher must have more than fifteen years of teaching experience. The selection process also considers training and job performance, and a credit system is used to grade candidates:

► PhD on a topic relevant to mentoring – 4 points;

► Masters on are relevant to mentoring – 3 points;

► Second postgraduate degree – 1 point;

► Prior experience as school advisor/school mentor, teachers' trainer – 4 points;

► Certification in ICT (level A - 1 point; level B – 2 points);

► Knowledge of a foreign language (level excellent - 1,5 points; level very good - 1 point; level good - 0,5 points);

► Service at the same school unit with the mentee - 2 points.

In Slovenia, the principals assign a mentor to the trainee from among the experienced education staff who perform the work for which the trainee is being trained. The experienced teacher should

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[29] At the time of this document the role of the mentor is being redefined in Spain.

hold the title of Councillor or Advisor or hold the title of Mentor for at least three years and have seven years of work experience.

In Italy, the mentor, in secondary education, must be a teacher from the same competition class[30]. If it is not possible to appoint a teacher with this characteristic, another teacher from a competition class, related to or belonging to the same subject area, must be appointed. The school director, in appointing the mentor, verifies the fulfilment of the following conditions:

► To hold a specialised qualification, such as a PhD or other academic degrees relevant to the performance of the function;

► To have developed scientific research activities, publications or others, as long as they are related to the functional content of the mentor;

► To have appropriate cultural competence;

► To have proven teaching experience;

► Demonstrate aptitude for mentoring, counselling, and professional supervision.

It should also be added about Italy that there is no rule preventing a teacher with less than five years of service from taking on the role of mentor. The principal can even appoint someone who has completed the probationary period in the previous school year.

Thus, the analysis of the different contexts shows that there is no defined profile of competencies for the choice of the mentor, what is identified in the respective legal frameworks are weighting criteria for this selection, which are characterised by safeguarding the adequacy of the mentor's performance to the needs of the function itself and the fulfilment of its purposes.

7.2. MENTORS AND MENTEES ASSIGNMENT

7.2.1. MENTORS MATCH CRITERIA

The success of a mentoring programme hinges on a good, solid mentor-mentee match (Zey, 1984). The concern regarding the adequacy of profiles between the mentor and the mentee, mainly considering the needs of the latter, does not seem to be reflected in the different national contexts. The designation of the mentor is only related to the fulfilment of the foreseen functional and legal criteria, which somehow try to ensure the effectiveness of the performance of both actors.

The criteria for assigning the mentor to the mentee or the group of mentees seek to that both are:

► The same subject as the beginning teacher (PT[31], SP, HR, GR, IT, SI);

► The same school (PT, SP, HR, IT, SI);

► The same geographical area (HR);

► From different subjects (IT).

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[30] Competition class means the class that is related to the area of discipline of the subject taught.
[31] Preferred but not mandatory condition.

7.2.2. MENTEES AND MENTOR

The programmes vary according to the number of beginning teachers a mentor accompanies. In Spain and Croatia, a mentor is only responsible for one mentee. In Slovenia and Italy, mentors can be in charge of a maximum of three mentees. In Greece, mentors can oversee up to eight mentees. In Portugal, the number of mentees who are accompanied by a mentor is not established.

7.2.3. ASSIGN THE MENTOR

The selection and appointment of the mentor to accompany a particular teacher is the responsibility of the principal[32] in all national contexts that are part of the LOOP consortium, except for Croatia, where this role lies with the Education and Teacher Training Agency.

The way mentors are selected is very important to ensure the success of the induction. Therefore, as this is an essential factor for a teacher's professional integration, it is important to reflect on whether taking on the role of a mentor should be voluntary or compulsory, given the impact this can have on the mentor's performance. At the same time, it is important to consider how the mentor should be recognised and supported for assuming this task.

In Portugal and Spain, the legislation does not specify any support or even refer to the importance of the mentor and the mentee, namely the fact that they should have some common weekly working time for reflection on the induction process and management of the activities.

In Croatia, a mentor has one to two fewer hours of schoolwork (work with students), per week, so that he/she can dedicate to the mentoring task. Mentors are also embedded in a specific career path and the mentor can progress to the grade of a senior mentor.

In Greece, mentors are valued for their performance and are awarded points which are considered when they enter competitions to take up senior positions, such as principals, school councillors, and local and regional directors.

In Slovenia, being a mentor allows for faster career progression in teaching, and peer learning and four hours per week to work with the trainee or teacher beginner.

In Italy, the mentor receives financial compensation for the performance of his/her duties, calculated based on the number of hours worked.

