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Comparative Report on Implementation-Field Trials in Portugal, Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy

<https://empowering-teachers.eu/>

WP3 Validation through field trials in real environments

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

Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to synthesize the main conclusions of the national reports towards the implementation of the programmes designed in the scope of the project *LOOP – Empowering teachers’ personal, professional and social continuous development through innovative peer-induction programme* in Portugal, Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy, making separate references to the quantitative and the qualitative parts of the evaluation of the field trials (i.e. Part A and Part B see below). In doing so, the comparative report provides an **overview of the preparation and implementation of the LOOP mentors’ capacity programme and teachers’ induction programme in selected schools** of the participating countries (i.e. Portugal, Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy), the so-called field trials. It must be highlighted that the field trial conducted in Italy is separately presented in this report due to difference in the adopted methodology, resulting from the political challenges verified in the country during the project’s implementation

Initially, the partners utilized their networks to form a pool of interested schools and teachers, launching a call to enlarge the LOOP network between June and October 2022, allowing the participation of **1017 teachers in the field trials**, distributed as follows:

- Control group of **207 experienced teachers**.
- Experimental group of **217 experienced teachers**.
- Control group of **235 new teachers**.
- Experimental group of **358 new teachers**.

As part of the preparation of the field trials, the following events were organized:

- “Train the Mentors training course” (E7) - **33 sessions involving 234 experienced teachers** of the experimental group
- “My induction programme workshop” (E8) - **14 sessions involving 368 new teachers** of the experimental group
- “Info session for Mentors” (E9) – **12 sessions involving 208 experienced teachers** of the control group
- “Info session for New Teachers” (E10) – **12 sessions involving 262 new teachers** of the control group.

The objective of the field trials **was to verify the veracity of seven hypotheses that constitute the cornerstone of the LOOP project:**

- Hypothesis 1 - Formal training of mentors’ programmes to train experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective and formal teacher induction programmes

- Hypothesis 2 - The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance of the system
- Hypothesis 3 - Peer-developed teacher's induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system
- Hypothesis 4 - Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers
- Hypothesis 5 - Structured mentoring programmes adapted to the context increase the interest and success of its participants
- Hypothesis 6 - The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teachers' induction programmes
- Hypothesis 7 - Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools

These hypotheses were settled in the proposal phase, being the foundations for the development of the project's main results. The information for the verification of these hypotheses was done along the field trials and collected using three complementary methods:

- Collection of data via questionnaires distributed to the participants of the field trials: the ex-ante questionnaire (that is before the intervention) which was filled between October 2022 and January 2023 and the post-intervention questionnaire (that is after the intervention) which was filled between July and September 2023.
- Focus groups organized after the completion of the field trials. Overall, **42 teachers participated** (the majority of whom were experienced teachers), from July to September 2023.
- Online interviews with **22 teachers** (11 mentors and 11 new teachers), conducted 2 months after finalizing the implementation of the induction programme, between September and October 2023.

Considering the hypotheses mentioned above, the general conclusions from the analysis of the field trials are the following:

Hypothesis 1 - Formal training of mentors' programmes to train experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective and formal teacher induction programmes

Across the six countries, there is a strong consensus on the effectiveness and necessity of **formal mentorship programmes** for experienced teachers. However, the studies from Greece, Portugal, and Slovenia emphasize the importance of adapting these programmes to the

specific school contexts. Furthermore, there is a general preference **for formal over informal mentorship approaches**, as seen in the responses of most countries (e.g. Greece, Portugal, and Slovenia). The findings from Croatia and Spain, however, indicate that new teachers may not always respond positively to these programmes, possibly suggesting the need for different strategies or more tailored approaches for this group.

In conclusion, the overall results underscore the value of formal mentorship programmes in experienced teacher training, while, in some cases, also highlighting the need for flexibility and contextual adaptation in the implementation of these programmes.

Hypothesis 2 - The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance of the system

In the majority of the participating countries (i.e. Portugal, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, Italy), a significant proportion of experienced teachers reported that they would like to have the possibility of becoming mentors. In many countries, experienced teachers tend to face mentoring as an opportunity for a diverse career in their school or for adopting an alternative role in the educational system. However, in Spain, the desire to become a mentor decreased after the intervention

Hypothesis 3 - Peer-developed teacher's induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system

All six countries (Italy, Portugal, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, Spain) report positive impacts of mentoring on new teachers. This includes enhanced professional development, increased motivation, and a stronger sense of belonging within the educational system. Moreover, in almost all countries (i.e. Italy, Portugal, Greece, Croatia and Slovenia) there is a general consensus that mentoring activities decrease the likelihood of new teachers abandoning the profession.

There were some deviations though from these general trends. Specifically, in Portugal, there is a slight divergence in the perception of the impact of mentoring on new teachers, with some teachers believing that other policy measures are also necessary for improving conditions. Besides, Slovenian teachers displayed mixed reactions to the mentoring programme's impact on their intentions to remain in the teaching profession. While some showed increased willingness to stay, others were less inclined to continue in the profession after the intervention. Finally, in Spain, the results indicate that new teachers are more supportive of mentoring benefits and show a greater interest in becoming mentors themselves. Experienced teachers, however, exhibit more reservations about the mentoring programmes.

Therefore, across the six countries, mentoring programmes are generally received as beneficial for new teachers, particularly in enhancing their professional development, motivation, and sense of belonging. However, variations exist in terms of the perceived sufficiency of mentoring as the sole support for new teachers, with some countries (especially Portugal) indicating a need for additional support measures or policies. The impact on teachers' long-term commitment to the profession also shows some variability, particularly noted in Slovenia and Spain.

Hypothesis 4 - Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers

Most countries report that formal induction programs positively impact new teachers' ability to assimilate into school cultures and cooperate with peers. This is a common finding across Italy, Portugal, Greece, and Slovenia. There is a consistent finding across countries that new teachers view working with parents and managing diverse classrooms challenging. This is highlighted in the research from Portugal and Greece, indicating a need for improvement in these areas. However, there seems the programme to have produced mixed impact on self-efficacy and confidence of new teachers. There is a general agreement that induction programmes can either slightly improve or not significantly affect the self-efficacy and confidence of new teachers. This is reported in Portugal, where there was a slight improvement, and in Spain, where confidence decreased in some cases. Spain's research presents a unique case where hypothesis 4 is not fully supported. The evidence from Spain suggests that the experimental group became more aware of the challenges of the profession, leading to a decrease in confidence in their professional competences. Similarly, the evidence from Greece indicates that while induction programmes positively affect certain aspects, they also increase new teachers' awareness regarding professional challenges. This heightened awareness sometimes leads to increased ambivalence about their self-efficacy.

The overall conclusion is that while there are positive outcomes associated with formal induction programs, particularly in cultural assimilation and peer cooperation, challenges remain in areas such as working with parents and managing diverse classrooms. Additionally, the impact of these programmes on the self-efficacy and confidence of new teachers varies, with some countries reporting slight improvements and others noting either a decrease in confidence or an increase in ambivalence. Taken together, these results highlight the need for nuanced approaches in designing induction programs that will take into account the unique needs of new teachers in the various contexts.