7.3. MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMMES

In none of the consortium countries it is mandatory for the teacher to attend a mentoring course to perform the role of mentor. As such, being a qualified, formally recognised mentor is not a criterion for being selected. So far, there is no training course for mentors available in any consortium country. However, in Portugal, and Greece an accredited training course for mentors is under preparation because of the experimental work carried out in the framework of the LOOP

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[32] In Portugal, the accompanying teacher is appointed by the department coordinator or by the teaching council (in the case of 1st cycle teachers), designation by the director is done when it is not possible to be made by the other elements.

project. In Slovenia, a training course was already being prepared before the start of the LOOP project. The programme is developed by the National Education Institute in Slovenia.

It should be remembered that the term mentor is semantically associated with that of supervisor or tutor, the conceptual distinction between these terms and their relationship with the very programmes in use in each national context having already been underlined. Thus, although there are no courses for mentors, there are in Portugal pedagogical supervision courses for teachers. These are continuous teacher training courses which do not confer a degree and are provided by public and private organisations accredited by the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for the Continuous Training of Teachers. The design of the courses, structure, duration, and nature is very varied and therefore difficult to characterise. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that any teacher can access this type of course and no pre-requisite is required.

As there are currently no structured, formal training programmes for mentors, the activities favoured in this area are very diverse, ranging from meetings, class observation, attendance at conferences, seminars, workshops and even reflection activities such as journal writing.

7.4. LOOP AIM: TO CHANGE THE CONCEPT OF THE MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMMES

The research carried out by the LOOP consortium also analysed the "desirable" profile of a mentor and its main characteristics, the dimensions and form and content of the mentoring activities to be included in a mentoring programme for new mentors.

7.4.1. MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The mentoring training programme should enable the development of the following skills in the mentor:

- ► communication, including active listening, and understanding non-verbal language;
- ► assertive feedback;
- ► soft skills: emotional intelligence, problem-solving life-long learning;
- ► establish and maintain trusting and respectful relationships, including the ability to manage conflict and stressful situations;
- ► reflect on practices, and methodologies and discuss with peers with different backgrounds and experiences, having a:
    - ▪ willingness to (re)think and improve practices;
    - ▪ adopting a different perspective and testing new strategies and methodologies.

7.4.2. MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMME DIMENSIONS

The dimensions that should be included in a formal mentoring training course according to LOOP research are:

- ► Mentor in a mentoring relationship:

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- skills, characteristics, and experience;
- interpersonal relationships and multicultural challenges;
- strategies and tools to use for effective mentoring relationships;

► Mentor in the classroom:
- Instruments to observe lessons and
- Feedback used;

► Examples of good practices;

► Understanding the needs and specificities of working with beginning teachers.

7.4.3. MENTORS' PROFILE

Research shows that there is a consensus that a mentor should have certain characteristics and competencies, including:

► Mastery of didactic-pedagogical strategies and practices;

► Knowledge of the teaching subject in which mentoring is provided;

► Professional experience in the areas of teaching and learning;

► Willingness to invest the necessary time to support mentees;

► Strong interest in being a mentor and supporting mentees;

► Ability to actively listen and communicate effectively;

► Ability to share experience and expertise;

► Ability to provide constructive feedback.

7.4.4. CONDITIONS TO BE A MENTOR

All professionals in the performance of their duties need to be motivated to carry them out with excellence. Motivation and performance are intrinsically linked. Research participants considered that motivation to be a good mentor is associated with "the possibility of sharing my knowledge and experience with teachers starting their careers". Other motivational factors listed are the opportunity to diversify the teaching career, give up teaching responsibilities or partially maintain teaching responsibilities.

When considering the direct incentives that teachers would like to receive, these include:

► opportunity for career development/progression (diversification of role and responsibilities), with formal recognition of the role of mentor. This includes changes in legislation, in the definition of the role and responsibilities of the mentor, and the conditions offered to secure these functions;

► reducing the time spent on teaching;

► flexible working hours;

► creating opportunities for sharing experiences, good practice and peer learning;

► participation in a formal training course for mentors (with certification);

► participation in teacher communities of practice;

► increased teacher salary.

Time allocation is the main condition, according to the research participants, that should be ensured to mentors to be able to mentor. The research also showed that mentoring should not be a full-time activity for the teacher-mentor, but should allow for concertation between the regular teaching activities that he/she ensures and the functions as a mentor so that it is possible to:

► maintain motivation and a sense of achievement;

► update on new practices to meet emerging challenges;

► serve as a role model.

7.4.5. LOOP MENTORS' CAPACITY PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

► Purpose/objectives and aims of the programme

Mentoring as a new challenge for experienced teachers assumes training as a response to the different professional situations that may arise, from a problem-solving perspective, establishing relationships between professional and personal development, supervision and the act of supporting the induction of a new professional.

The aim of the Mentor Training Programme (MTP) is to provide a formal training programme for experienced teachers to enable them to implement the Teacher Induction Programme, which is based on mentoring.

This programme is also intended to create opportunities for experienced teachers to diversify their roles by acting as mentors for their peers, which is intended to increase their motivation for the profession and thus their retention in the system.

Experienced teachers can use the MTP to:

▪ have access to a theoretical field that allows the relationship with the objects of study, able to lead to the desired results;

▪ understand the duties and responsibilities, and manage the expectations of the mentoring role;

▪ identify priorities and actions relevant to the development of mentoring activities;

▪ jointly develop standards and protocols to guide the mentoring action;

▪ develop competencies in different domains for the application of the induction programme;

▪ access to exercises, activities and material resources.

As with competent teaching, effective mentoring of beginning teachers should be explicit (not incidental), evidence-based (not circumstantial) and collaborative (not isolated), involving dedicated time for reflection and feedback.

Experienced teachers attending the MTP will:

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- understand the duties, responsibilities and expectations associated with the role of an experienced teacher;
- identify relevant priorities, actions and competencies to develop their mentoring capacity;
- develop together, standards and protocols to guide mentoring action;
- develop competencies in the areas of teaching professionalism - scientific/didactic, technical/normative, interpersonal and moral/social;
- develop competencies for supported intervention in contexts of professional performance.

► **Structure of the programme (size/activities/duration)**

The MTP is composed of three sequential blocks (Figure 2), interconnected, complementary and distinct in their theoretical contents, which in turn are materialized in a proposal of activities and dynamics, whose objective is to ensure excellence in the training of teachers, who will be future mentors. The programme is planned to last thirty-five hours and it is based on a face-to-face format but will also have an online presence.
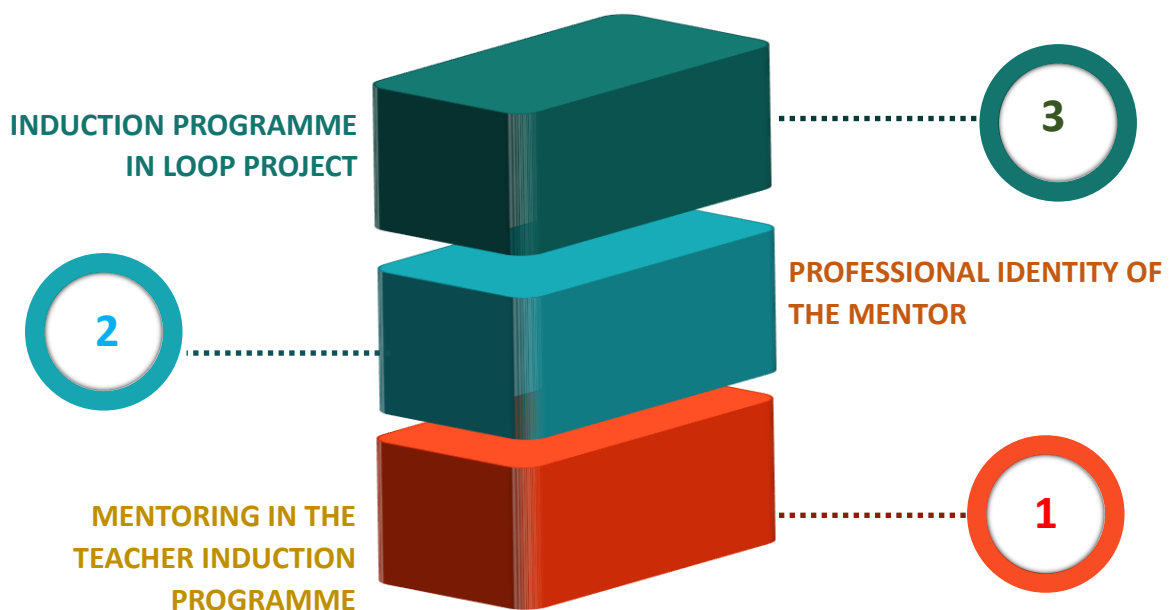

INDUCTION PROGRAMME IN LOOP PROJECT

3

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF THE MENTOR

2

MENTORING IN THE TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAMME

1

Figure 2 – Building Blocks of the Mentors' Capacity Programme

The building blocks are dedicated to the different training contexts of the experienced teacher and, consequently, are organised into different units, with different contents and objectives. Thus, each unit of the building block proposes, after a brief introduction, a set of activities with a fixed time scale, which are materialized in practical dynamics, depending on the unit in question, and which invite, by their character, exploration, and reflection.