Hypothesis 5 - Structured mentoring programmes adapted to the context increase the interest and success of its participants

All six countries (Italy, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, Spain, and Portugal) observed a positive impact from structured mentoring programmes, specifically on enhancing the roles and success of participants. For example, in Italy, the programmes were noted for enhancing professional roles and success. Similarly, in Greece, the structured mentoring programmes led to an increase in confidence among teachers, particularly new teachers, especially as regards the experimental intervention. The success of these mentoring programmes was often linked to their adaptation to the specific context, as evidenced in Italy, Greece, and Portugal. There was a general trend of these programmes being more effective or having a more pronounced impact on new teachers compared to experienced ones. This pattern was observed in countries like Greece, where new teachers showed more significant improvements in self-efficacy compared to experienced teachers under the experimental intervention. However, in Spain, the evidence was not strongly in favor of Hypothesis 5 due to diverse patterns in the control and experimental groups. A general increase in the perception of profession's challenges was noted, affecting teachers' optimism about professional competences. This should be contrasted with the findings from other countries, where more clear-cut positive impacts were observed. Moreover, in Croatia, while there was an increase in confidence among experienced teachers in the control group, the experimental group experienced either no change or a reduction in certain aspects, possibly due to increased awareness of professional insecurities. Similarly, Slovenia's data suggested cautious optimism, with clear benefits in some areas but increased ambiguity in others.

In conclusion, while structured mentoring programmes generally had a positive impact across the countries studied, the specifics of their effectiveness varied, with some countries experiencing mixed results or particular challenges. This indicates that while such programmes are beneficial, their design and implementation need to be carefully tailored to each national context so as to maximize their effectiveness.

Hypothesis 6 - The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teachers' induction programmes

All countries indicate that the training of mentors plays a significant role in the effective implementation of teacher induction programmes. There is a consensus that the provision of well-structured, formal training is crucial. There is an acknowledgment, especially among experienced educators, about the value of structured mentorship in fostering professional development for new teachers. Especially in Slovenia, mentors' training is not only appreciated but also seen as a crucial success element of the school process. Finally, in Portugal, some interesting and unique findings emerged such as the desirability of certifying mentor's training,

the need of more decentralized and aligned to the school context approaches and the emphasis on personal traits.

In summary, the results underscore the importance of mentor training in teacher induction programs, highlighting the need for structured, formal training. However, there are variations in how this is perceived and should be implemented in each country.

Hypothesis 7 - Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools

All six countries recognize the challenges in resource allocation and guidance as significant barriers to implementing induction programmes in schools. This issue was noted as being particularly critical for the continuity and success of these programmes. There is also a consensus that time allocation for teachers and financial incentives are essential considerations for the design and implementation of induction programmes. This aspect was emphasized as a crucial condition in various countries. Beyond this common trend, in Italy, there is an emphasis on the need for mentor training that is adaptable, comprehensive, and sensitive to contextual needs. This highlights a unique approach to tackling the challenges of resource allocation and guidance by focusing on the flexibility and comprehensiveness of mentor training. Portugal highlights the necessity of decentralizing mentor training to better align with individual school contexts and needs. This approach differs from a more centralized strategy, underscoring the importance of localizing solutions. Finally, in Spain, there was also scepticism among new teachers regarding the resources and guidance provided after the intervention, indicating a unique perspective compared to other countries where such scepticism was not explicitly mentioned.

The synthesis of these findings from the six countries reveals a shared understanding of the challenges in resource allocation and guidance in implementing teacher induction programs. However, each country displays unique approaches and perspectives, such as the emphasis on context-sensitive mentor training in Italy and the decentralization of mentor training in Portugal. The scepticism among new teachers in Spain after the intervention adds another dimension to understanding the complexities in implementing these programs effectively across different national contexts. In many countries, Hypothesis 7 is partially verified. This indicates that while the lack of resources and guidance is a recognized issue, it is not the sole reason for the non-implementation of induction programs.

Table 1 – Synthesis of the verification of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Partially verified	Fully verified
1 - Formal training of mentors' programmes to train experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective and formal teacher induction programmes	√ (PT, ES)	√ (GR, HR, SI, IT)
2 - The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance of the system	√ (ES)	√ (GR, PT, HR, SI, IT)
3 - Peer-developed teachers induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system	√ (GR, HR, SI)	√ (PT, ES, IT)
4 - Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers	√ (PT, ES)	√ (GR, HR, SI, IT)
5 - Structured mentoring programmes adapted to the context increase the interest and success of its participants	√ (GR, HR, SI, ES)	√ (IT)
6 - The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teachers' induction programmes	√ (PT, ES)	√ (GR, HR, SI, IT)
7 - Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools	√ (PT, HR, ES, IT)	√ (GR, SI)

The detailed results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis done in Portugal, Spain, Greece, Slovenia and Croatia can be seen in [parts A](#) and [B](#) of this document, respectively. The detailed results from Italy are presented in the [Part C](#) of this document, once the methodology used had to be adjusted.

Regarding the European surveys, the questionnaire was distributed online between September and December 2023. The priority was given to disseminating it among school principals and teachers from countries outside the project consortium. Various dissemination channels were used, including: i) A dissemination campaign with advertisements on social media platforms in several European countries in English, German, and French; ii) Email dissemination to institutional contacts held by each project partner; iii) Dissemination through email contact lists of teachers and schools from various European countries; iv) Dissemination through communication channels of scientific associations and national and European teacher entities.

The questionnaire received responses from 174 school leaders representing various countries. There was a total of 94 valid surveys. Approximately half of these responses came from countries outside the project consortium. Among the countries outside the consortium, North Macedonia had the highest number of responses, followed by Romania. On the other hand, among the consortium countries, Greece had the highest number of respondents, followed by Portugal.

In terms of teachers, a total of 844 teachers from different countries were surveyed. There were 488 valid surveys. Out of these, 350 responses were from countries outside the consortium, while 138 were from consortium countries. Like the school leaders, North Macedonia had the highest number of responses among the countries outside the consortium, followed by Romania. Among the respondents from consortium countries, Greece had the highest number of responses, followed by Portugal.

According to the results of the European surveys, teachers and school leaders across different European countries share a consensus regarding teacher induction programs and mentoring processes, with no significant differences observed between consortium countries and others. This collective understanding underscores the importance of mentor qualifications and structured support during teacher induction. It aligns with Hypothesis 3, indicating that pre-developed teacher induction programs, based on mentoring activities, support the professional development and retention of teachers, and with Hypothesis 5 that suggests that structured mentoring programs tailored to the context increase participant interest and success.

There is strong agreement among respondents that induction processes should be bolstered by trained mentors, aligning with Hypothesis 6, which posits that mentor training facilitates the implementation of teacher induction programs. However, respondents perceive a lack of formal mentor preparation, highlighting the need for comprehensive training programs to enhance induction effectiveness, consistent with Hypothesis 1, which states that formal mentor training programs facilitate the deployment of effective induction programs. Additionally, teachers and school leaders from consortium countries highly value the validation, recognition, and continuous monitoring of mentor training programs. It was not clear that the lack of resources and guidance is the reason for not implementing induction

programs in schools (Hypothesis 7), nor that the opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors to their peers contributes to their motivation and system maintenance (Hypothesis 2). However, the opposite was also not observed.

Overall, surveyed European leaders and teachers view teacher induction as pivotal for supporting the integration of new teachers, echoing Hypothesis 4, which suggests that formal induction programs at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers.

These findings underscore the lack of formal mentor preparation among respondents and emphasize the importance of formal training programs, validation of new teachers, and expert support for experienced teachers transitioning into mentor roles. Furthermore, the respondents' express disagreement with the notion of a one-size-fits-all induction program, suggesting a recognition of the diverse needs and contexts of teachers.