When exploring the Programme, it is suggested that the trainer takes ownership of the LOOP conceptual field and presents it to his/her trainees before the beginning of any activity.

The Building Block I - Mentoring in the Teacher Induction Programme - the teacher will have the opportunity to experience their new role, becoming aware of the duties and rights - and the principles underpinning the different types of mentoring.

Through this building block, teachers will be able to explore the following units:

- Role of the experienced teacher;
- Different types of mentoring and how to use them;
- Mentoring by relationship stages.

Building Block II - Teachers' Professional Identity - it focuses on the different attributes that an experienced teacher needs to be effective in mentoring.

Through this block teachers can explore the following units:

- Self-reflection as a central factor in professional development;
- Communication and interpersonal skills;
- Empathic listening in the context of non-violent communication;
- Teaching to open mindsets;
- Managing stressful situations;
- Digital competencies, tools and strategies;
- Me as a beginning teacher: remembering my trajectory;
- Me as a beginning teacher: managing disagreements and expectations.

And finally, Building Block III - LOOP Teacher Induction Programme - it aims to introduce the LOOP Teacher Induction Programme to teachers, as well as inform them about the objectives, contents, and materials.

Throughout this section, teachers will be able to:
- Establish a professional network;
- Know about the teacher induction programme and how to use it.

► **Suitability to the country/educational context/mentor and mentee profiles**

The mentoring training programme has the following features:

- **Focused on objectives**: the objectives are well defined but have the flexibility to adjust them according to the national context and needs;

- **Flexible**: differences in national contexts and the group of mentors during the implementation of the programme can be incorporated;

- **Inclusive**: because it is possible to add activities and change activities according to needs, it can include all adaptation needs;

- **Reliable**: because it is the result of work by various entities, with different expertise, and working groups;

- **Positive**: it understands that competencies can be improved and all participants can change.

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► Target of the programme

To integrate beginning teachers into the school culture, it is essential to have experienced teachers who can explain school policies, regulations and procedures; to share methods, materials and other resources; to help solve problems relating to teaching and learning; to provide personal and professional support and give guidance so that improvements can be made.

This means that teachers and principals see mentoring as a symbiotic relationship in which beginning and experienced teachers can share, learn, grow, and cooperate.

The mentoring programme is aimed at a group of experienced teachers who are professionally committed and recognised by their peers as responsible and competent professionals.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

What types of induction and mentoring programmes exist and under what circumstances they fulfil their purpose are key questions for researchers, educators, and policymakers, confronted on the one hand by their importance and on the other hand, the requirement to invest in teachers at the start of their professional careers. As induction theory itself argues, investments that support the effectiveness of new teachers can increase retention and attractiveness to the profession, thereby improving outcomes. This is the purpose on which the implementation of the LOOP project is based, and it is at this stage that it is important to consider the associated challenges raised during the programme design phase and creatively consider strategies for overcoming them, observing the participation of schools, the implementation proposal, the conditions offered, the role of school management and the adherence of participants.

8.1. SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Schools were invited to participate in the implementation phase of the LOOP project, and their participation was voluntary, even when the invitation came from public bodies integrated into the project partnership (which is the case in Portugal, Greece, and Croatia) and with the guardianship of the schools. Thus, the schools' participation was very much associated with their effective interest, even though subject to a set of constraints, as explained in this chapter, with the most common difficulties being related to lack of time and reduced knowledge on the project topic, along with intrinsic factors and some natural resistance.

The selection process also influenced participation by applying the following criteria:

► **Numbers of teachers hired in recent years in schools**: with the support of the public entities associated with the project, an inventory of schools and the number of teachers hired in the last school year was carried out, as this was considered an indicator of the existence of teachers with fewer years of experience and, therefore, potentially eligible to integrate an induction process. Thus, in the first phase, the schools selected were those with the highest number of teachers hired in the previous school year.

► **Belonging to the network of schools associated with the project**: schools which are registered on the project website, and which already have the willingness to participate in the activities and implement the LOOP project, because they find meaning in the results and recognise their value, they have also been invited by the consortium organisations of the same nationality.

► **Belonging to the organisations' contact network**: schools which have already participated in other activities of the different organisations making up the consortium, are available to continue.

► **Being part of the network of contacts of public bodies**: schools regularly receive information about the projects supported by the Ministries of Education and feel that the requests to participate in the activities mean a validation of the quality of the projects and a guarantee of

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the success of the actions in which they are invited to participate. It is therefore to be expected that they tend to accept proposals from these bodies.

The fact that these selection criteria were applied when sending out invitations meant that many schools were excluded. Furthermore, it may also be the case that some of the schools invited did not consider the programmes to be appropriate or timely, especially as teacher mobility takes place every year and it is more significant in certain national contexts. This may mean that potential participants may meet the eligibility criteria one year and not the next and that the school may not be interested in implementing the programmes. Furthermore, it should be noted the greater involvement of schools invited by the bodies attached to the Ministries of Education than by the participating organisations, which highlights the importance of the involvement of the Ministry of Education in this process.

It is therefore important to rethink the definition of the selection criteria and broaden the scope of its application, to allow more schools to recognise the relevance of the project in the situation in which they find themselves and thus join its implementation.

8.2. PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION

Participating organisations from different countries started contacting schools at different times. This situation is related to some main reasons:

► There are countries represented by the Ministry of Education, which speeds up the contact with schools and they more easily recognise the importance of their participation, since the entity that oversees them participates in the project and gives it credibility from the outset, also conferring validity to the results;

► There are countries where the Ministries of Education are not represented in the partnership and therefore face more difficulties in contacting and involving schools in the implementation phase;

► The coincidence of agendas, some public bodies[33] were in the process of designing its own regional induction programmes and starting the implementation. This has posed an important challenge due to the impossibility (and incoherence) of developing two sets of induction programmes at the same time, in the same system.

This double reality affects the degree of implementation and involvement of schools, so it is essential to attract the bodies that are not yet directly affected, showing the work developed, the importance of the project and its impact, and associating them quickly to the implementation. In this sense, it is suggested that the invitations for the participation of schools be made with the seal of the Ministries of Education.

Regarding the most appropriate time for sending invitations, it is recognised that it may not be appropriate after the start of the academic year, because the organisation of activities in schools is defined by the school year and by school periods, obeying a calendar with little or no flexibility at

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[33] The example of Spain.

all. The allocation of functions and timetables is established before the beginning of each school year, leaving little room for later changes. Thus, late contact with schools can make implementation difficult or even impossible in that school year, since adapting teachers' predefined timetables to the project is a complex task and often impossible to materialise. As such, some of the teachers who could participate in the project see this opportunity thwarted by lack of availability, the result of late planning.

The LOOP national team has been working to reach a common ground and coordinate actions that can benefit both the implementation of the pilot LOOP programmes and the launching of the national induction programme.

Thus, it is important to keep in mind the timely planning, considering the assumption that the training of mentors should take place in the school year before the implementation of the induction process, which should take place throughout the school year.

8.3. TEACHERS' CONDITIONS

The experienced teachers identified by the principals as having the right profile to play the role of mentor are often those who already hold important positions, namely at the pedagogical management level. The fact of adding one more responsibility, without any compensation or recognition, may not be welcomed and imply the natural disinterest in their participation, justifying this decision based on lack of availability.

Thus, it is necessary to create conditions for the participation of the mentors, suggesting:

► Compensation for extra responsibilities;
► The integration of the mentoring hours as part of the teaching component, instead of being considered as part of the non-teaching component;
► The certification of the exercise of these functions;
► The appreciation of their implication and effort in the evaluation process;
► The official recognition of the role of mentor as a career option.

As for teachers eligible to join the induction process, they may not exist in schools as expected. In recent years, issues regarding the reduced number of beginning teachers are well evidenced in all national and international reports. This decline has led to the ageing of human resources and has made the recruitment of young teachers in most countries very urgent and an increase in this area is expected in the coming years.

The certainty of this increase makes an effective bet on induction and mentoring even more essential. It is therefore essential to provide policymakers and the different educational agents with a reliable and current assessment of what is known about the effectiveness of induction and mentoring programs, identifying gaps and relevant issues that justify and promote their implementation and generalization.

However, the difficulty experienced in identifying teachers to participate in the induction programme, if the criteria described in the project's wording had been applied: age up to 35 years and 5 years of experience, should be underlined. The requirement to review this profile led to the following criteria being set:

► Age is no longer an eligibility criterion;

► Up to 8 years of service in teaching;

► Up to 8 years of service in the subject group;

► Up to 8 years of service time in the teaching cycle;

► Have not held a teaching post (for at least 10 years).