The analysis of teachers' responses across all the participating countries resulted to a set of recommendations to support the successful implementation of induction programmes in schools, being the most relevant identified above:

- **Incentives for Experienced Teachers as Mentors** (Spain, Croatia, Greece, Portugal): Teachers proposed the adoption of various incentives such as formal recognition of mentoring, reduced teaching workloads, or financial rewards to encourage experienced teachers to become mentors.
- **Networking among Mentors** (Spain, Croatia, Greece, Slovenia): Teachers suggested creating platforms for mentors to connect, share resources, and support each other, enhancing the mentoring experience through regional virtual communities and school visits.
- **Induction Programmes Integrated into Teacher Training and School Strategy** (Spain, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia): Teachers advocated for integrating induction programmes into the final years of teacher training and the overall strategy of schools, focusing on practical and theoretical aspects to assist new teachers.
- **Monitoring Plan for Induction Programmes** (Italy, Portugal): Teachers recommended implementing a monitoring plan to share best practices and experiences, involving various stakeholders like school leaders, management, and universities.
- **Mentoring in Legal and Formal School Procedures** (Spain, Greece, Slovenia): Teachers emphasized the role of school leaders and management in mentoring, especially regarding legal and school procedures, and suggested the inclusion of mentoring approaches in school leadership training.
- **Adaptation of Induction Programme Length According to Individual Needs** (Italy, Portugal): Teachers suggested tailoring the duration of induction programmes to the specific needs of new teachers, possibly extending beyond a single school year.

- **Online Resources for Mentoring** (Greece, Slovenia): Teachers proposed the creation of digital resource banks and online repositories for mentors and mentees, providing accessible materials and resources.
- **Consideration of New Teachers' Working Conditions** (Slovenia): Teachers highlighted the need to address issues related to new teachers' working conditions, including feelings of being underpaid and undervalued, and the need for support from superiors and colleagues.

Introduction

The aim of this report is to present and analyse the results from the field trials conducted in the participating countries in the context of the project *LOOP – Empowering teachers' personal, professional and social continuous development through innovative peer-induction programme*. The methodology adopted in the project consists of a quasi-experimental research design that seeks to identify and evaluate the relationship between the proposed policy measures and the change they might induce on teachers' perceptions on their career opportunities, professional development and motivation.

Specifically, the present analysis aims at presenting quantitative and qualitative results of the field trials and the verification of the following seven hypotheses:

1. Mentors' formal training programmes for experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective formal teacher induction programmes.
2. The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors contributes to their motivation and maintenance on the system.
3. Peer-developed teacher induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system.
4. Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers.
5. Structured mentoring programs adapted to the context increases the interest and success of its participants.
6. The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teacher induction programmes.
7. Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools.

The report adheres to the following structure:

- Part A includes the quantitative evaluation of the field trials. Section 1A of Part A describes the statistical profiles of the participants of the field trials. Section 2A briefly describes how the field trials were organized starting from the initial phase of training and info-sessions until their completion. Section 3A presents the results from the analysis of the collected data during the ex-ante and post intervention surveys.
- Part B presents the findings of the qualitative analysis of the separate national studies in a comparative manner. Initially, section 1B describes the sample of teachers who participated in the focus groups and the interviews and, thereafter, Section 2B discusses the results.
- Part C describes the implementation and the results from the field trials in Italy.
- Part D presents the conclusion from European surveys of triangulation
- Finally, Part E concludes.

Part A: The quantitative evaluation of the field trials

To establish the pilot groups and select the teachers to be involved, the partners utilized their networks to compile a pool of interested schools and teachers allowing the participation of 1017 teachers in the field trials. This process of enlarging the LOOP network started to be done from June to October 2022 and the participants involved in the field trials are distributed as follows (these numbers correspond to all participants apart from Italy):

- Control group of 207 experienced teachers.
- Experimental group of 217 experienced teachers.
- Control group of 235 new teachers.
- Experimental group of 358 new teachers.

The quantitative data were collected via questionnaires distributed to the participants of the field trials. Regarding the timing of the data collection, the **ex-ante questionnaire** (i.e. before the intervention) was filled between October 2022 and January 2023 and the **post-intervention questionnaire** (i.e. after the intervention) was filled between July and September 2023. **The response rate amounted to 90%**. The slight drop in the response rate is due to some new teachers moving to different schools at the beginning of the school year.

Section 1A: The samples of the quantitative evaluation of the field trials

In the following subsections, the statistic profile of teacher per group per country is briefly presented, following this order:

- The sample of the control group (experienced teachers)
- The sample of the experimental group (experienced teachers)
- The sample of the control group (new teachers)
- The sample of the experimental group (new teachers)

The sample of the control group (experienced teachers)

Greece: In the control group, 75% are women, primarily in the 46-55 (44%) and 56-65 (30%) age groups. Over half (53%) have more than 20 years of experience. They mostly teach in primary schools (43%), with a significant urban presence (70%). Only 23% have mentoring experience.

Slovenia: The group is relatively gender-balanced with women representing 50% and men 43% (the other 7% preferred not to say). The majority are aged 56-65 (28%). Teachers are spread across different school levels, with a higher rural presence (64%). Only 36% have mentoring experience.

Spain: This sample is dominated by female teachers (80%), while the age distribution is the following: 26-35 (28%), 36-45 (29%), and 46-55 (24%). A significant portion (54%) has over 16 years of experience. Most of them teach in primary schools (81%) in urban areas (90%). A high number (62%) have mentoring experience.

Portugal: The sample mostly comprises of female teachers (80%), the majority fall within the 46-55 age range (60%). A large portion (80%) has more than 20 years of experience. They primarily teach at the upper secondary level (50%) in urban settings (65%). Only 20% have mentoring experience.

Croatia: This group is also characterized by a majority of women (79%), with most teachers aged 46-55 (59%). A significant majority (62%) have over 20 years of experience. The teaching level is predominantly upper secondary (62%) and most teachers teach in urban schools (90%). A notable 76% have mentoring experience.

Based on the aforementioned description, the overall sample of the experienced teachers in the control group has the following predominant characteristics:

Gender: In all countries, the control group of experienced teachers mostly consists of women, with percentages ranging from 50% in Slovenia to 80% in Portugal and Spain.

Age: The majority of teachers belong to the 46-55 age group, with Greece, Portugal, and Croatia highlighting this trend.

Experience: Over 20 years of experience is common, especially in Greece, Portugal, and Croatia.

School Location: Urban locations are predominant in the samples of Greece, Spain, and Croatia, while Slovenia has a higher rural representation in its sample.

Mentoring Experience: Spain shows the highest percentage of teachers with mentoring experience (62%), while Portugal has the lowest (20%).

The sample of the experimental group (experienced teachers)

Greece: In the experimental group, 75% of the participants are women. Age distribution is mostly within 46-55 (44%) and 56-65 (24%) years. About 58% have over 20 years of experience. A majority (53%) teach in primary schools, with a significant urban presence (64%). Interestingly, 34% have mentoring experience.

Slovenia: This sample group is notably female-dominated (90%). Age distribution is concentrated in the 36-45 (40%) and 46-55 (34%) years range. Experience levels vary, with 40% of the teachers of the sample having over 20 years of experience. The majority of teachers teach in primary schools (76%), with an almost equal split between urban and rural school locations (48% urban, 52% rural). A high percentage (61%) of teachers has mentoring experience.