Teacher training has developed a lot in the last 50 years, it has extended its influence and it has given rise to a highly relevant scientific production. Training is fundamental to building teaching professionalism, which is only possible within an organizational context and a positioning within a collective that gives it meaning and density. The training programmes and information activities that are part of this project should fulfil a process of professional socialisation, in a framework in which each of the participants is fully integrated and affirmed.

8.4. PARTICIPATION OF THE COORDINATION BODIES OF THE SCHOOLS

The possible lack of recognition of the value of the project by the school management is one of the greatest impediments to making the implementation of the programmes viable. Besides this, other reasons inherent to this lack of recognition can be identified:

► **The school/organisation culture**: school organisations face multiple daily challenges, which require immediate action. These require the use of skills from several areas of knowledge, beyond the reach of a single professional, which implies the commitment of several actors and the consequent need for human resources and time. The medium- and long-term planning of other actions different from the daily school routine is therefore difficult to achieve and the adoption of innovative programmes, requiring a transition to new ways of working, is seen as a difficult exercise to incorporate, hence the support of school management is essential. The importance of a professional culture that seeks the active involvement of staff and a positive influence on teaching resources needs to be promoted and supported within the framework of strategic, multi-annual planning;

► **The devaluation of collaborative work**: in practice, this form of work is not recognised, promoted or supported, so this type of programme is not properly valued;

► **The lack of knowledge about the principles:** underlying the programmes, their objectives and their impact;

► **The correspondence with supervision and mentoring programmes**: some of the programmes regulated in the different national contexts aim to assess the ability of professionals when they find a definitive place in the teaching career, so there is a tendency to associate LOOP activities with supervision and mentoring, which have a strongly evaluative character and therefore very different from what is at stake in this project.

Thus, it is important to clarify the nature of mentoring practice on which induction is based, finding spaces to clarify and support school leaders and their staff, showing them the importance of their role and the participation of their organisation in this purpose of supporting beginning teachers. The creation of strong relationships with principals to involve them intrinsically and to be able to obtain space and time to promote and carry out the activities is essential, and to this end, the creation of collaboration protocols is suggested.

8.5. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

The general aim of education professionals is to fight early school leaving and increase academic success, ensuring the inclusion of all students. However, the achievement of these objectives is often hindered by the demand for excessive and unnecessarily bureaucratic processes and procedures, which only contribute to exhausting and demotivating teachers. There is therefore a greater propensity to search for less bureaucratic projects that optimise routines, make time profitable and ensure success.

Therefore, it is important to highlight some of the most relevant factors:

► The implementation of the LOOP project is well laid out, devoid of any bureaucracies and the various stakeholders have been guaranteed all the support they need;

► The impact of the programmes on the school: the challenges faced by schools are numerous and the focus is on actions to solve the problems on a large scale (as if they were revenues) and in the immediate term; the implementation of the LOOP project requires something different, by asking schools to align their efforts to experimentally evaluate induction programmes, based on mentoring activities, with the potential to reduce the negative effects of the lack of beginning teachers in the profession and the loss of the accumulated knowledge of experienced teachers; this is undoubtedly a challenge that requires a collaborative and altruistic attitude from all involved for the common good;

► Although the LOOP project is not student-centred, it is the students who are its beneficiaries. Indeed, one of the aims of LOOP is the creation of a professional community based on learning and training, not a mere reproduction of an "empty theory", which so often characterises the thinking of teacher communities, or an "empty practice", but rather the construction of a new institutional place, which brings the profession into the institutions;

► The contribution of the project to the definition of the criteria for the appointment of the mentor and the creation of appropriate mechanisms for the evaluation of his or her performance, given the concern and the relevance in distinguishing merit;

► The construction of a system to monitor the development of the induction programme, namely through seminars and periodic meetings;

► The potential of LOOP to influence policymakers, supporting a new framework for action that properly values the implementation of induction programmes and responds to a pressing need.

It is therefore important to demonstrate that the programme activities should be carried out with maximum flexibility, reducing self-study time as much as possible with increased practical activities and field experiences.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Teacher Induction and Career Progression Model presented in this document, safeguarding the specificities of each national context, is intended as a reference for the implementation of induction and mentoring programmes. These are two essential training tools available to education systems to effectively support beginning teachers and their mentors.