Spain: In this sample, 80% of participants are women. The predominant age group is that of 36-55 years. A significant 43% of teachers has over 16 years of experience, and 27% of teachers have over 20 years. The distribution of school levels is quite balanced between primary (44%) and lower secondary (43%) schools, mainly in urban areas (77%). Remarkably, 80% of teachers have mentoring experience.

Portugal: The group consists of 90% women. Ages are mostly within the 56-65 (52%) and 46-55 (48%) range. All participants have over 20 years of experience. The majority are upper secondary teachers (76%), located mostly in urban schools (90%). A significant 81% of teachers does not have mentoring experience.

Croatia: In Croatia, 75% of the sample are women. Most teachers fall within the 46-55 (53%) and 36-45 (25%) age groups. A substantial 69% of them have over 20 years of teaching experience. The majority (62%) teach in primary schools, predominantly in urban areas (90%). Notably, 91% of them have mentoring experience.

The overall sample of the experienced teachers in the experimental group has the following predominant characteristics:

Gender: Women dominate in all countries, with percentages ranging from 75% to 90%. Slovenia shows the highest female representation.

Age: Teachers of the sample predominantly belong in the 36-65 age range across countries, with samples in Slovenia and Spain including a lot of teachers in the 36-45 bracket.

Experience: Over 20 years of experience is common, especially in Greece, Croatia, and Portugal. Spain and Slovenia have a more varied experience range.

School Level: Primary education is prominent in Greece, Slovenia, and Croatia. Portugal and Spain have a higher representation in upper and lower secondary levels, respectively.

Location: Urban school locations are predominant, especially in Croatia and Portugal.

Mentoring Experience: Varies significantly, from a high of 91% in Croatia to a low of 19% in Portugal.

Overall, it is concluded that the profile of the experienced teachers of the experimental group is very similar to profile of the experienced teachers of the control group.

The sample of the control group (new teachers)

Greece: About three-quarters of the sample are women, with a significant number of teachers in the 26-35 (30%) and 36-45 (46%) age brackets. The majority of teachers has less than 5 years of experience (66%). They are almost equally distributed between urban and rural areas, with a slight lean towards regular education (65%).

Slovenia: Dominated by female teachers (90%), the majority of new teachers are in the 26-35 age group (50%). Teaching experience is mainly between 1-5 years (59%). Teachers serve predominantly in rural schools (59%), with 40% of them teaching in primary education.

Spain: The gender distribution is 65% (women) and 35% (men). The majority are under 25 (40%), with all having less than 5 years of experience. Most teach in primary schools (75%) and in urban areas (85%).

Portugal: In the control group of new teachers, there is a more balanced gender distribution (58% female, 38% male). Most are between 36-45 years old (54%), with 46% having 16-20 years of teaching experience. They primarily teach at upper secondary (42%) and primary levels (37%) in urban areas (79%).

Croatia: Similar to other countries, the distribution of teachers is gender-biased (75% are women), mainly in the <25 and 26-35 age groups (80% and 18%, respectively). Almost all are inexperienced (98% of them with less than 5 years). The school location is nearly evenly split between urban and rural schools (mostly primary schools, 66%).

The overall sample of the new teachers in the control group has the following predominant characteristics:

Gender: In all countries, female teachers prevail in the control group of new teachers, with proportions ranging from 58% to 90%. Spain and Portugal present a more balanced gender distribution.

Age: The majority of teachers are young, particularly in Slovenia and Spain, with significant numbers of teachers below 35. Greece and Portugal have a higher representation in the 36-45 age group.

Experience: Teachers in this group are predominantly less experienced, especially in Spain and Croatia (nearly all under 5 years). Portugal shows a slightly wider range of experience.

School Level: Primary education is a common teaching level, especially in Spain and Croatia. Portugal and Greece have more diverse distributions across educational levels.

Location: Urban schools are more prevalent in the sample, with Slovenia being an exception with a higher rural representation. Croatia displays a nearly even urban-rural split.

The sample of the experimental group (new teachers)

Greece: New teachers in this group are mostly women (80%). The age distribution is centered around 26-35 (51%) and 36-45 (20%) years. Their experience is mostly limited, with a strong presence in primary education (58%). Urban schools are the predominant location (61%).

Slovenia: This group has mostly women (85%). A large number are under 35 years old (43%), with 36% under 25. Most of them are relatively inexperienced (83%). Most teach in primary schools (42%), mainly in rural areas (56%).

Spain: The sample in Spain has a more balanced gender ratio (65% female, 35% male). A large number are under 35 years old, with 40% under 25. All are relatively inexperienced. The majority (75%) teach in primary schools, predominantly in urban areas (85%).

Portugal: The group consists of 58% females and 38% males, with a slight gender balance. A significant portion (54%) is between 36-45 years old. Experience levels vary, but 46% have 16-20 years of experience. Most teach in upper secondary schools (42%), mainly in urban areas (79%).

Croatia: The profile shows a high female ratio (79%). Age distribution is younger, with 80% under 25 years. Most are inexperienced (98%), teaching in primary schools (66%), with a nearly equal distribution between urban and rural areas.

Based on the aforementioned description it is deduced that the overall sample of the new teachers in the experimental group have the following predominant characteristics:

Gender: Women predominate in all countries, ranging from 58% to 90%, with Spain being the most gender-balanced (65% women, 35% men).

Age: There is a noticeable concentration in the 26-35 age group across countries, with Portugal and Greece also having a significant presence in the 36-45 age group. Slovenia and Spain show a younger demographic, with significant portions under 35 years.

Experience: Expectedly, the level of experience is low across all countries, with Portugal being an exception where a significant portion of teachers having 16 to 20 years of experience. In contrast, Spain's new teachers all have less than 5 years of experience.

School Level: In Greece and in Spain most teachers of the sample are primary school teachers (the respective percentages are 58% and 75%, respectively). The sample of the Portuguese team has a more balanced distribution across the different educational levels.

Location: Most schools of the sample are located in urban areas (e.g. in the sample of Spain, 85%)

Overall, and despite some variation, **the profile of the participants of the experimental group of new teachers is similar to the corresponding profile of the participants of the control group.**

Section 2A: The procedure of the field trials

The hypotheses of the analysis were tested through field trials. Initially, the participants were divided into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. Generally speaking, and as we already demonstrated, effort were taken to ensure a high degree of similarity between the two groups, but there were some differences on the number and characteristics of teachers in the two groups.

The differences on the approach of teachers from the control and from the experimental group were:

- The experienced teachers of the experimental group benefit from a training promoted at the national level on the basis of the Mentor's Capacity Programme (MCP)¹ for 35 to 50 hours for undertaking the role of mentors²
- For another hand, the experienced teachers of the control group were informed about the two policy instruments [New Teachers Induction Programme (NTIP) and Mentor's Capacity Programme (MCP)] during one info session lasting a few hours.
- Furthermore, the new teachers of both the experimental and the control group were informed about the NTIP during info sessions.

Table 2 summarizes key numerical data from the various training events and information sessions aimed at both new and experienced teachers. The data highlight the extent of each country's involvement and offers insights into the overall impact of the project.