Teachers do not feel accompanied or adequately and sufficiently prepared to tackle the challenges they face in the first years of their professional activity, so it is urgent to find ways to support them. It is in this sense that the induction programmes, based on mentoring, are a mechanism capable of providing them with the support they need, namely in the scientific, didactic-pedagogical, administrative/bureaucratic, socio-cultural and emotional dimensions.

The experience resulting from the work developed throughout the LOOP project has made evident the strategic importance of its adoption, hence its legitimisation at a political level is considered determinant as a first impulse. This recognition must be translated into concrete actions aimed at its operationalisation, a process in which the definition of competencies and the active participation of the different educational actors are essential.

Given this synthetic framework, the recommendations set out below are mainly characterised by their pragmatism, because they result from the real knowledge of the process of creation and implementation of induction programmes based on mentoring. It is this notion of the contribution made by these tools that makes them vital for an effective improvement of teachers' well-being and motivation for teaching in the different stages of their professional careers.

► **GUARANTEE** **access to induction programmes based on mentoring and training programmes for mentors, adopting policies to promote projects such as LOOP, which include systematic training, integration and induction devices in the profession.**

Achieving this goal requires the creation of legal and regulatory mechanisms for regular access to induction programmes, considering some assumptions, namely:

- The advantages that result from their application, fundamentally regarding professional development and career access and progression;

- The support for its implementation, such as the reduction of school and non-teaching working hours and the provision of workspaces[34];

- Regular access to training programmes for mentors, defining the mentor's competence profile and their functions;

- The requirement to comply with the following principles:
  - o Quality: the provision of resources and meaningful activities for the training of mentors and mentees, in the different dimensions of professional activity

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[34] Portugal and Greece

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- o Intraspecific cooperation[35]: the constitution and certification of a network of "training schools" that support all organizations and assume the monitoring of the implementation of the programmes;

- o Interspecific cooperation: schools and training centres jointly designing and support the training of mentors;

- o Personalisation: planning centred on the mentee, so that activities are defined according to their needs, potential, interests and preferences, through a multi-level approach, thus ensuring their integration, enculturation and adaptation to the educational community.

▶ **ATTRIBUTE** **competencies to the different national structures on the part of the Ministry of Education, to assume a set of differentiated and decisive roles for the effective development of the induction of new professionals,** considering for this purpose the pertinence of some actions of greater relevance:

- The definition in the normative framework regarding the induction programmes and training of mentors of the guidelines considered essential at the level of its design, implementation and monitoring;

- The availability of the indispensable means to materialize the induction, dynamizing initiatives of promotion and demonstration of its importance among schools, teachers and training entities;

- The creation of "training schools" for mentors[36];

- The establishment of a national executive committee to monitor the induction programmes, with the responsibility of evaluating their development and recommending actions that contribute to their continuous improvement.

▶ **TO INDUCE and DEVELOP**, **through specific action measures, induction programmes for certain teacher profiles, recognizing them as an indispensable instruments for the development of competences and professional valorization.**

Thus, understanding induction as a strategy for professional growth and training in a crucial phase of (re)integration in school, it is considered that its recipients should generally fit the following profiles: i) have little teaching experience, ii) have moved from school, iii) have changed teaching level or recruitment group (special school, VET, etc.), iv) have been away from teaching for more than 10 years, v) are in a probationary year and vi) are providing temporary service[37].

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[35] Not appropriate for the Portuguese context.

[36] Not appropriate for the Portuguese context.

[37] In Italy, Messa a Disposizone.

► <u>**VALUE**</u> **the specific and specialized knowledge of the mentors and their skills profile to support induction promotion practices, a crucial recognition to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes.** In this sense, it is important to regulate the general criteria for the selection of these professionals[38], safeguarding, namely:

▪ Experience in teaching, knowing that ten[39] or twenty[40] years of career translates into accumulated knowledge in various dimensions of the teaching activity;

▪ The knowledge acquired in the performance of other relevant functions, such as the participation in innovative[41] projects and the orientation of internships[42];

▪ The specific training, namely attending the mentoring training programme;

▪ The evaluation of performance and their motivation to exercise the function;

▪ The connection to "training schools"[43] and the expression of interest in participating.

► <u>**FIT**</u> **the induction process to the professional contexts and the needs of the mentees and mentors,** ensuring that:

▪ **Induction programmes are:**
  o Endowed with the necessary flexibility, both to adapt to different professional contexts and the profile, needs and challenges of the mentees;

  o Structured with some modules that are compulsory and others that are optional, concerning the various dimensions that make up the teaching activity;

  o Oriented towards professional enrichment, the promotion of self-learning, reflection and the carrying out of attractive, significant and coherent activities;

  o Accessible through a free registration platform;

  o Implemented with regular evaluation and monitoring for ensuring their effectiveness.

▪ **The capacity training programmes for mentors are:**
  o Oriented towards the achievement of the essential objectives that characterise induction programmes;

  o Organised to provide tools, foresee activities and provide guidance to respond to the main challenges of each school context

  o Geared towards effectively supporting the implementation of activities in the different dimensions on which the teaching functions are based;

  o Able to respond to the needs of the mentors themselves;

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[38] In Portugal, this process can be left to the responsibility of the school management.
[39] Italy.
[40] Portugal.
[41] In Spain is the Department of Education (DoE).
[42] Italy.
[43] Schools with collaborative training practices that will be set up and can play a key role in training mentors.

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o Designed to support the monitoring of processes and results.

► **IMPLEMENT** **the induction programmes in a concerted way between different levels of action (multi-level), recognizing the fact that they are a unique opportunity to relaunch and transform education, making the teaching career more attractive and prepared to respond to current challenges.**

Considering that its operationalization is absolutely decisive to achieve the objectives of induction, it is proposed that, in articulation:

▪ The education authorities promotes the actions it considers convenient to support its implementation, adopting the measures, providing the means and facilitating access to an induction programme compatible with the needs of teachers and contexts;

▪ The school directorates ensure the best conditions for the implementation of the induction programmes and establish criteria for the choice of mentors and mentees, as a decisive management structure in:

o Definition, organisation and provision of the indispensable means for the success of the induction programmes for mentors and the training of mentors;

o Promotion of initiatives aiming at the involvement of the school community, the articulation with entities that support the training of mentors and the monitoring of the induction process;

▪ The middle management structures of schools and teachers actively contribute to the creation of a favourable climate for the integration of the mentors and the network collaboration with the various stakeholders, thus reinforcing the support for the success of the induction;

▪ The training entities recognise the relevance of the induction programmes and ensure their certification, simultaneously with the dynamisation of awareness actions for mentors and mentees, highlighting some essential characteristics:

o The concept underlying the programmes values the proactive interaction between the various actors in an exclusively formative perspective;

o The organisation of the programmes gives them a dimension of practical application to each context, with the guarantee of individual support for the mentees;

o The programmes are certified and are reflected in the progression and/or entry into the teaching career;

▪ The mentors and mentees ensure the development of the programme, based on reflection and collaboration, foreseeing and acting effectively on potential risks and challenges, and adopting a collaborative, proactive and empathic attitude.

► **TO ENSURE** **the effective participation of teachers in induction at the national level, in a logic of co-responsibility of the various agents, supporting their full integration in a given educational context and ensuring their professional development**, bearing in mind some essential assumptions:

- Induction programmes are planned, systematic processes of collaborative and formative nature, interpreted by mentors with competences in scientific, didactic-pedagogical, administrative/bureaucratic, socio-cultural and emotional dimensions;

- The mentoring programmes reflect the needs of each context, are structured according to the five dimensions of action and are oriented towards the achievement of specific objectives;

- The organisational conditions require regulation to allow the compatibility between the service to be provided in schools, the collaborative work and the participation in the mentoring activities;

- The training of mentors supporting the induction and the recognition of the importance of their role is vital for the success of the programmes;

- The involvement of the different school management structures in supporting the implementation of the induction programmes is a task for the whole educational community.

► **RECOGNIZE** **the relevance of the experience and training acquired by the mentors, through the attendance of the training programme and the application of the induction programme, translating this recognition into the guarantee of conditions for the full performance of the function and its reflection in the career.** Thus, it seems pertinent to ensure that it is guaranteed by the different intervening parties.

- **Regarding mentors and mentees:**
  - The adequacy of the time dedicated to teaching and of the total number of working hours;

  - The creation of moments of sharing experiences, good practices and learning among peers;

  - Participation in communities of teaching practice;

  - The attribution of a remuneration supplement.

- **Regarding the programmes:**
  - The accreditation of training programmes by competent entities[44], recognising training for curricular assessment and career progression;

  - The accreditation of induction programmes and the certification of teacher training for progression and/or entry into the teaching career[45];

  - The monitoring of the implementation of the induction programmes, in a perspective of continuous improvement and permanent updating;

  - Access to induction programmes on national platforms [46].

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[44] Such as the Agency for Teacher Education and Training, with autonomy from the Croatian Ministry of Education.
[45] In the case of Croatia.
[46] An example of this is the INDIRE or SOFIA platform in Italy.

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