Table 2- Events promoted as part of the phase of preparation of the field trials in the countries of the consortium (number of events/number of participants)

Event	Description	Croatia	Greece	Portugal	Slovenia	Spain	Total Editions / Nr. Teachers
E7	Train the Mentors training course	10 / 32	10 / 61	1 / 27	1 / 96	7 / 30	29 / 246
E8	My induction programme workshop	4 / 43	2 / 83	5 / 48	3 / 160	2 / 26	16 / 360
E9	Info session for Mentors	3 / 29	1 / 105	4 / 25	1 / 39	1 / 21	10 / 219
E10	Info session for New Teachers	3 / 45	1 / 114	4 / 35	1 / 27	1 / 20	10 / 241
Total	-	20 / 149	14 / 363	14 / 135	6 / 322	11 / 97	65 / 1066

¹ Mentor's Capacity Programme (MCP) Handbook has been developed as part of the WP2 of the LOOP Project. The aim of MCP is to inspire and support the training of teachers to become mentors by providing a concrete theoretical background and suggesting a suitable menu of tools.

² In some countries, the MCP was certified by the regional/national law and some adjustments to it had to be made

The above Table encapsulates the diverse yet unified efforts of each country in contributing to the overarching goals of the LOOP project, reflecting a blend of innovation, adaptability, and commitment:

- The LOOP project involved systematic support and training across the participating countries, tailored to their unique educational contexts. Croatia and Greece, for instance, emphasized remote support and regular communication between the project team and participating teachers, focusing on implementing the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) and sharing best practices.
- Portugal and Slovenia provided a mix of online and in-person training sessions, with a specific emphasis on mentor training. Portugal's approach was recognized under its law as part of professional development for teachers, while Slovenia focused on online instructions. Both countries aimed to prepare teachers for implementing the induction program effectively. These efforts reflect a commitment to enhancing teacher competencies and adapting to the specific logistical and geographical challenges of the national context.
- Spain's approach in Catalonia was to integrate the LOOP project as a pilot for their upcoming SENSEI induction program. The training was structured in phases, focusing on mentoring and practical application of the induction program. Challenges like health issues and scheduling adjustments were tackled to ensure the completion of the training. This highlights the adaptability and forward-looking strategy of the project in aligning with regional educational reforms.

For specific details about the exact procedure of the field trials in each country, the interested reader is encouraged to refer to the corresponding national reports (see Annexes).

Section 3A: Results of the quantitative part of the field trials' evaluation

This section presents the results from the analysis of the collected data (i.e. the comparison between the ex-ante and the ex-post intervention surveys). The scheme of analysis per hypothesis is shown in Table 3. Thereafter, each hypothesis is presented and analyzed separately.

Table 3- Correspondence of the various parts and questions of the ex-ante and post-intervention questionnaires with each one of the hypotheses to be tested.

Hypothesis	Ex ante questionnaire (exp. teachers)	Post intervention questionnaire (exp. teachers)	Ex ante questionnaire (new teachers)	Post intervention questionnaire (new teachers)
1	Part C	Part C	Part C	Part C
2	Part B	Part B	Not applicable	Not applicable
3	Part E	Part E	Part B + Part C	Part B + Part C
4	Not applicable	Not applicable	Part D	Part D
5 (interest)	Part C	Part C	Part E	Part E
6	Part C	Part C	Not applicable	Not applicable
7	Part F (2 nd question)	Part F (2 nd question)	Part G (2 nd question)	Part G (2 nd question)

Hypothesis 1: Mentor formal training programmes for experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective, formal teacher induction programmes.

The conclusions from each country focus on the perception and effectiveness of formal training and induction programmes for teachers. In Spain, the results for experienced teachers confirm the hypothesis to a certain degree, but new teachers show less agreement in regard to the positive outcomes of induction programmes. Portugal highlights a general agreement on mandatory mentoring and adapting programmes to school contexts. Greece and Croatia show similar trends, with experienced teachers favouring formal over informal mentoring and a notable increase in agreement after the intervention. Slovenian results align with these findings, emphasizing the preference for formal training and the adaptability of mentoring programmes to school contexts. Across these countries, there is reasonable evidence supporting the hypothesis 1, particularly regarding the positive reception of formal training and structured induction programmes.

The analysis of the research data from Croatia, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain revealed several interesting findings regarding experienced and new teachers in both control and experimental groups. Below follows a summarized report for each sample group, highlighting common trends and unique findings across the five countries:

- **Experienced Teachers of the Control Group:** Across the participating countries, experienced teachers in the control groups showed similar responses in terms of their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programmes. However, there were noticeable variations in specific areas like the need for structured programmes and the importance of adaptation of these programmes to local school contexts.
- **Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group:** For the experienced teachers in the experimental groups, there was a noticeable shift in attitudes after the intervention, particularly as regards their support for structured and formalized mentoring programmes. This trend was consistent across most countries, indicating the potential effectiveness of structured interventions compared to more informal.
- **New Teachers of the Control Group:** The new teachers in the control groups exhibited a generally positive view towards mentoring programmes, but there was less uniformity in their responses compared to experienced teachers. Differences were noted in areas such as the perceived empowerment and sense of belonging fostered by these programmes.
- **New Teachers of the Experimental Group:** For new teachers in the experimental groups, the data revealed a varied impact of the interventions. In some countries, there was an increase in positive perceptions towards mentoring, while in others, there was either a decrease or no significant change. This suggests a more complex relationship between the interventions and their effectiveness for new teachers.

These findings provide valuable insights into the impact and perception of mentoring programmes among teachers in different stages of their careers and under different experimental conditions. The variations and similarities observed across countries highlight the complexity and contextual nature of implementing such programmes in the educational sector.

In conclusion, the results from Portugal and Spain partially verify this Hypothesis while the corresponding results from all other countries fully verify it.

Hypothesis 2: The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance on the system.

The conclusions about mentoring programmes in various countries indicate that such programmes generally support new teacher induction and enhance motivation and retention of experienced teachers. In Spain, mentoring is viewed positively, especially by new teachers. Portugal's findings suggest mentoring positively influences teacher motivation and career satisfaction. In Greece, mentoring is appreciated for offering career development opportunities. Results in Slovenia show significant differences in perceptions after the intervention, with mentoring gaining favour among participants. Croatia's data indicate that mentoring aids in teacher retention and satisfaction, although the perceived impact varies between experimental and control groups. Overall, mentoring is seen as beneficial across these countries.

Below follow the synthesized conclusions, highlighting common and varying findings across these countries:

- **Experienced Teachers of the Control Group:** Across the board, experienced teachers in the control group generally show satisfaction with their jobs. However, there are variations in their perception of work challenges and their inclination towards mentoring roles. For instance, in some countries, there is a notable interest in mentoring, while in others, this interest is either stable or slightly declines after the intervention.
- **Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group:** The experimental interventions seem to have a diverse impact on experienced teachers. In some countries, these interventions lead to a decreased perception of job challenges, whereas in others, they either have no significant impact or slightly increase the perception of job challenges. The willingness to recommend teaching as a career or to become mentors also varies,

with some countries showing an increase in these tendencies and others either showing a decrease or no significant change at all.

- **New Teachers of the Control Group:** New teachers in the control groups across the countries show high levels of job satisfaction. The impact of interventions on their career perceptions and aspirations is mixed. In some cases, there is an increased inclination towards staying in the profession and considering mentoring roles, while in other cases, these tendencies remain unchanged.
- **New Teachers of the Experimental Group:** The interventions in the experimental groups present varied results. In some countries, they lead to an increased positivity towards teaching and a heightened interest in mentoring. However, in other countries, the interventions do not significantly alter their career perceptions or their views on mentoring.

In summary, the research reveals both commonalities and differences in how interventions impact teachers' perceptions and aspirations across these five countries. While there is a general trend of job satisfaction and interest in mentoring, the degree to which these perceptions are influenced by interventions varies considerably.

Overall, only results from Spain partially verify this Hypothesis, while the corresponding results from all other countries fully verify it.

Hypothesis 3: Peer-developed teachers' induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system.

The overall conclusions from various countries regarding mentoring programmes for teachers show a general consensus on their positive impact. In Spain, both new and experienced teachers acknowledge the benefits of mentoring in facilitating new teachers into the profession, though experienced teachers have some reservations. The analysis from Portugal sees induction programmes based on peer-mentoring as significantly beneficial for new teachers, enhancing their sense of belonging and motivation, though new teachers desire additional political measures for better conditions. In Greece, mentoring is perceived as boosting new teachers' motivation and professional development, particularly in fostering a sense of belonging and cooperation. Slovenia's results indicate a strong agreement on the empowerment of new teachers through mentoring, with mixed views on its impact on teachers' long-term career intentions. Lastly, in Croatia, mentoring is believed to greatly aid new teachers in their motivation and professional growth, especially in developing a sense of belonging and collaborative skills.

Overall, the results show that:

- **Experienced Teachers of the Control Group:** Across all the countries, there was a general agreement on the value of mentoring in empowering new teachers. However, there were variations in the perceived impact on the sense of belonging, cooperation with peers, and motivation.
- **Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group:** Most countries showed a significant positive shift in the perception of mentoring's benefits after the intervention. Notably, the extent of agreement on its effectiveness in enhancing new teachers' sense of belonging and cooperation skills varied.
- **New Teachers of the Control Group:** Across the board, new teachers enjoyed their job and found it challenging. However, there were differences in the intervention's impact on their intention to stay in the profession and their interest in becoming mentors.
- **New Teachers of the Experimental Group:** The intervention had mixed effects. While there was an overall positive trend towards a long-term teaching career, the perception of the profession's challenges and the interest in mentorship roles varied significantly.

In summary, while there were overarching similarities in certain aspects, such as the general appreciation of mentoring, specific impacts of interventions showed considerable variability based on the group and country. This suggests that while some educational strategies may be universally applicable, their effectiveness can differ based on the context and the target group.

Overall, the results from half of the countries (Greece, Croatia and Slovenia) partially verify this Hypothesis while the results from the other three countries (Portugal, Spain) fully verify it.

Hypothesis 4: Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers.

The overall conclusions highlight the impact of induction programs on new teachers across several countries. In Spain, no significant differences were observed between the control and experimental groups. In Portugal, new teachers felt capable in various professional aspects, with the experimental group showing higher preparedness in assimilating school culture and managing diversity. Greek results suggest a positive impact of formal induction programs, especially in cultural assimilation, but with negligible or mixed effects in other areas. Slovenian and Croatian findings also indicate beneficial effects of induction programs, particularly in fostering teacher confidence and competence in various aspects, including dealing with parents and assimilating school culture.

Summing up the national analyses:

- **Experienced Teachers of the Control Group:** Across multiple countries, experienced teachers in the control groups showed a consistent level of professional adaptability and pedagogical skills. Their experience seems to contribute positively to handling classroom challenges and adapting to evolving educational environments. In some countries, there was noted resistance to new teaching methodologies, contrasting with others where a more open attitude towards innovation was observed.
- **Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group:** The experienced teachers in the experimental groups, who underwent additional training, generally showed an improvement in adopting innovative teaching techniques. This was a common trend observed in most countries. The degree of improvement varied, with some countries reporting significant changes in teaching approaches, while others observed only marginal improvements.
- **New Teachers of the Control Group:** New teachers in the control groups across several countries displayed a keenness to learn but faced challenges in classroom management and implementing theoretical knowledge into practice. In certain countries, new teachers demonstrated higher adaptability and quicker integration into the school culture, whereas others showed a need for more structured support systems.
- **New Teachers of the Experimental Group:** Across the board, new teachers in the experimental groups benefited significantly from the additional training and mentorship programmes. This led to enhanced classroom management skills and better implementation of teaching methodologies. The extent of improvement and the areas where these new teachers excelled varied, with some countries showing notable advancements in innovative teaching methods, while others improved more in traditional teaching aspects.

Overall, the results from two of the countries (Portugal and Spain) partially verify this Hypothesis while the corresponding results from the other four countries fully verify it.

Hypothesis 5. Structured mentoring programmes adapted to the context increases the interest and success of its participants.

The overall conclusions from the field trials in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Slovenia, and Croatia offer varied insights. In Spain, the evidence does not fully support the hypothesis. Portugal's results show an increase in self-efficacy among experienced and new teachers, with the experimental group showing more significant improvement. Greece's outcomes favour the hypothesis, especially in boosting new teachers' self-efficacy. Slovenia's conclusions are

cautiously optimistic, highlighting benefits of mentoring in the experimental group but mixed results in the control group. Lastly, Croatia's findings support the hypothesis, with increased confidence levels in both groups, but with some nuances regarding the impact of interventions on new teachers.

The key common and unique findings are the following across the different teacher groups:

- **Experienced Teachers - Control Group:** Across the five countries, experienced teachers in the control group showed similar challenges in adapting to new educational methodologies and technologies. There was a general trend indicating a need for more structured professional development.
- **Experienced Teachers - Experimental Group:** The experimental group of experienced teachers demonstrated notable improvements in adapting to innovative teaching methods and technologies, especially in Spain and Portugal. This suggests that targeted interventions can effectively enhance the skills of seasoned educators.
- **New Teachers - Control Group:** New teachers in the control group across all countries reported feeling underprepared for the complexities of the teaching profession, particularly in administrative and bureaucratic aspects. This was a consistent finding, indicating a gap in initial teacher training programmes.
- **New Teachers - Experimental Group:** In contrast, new teachers in the experimental groups, especially in Greece and Slovenia, showed a significant increase in confidence and competence in various teaching domains after the intervention. These findings underscore the effectiveness of induction programmes for new teachers.

In summary, the data reveals that while experienced teachers face challenges in adapting to new methodologies, targeted interventions can be highly effective. For new teachers, there is a clear need for comprehensive induction programmes to bridge the gap between training and practice. The variations in outcomes across countries also highlight the importance of contextualizing professional development programs to meet specific national and regional needs.

Overall, the results from almost all the countries (Italy is the only exception) partially verify this Hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6. The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teacher induction programmes.

The overall conclusions from each country regarding the training of mentors' programmes are as follows:

In Spain, it is found that the experienced teachers recognize the benefits of training programmes but, at the same time, they seek more details on mentor training and its implications. In Portugal, there is support for mandatory mentoring in teacher induction but under the condition that these programmes are tailored to the school context. There is also ambivalence whether the mentor training ought to be formal or informal. In Greece and Croatia, there is preference for mandatory programmes with a more formal, structured approach and adapted to the social context. Finally, in Slovenia there is indirect evidence supporting that the training of mentors is beneficial for the effective implementation of the induction programmes.

In summary, there is a consensus across these countries on the importance and benefits of structured, context-sensitive mentoring programmes in teacher induction, with variations in preferences for the formality and specifics of mentor training.

The key common and unique findings across the different teacher groups are the following:

Experienced Teachers of the Control Group: In general, experienced teachers in the control groups displayed a consistent level of teaching effectiveness, with minor variances in classroom management and student engagement techniques. A notable similarity was their reliance on traditional teaching methods, showing less inclination towards integrating new technologies or pedagogical innovations compared to their counterparts in the experimental groups. In Croatia and Slovenia, these teachers showed a slightly higher level of adaptability to curriculum changes, compared to those in Greece, Portugal, and Spain. The Spanish group, in particular, demonstrated a unique approach in student assessment techniques, diverging from the more conventional methods observed in the other countries.

Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group: Common Trends Across Countries: There was a noticeable enthusiasm and openness towards innovative teaching methods and technology integration, contrasting with their counterparts in the control groups. These teachers demonstrated improved adaptability in pedagogical approaches, particularly in engaging students with diverse learning needs. In Greece and Portugal, these teachers were particularly effective in implementing collaborative learning strategies. Slovenian and Croatian teachers excelled in integrating digital tools into their teaching, a trend less pronounced in Spain.

New Teachers of the Control Group: Generally, new teachers in the control groups showed a tendency towards traditional teaching methods, albeit with a greater curiosity for new

approaches compared to their more experienced colleagues. They exhibited a keen interest in professional development opportunities, although actual implementation of innovative strategies was limited. In Spain and Portugal, these new teachers demonstrated a higher level of enthusiasm for student-centered teaching methods, a trend not as evident in the other countries. Croatian and Slovenian new teachers showed a unique approach towards classroom management, differentiating them from their Greek counterparts.

New Teachers of the Experimental Group: New teachers in the experimental groups displayed a notable eagerness to embrace innovative teaching methodologies and technological tools. There was a consistent trend towards more dynamic and interactive student engagement strategies compared to their counterparts in the control groups. In Greece and Slovenia, these teachers showed exceptional skill in integrating cross-disciplinary approaches into their curriculum. Spanish and Portuguese new teachers, in contrast, were more focused on individualized learning plans, differing from the Croatian group's emphasis on collaborative learning.

Overall, the results from two of the countries (Portugal and Spain) partially verify this Hypothesis while the corresponding results from the other four countries fully verify it.

Hypothesis 7: Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools.

The results from experienced teachers across different countries, including Spain, Portugal, Greece, Slovenia, and Croatia, highlight several key factors to consider when designing and implementing induction programmes for educators. The availability of time and financial incentives emerges as a common theme, suggesting that these elements play a crucial role in the success of such programmes. Experienced teachers emphasize the importance of time allocation, with leadership support and structured program tools also being identified as significant in some cases. New teachers, particularly those in experimental groups, emphasize the need for time, supporting material, and mentor financial support as essential conditions. Additionally, the role of leadership in supporting induction programmes is emphasized in Slovenia and Portugal.

The commonalities and differences in findings across these groups and countries are the following:

- **Experienced Teachers of the Control Group:** Across multiple countries, experienced teachers in the control group expressed concerns about the time required for mentoring and the lack of financial incentives. In some countries, lack of resources and support from school leadership were significant issues, while in others, these were less of a concern.

- **Experienced Teachers of the Experimental Group:** There was a general trend of increased recognition of time constraints and financial issues after the intervention. The importance of support from school leadership was consistently highlighted across countries. The extent to which lack of resources and support materials was considered a problem varied significantly between countries.
- **New Teachers of the Control Group:** New teachers universally reported time-related challenges and the need for better support from mentors and school leadership. The perception of financial incentives and resource availability as problems varied between countries, with some noting them as significant issues.
- **New Teachers of the Experimental Group:** Post-intervention, new teachers across countries reported heightened awareness of the challenges in time management and the need for effective leadership and mentoring. The degree to which lack of materials and financial incentives were seen as barriers differed, indicating varied experiences in different educational contexts.

Both new and experienced teachers, regardless of being in control or experimental groups, expressed common challenges related to time constraints, financial incentives, and the need for support from school leadership. However, the degree to which these challenges are perceived as crucial and their impact vary significantly between countries. This suggests that while there are universal issues in teacher induction and mentoring, the solutions need to be tailored to the specific contexts and resources of each educational system.

In general, the results suggest that hypothesis 7 are partially verified in the field trials conducted in most countries. In Greece and Slovenia, the hypothesis is fully verified.

Part B: Qualitative evaluation of the field trials

This section of the report presents the findings of the qualitative analysis of the separate national studies in a comparative manner. Initially, section 1B describes the sample of teachers who participated in the focus groups and the interviews and, thereafter, Section 2B discusses the results.

Section 1B: The samples of the qualitative evaluation of the field trials

The number of mentors and mentees who participated in the interviews and the focus groups conducted for the qualitative evaluation of the field trials in each country are distributed as follows

- Portugal: 15 teachers participated; 9 mentors and 6 mentees.
- Greece: 13 teachers participated; 6 mentors and 7 mentees.
- Slovenia: 9 teachers participated; 3 mentors and 6 mentees.
- Croatia: 8 teachers participated; 5 mentors and 3 mentees.
- Spain: 11 teachers participated; 7 mentors and 4 mentees

In total, 64 teachers participated, 37 mentors and 27 mentees.

Section 2B: Results of the qualitative part of the field trials' evaluation

The qualitative analysis does not allow for the validation or rejection of hypotheses. Yet, the qualitative research across five of the participating countries (Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Croatia, Greece) reveals **common themes (similarities) and differences** that enrich the interpretation of the results of the quantitative analysis.

Hypothesis 1: Mentor formal training programmes for experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective, formal teacher induction programmes.

Similarities:

- **Focus on Mentor Training:** All countries emphasize the importance of formal training programmes for mentors in enhancing teacher induction programmes.
- **Role of Mentors:** There's a consensus on mentors' critical role in supporting new teachers, particularly in managing emotional and professional challenges.
- **Need for Comprehensive Training Content:** The training programmes are designed to cover various aspects necessary for effective mentoring.

Differences:

- **Implementation Challenges:** While analyses from countries like Spain and Greece highlight the need for more time and resource allocation, teachers in Croatia point out the issue of multiple interns per mentor.
- **Cultural Adaptation:** Greece mentions specific challenges in adapting the NTIP guide to its school culture, indicating variances in how training content aligns with national educational norms.

In conclusion, while there is a uniform acknowledgment of the importance of mentor training programmes, the implementation and adaptation of these programs vary, influenced by cultural, structural, and resource factors varying in each country.

Hypothesis 2: The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance on the system.

Similarities:

1. **Mutual Benefits and Enhanced Motivation:** In almost all countries, teachers recognize mentoring as mutually beneficial, enhancing motivation among teachers. Both mentors and mentees gain from this interaction, improving their professional satisfaction and teaching quality.
2. **Need for Recognition and Support:** Spain emphasizes the need for proper recognition, incentives, validation, and structured support for mentors.
3. **Professional Development and Teaching Quality:** The participants in some countries observe that mentoring aids in the professional development of new teachers and enhances teaching quality. The focus is on fostering practical skills, establishing collaborative relationships, and providing structured programs like Croatia's LOOP program.

Differences:

1. **Career Development and incentives:** Most participants stressed the need for incentives for mentors, unlike Slovenia, where mentoring is not seen necessarily as connected to career development.

2. Perception of Mentoring Structure: Unlike other participants in most countries, teachers in Croatia valued the informal structure and practical focus.

In summary, all countries recognize the positive impact of mentoring on experienced teachers' motivation. However, challenges such as lack of career diversification, need for proper recognition and compensation, and differing perceptions of the mentoring role's impact on career development are noted. Notwithstanding these common trends, it should be acknowledged that each country shows unique perspectives and approaches to integrating mentoring into their educational systems.

Hypothesis 3: Peer-developed teachers' induction programmes based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system.

Similarities:

- **Emphasis on Professional Development for New Teachers:** Slovenia, Spain, and Greece focus on mentoring to support new teachers, specifically for professional development, orientation, and handling challenges.
- **Practical Skills and Application:** Croatia's LOOP programme emphasizes practical skills, focusing on parent-teacher cooperation.
- **Mentor Interaction and Support:** Spain and Greece both highlight the importance of mentor interaction for handling everyday professional challenges, exchanging ideas, and specific areas like classroom management and ICT use.

Differences:

- **Focus and Structure of Programs:** Croatia's programme stands out for its emphasis on practical skills and parent-teacher cooperation. This is an interesting difference compared to other programmes, showing different focal points (for example Portugal's programme highlights flexibility and autonomy).
- **Specific Areas of Emphasis:** Greece's NTIP program focuses on classroom management and ICT application, which is distinct from other countries, focusing on different priority areas in mentoring approaches.

While each country approaches teacher induction and mentoring with some unique elements, the overarching theme across the countries is a strong emphasis on mentoring as a key tool for professional development and practical skill enhancement for new teachers. This synthesis provides insights into the shared values and distinct methodologies employed in teacher induction across these countries.

Hypothesis 4: Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers.

- **Similarities: Emphasis on Specific Approaches:** Slovenia and Spain, each emphasize unique aspects in their mentoring practice, e.g. technology integration, structured approaches, and creativity, respectively.
- **Community Involvement:** Both Croatia and Greece place importance on extending mentoring beyond formal settings, involving communities in Croatia and focusing on personal connections in Greece.
- **Professional Development Focus:** Portugal emphasizes the development of mentors.

Differences:

- **Formal vs Informal Approaches:** Spain's mentoring practices are structured and formalized, contrasting with Greece's more informal and relationship-focused approach.
- **Educational Focus:** Slovenia's focus on technology integration in mentoring contrasts with Croatia's community-based approach, highlighting different priorities in their mentoring models.

In summary, while there are common threads such as the importance of mentoring in educational settings across these countries, each educational setting exhibits unique characteristics with respect to mentoring. Slovenia emphasizes technology and innovation, respectively, while Spain and Portugal focus on structure and mentor education. In contrast, Greece and Croatia show a preference for informal, relationship-based, and community-involved practices.

Hypothesis 5. Structured mentoring programmes adapted to the context increases the interest and success of its participants.

Similarities:

- **Emphasis on Professional Development:** All countries recognize the importance of continuous professional growth for teachers.
- **Peer Support and Collaboration:** There is a common trend of utilizing experienced educators to guide new teachers.

Differences:

- **Approach and Focus:** Each country has a distinct emphasis, ranging from personalization in Portugal and peer collaboration to an emphasis on technology innovation and integration in Italy.
- **Structure and Methodology:** The methods vary significantly, from Slovenia's structured sessions to Croatia's hands-on approach.

This comparative analysis reveals diverse yet complementary approaches to mentoring in education across these European countries, each tailored to its unique educational context and needs.

Hypothesis 6. The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teacher induction programmes.

Similarities:

- **Blending Theory and Practice:** Portugal, Greece, and Italy emphasize a blend of theory and practical elements in their mentoring and training approaches, aiming for a comprehensive educational experience.
- **Focus on Practical Experience:** Portugal, Spain, and Croatia prioritize practical experience in their mentoring approaches, focusing on real-world applications and structured methodologies.
- **Challenges in Integration and Consistency:** Greece, Slovenia, and Spain face challenges in integrating diverse educational backgrounds, ensuring consistent quality, and integrating induction programs with mentor training.

Differences:

- **Mentoring Approach:** Slovenia's collaborative and community-oriented approach contrasts with Croatia's structured approach with clear objectives, reflecting different priorities in mentoring styles.
- **Training Focus:** Spain seems to prefer a flexible approach that adapts to various contexts, showing variation in training methods and adaptability.

This comparison reveals that while there are overarching themes in mentoring across these European countries, each nation tailors its approach to fit its specific educational needs and cultural nuances.

Hypothesis 7: Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools.

Similarities:

- **Lack of resources:** Most countries face challenges with time and resources for effective mentoring implementation (Greece, Spain, Portugal).
- **Lack of structured approach/guidance:** In some countries, the relative lack of a well-structured guidance may be a barrier to implementation.

Differences:

- **Diverse Focus Areas:** The varied emphases, such as innovation in teaching methods in Italy or practical classroom experiences in Spain, indicate that factors other than just resource and guidance constraints may play a role in the implementation of induction programmes.

These findings suggest that, indeed, resource constraints and the lack of well-structured guidance might hinder the implementation of effective mentoring or induction programmes in many countries.

Part C: The implementation of the field trials in Italy

The procedure of the field trials in Italy

The analysis of the Italian case follows a different *modus operandi* than in the other countries. The change in the methodological approach adopted by the Italian team was dictated by two reasons. The first reason is related to the institutional treatment of teacher induction in Italy. According to the relevant legislation, a formal induction process (comprising of a 50-hour training and a final exam) is mandated. The LOOP project's induction programme overlapped with this process, requiring additional training hours, thus discouraging teacher participation due to the extra workload and incompatible school schedules. Additionally, a government change that occurred during the period of implementation disrupted the prospect of governmental support, severely complicating the implementation of the programme. Efforts of the Italian team to engage school directors in Puglia resulted in limited interest, with only 13 teachers enrolling.

As a response, the Italian team expanded its effort to a national scale, collaborating with INDIRE. This collaboration, along with the assistance of some USRs (Ufficio Scolastico Regionale – Ministry of Education) resulted to an online presentation event attracting more than 800 teachers and a course on the S.O.F.I.A. platform. The course consisted of a fully online, asynchronous, self-study format, supplemented by continuous support from the LUM team. The course consisted of 28 mandatory tasks, transforming theoretical learning into practical online exercises, with successful completion leading to a certificate. Thereafter, the hypotheses of the LOOP programme were tested via field trials, separating participants into a control group and an experimental group (see the National Report of Italy for further details). The experimental group engaged in a 15-hour training regime under the Mentor's Capacity Program (MCP). In contrast, the control group was provided only with an overview of the MCP and the New Teachers Induction Program (NTIP), along with the MCP handbook. Furthermore, the experimental group benefited from systematic support throughout the trials that included regular email communication and direct interactions with the coordination team.

The quantitative evaluation of the field trials

The quantitative evaluation of the field trials involved a total of 149 **experienced teachers**, strategically divided into two groups:

- 67 in the experimental group
- 82 in the control group.

It is important to note the disparity in the response rates between the ex-ante and post intervention questionnaires between the two groups. The experimental group exhibited an outstanding 100% response rate, providing a complete set of data. However, the control group had a significantly lower response rate, amounting to a 53% response rate. In sum, 111

experienced teachers replied to the questionnaires: 44 of whom were allocated to the control group and 67 to the experimental group. The control group mostly comprises of women, primarily based on urban regular schools and with considerable experience. Very similar is the profile of the experimental group.

The analysis of the data led to the following conclusions per hypothesis:

- **Perception of Formal Training Programs (Hypothesis 1):** Experienced teachers favourably view formal training programmes, indicating a broad acceptance and recognition of their value in the teachers' career development framework.
- **Mentorship as a Career Motivator (Hypothesis 2):** The consistent interest in mentorship roles, seen as a viable career alternative, confirms its motivational impact and potential for career diversification.
- **Role of Mentoring in Professional Development (Hypothesis 3):** Mentoring is crucial in supporting the professional development of novice teachers, significantly contributing to their retention and sense of belonging within the educational system.
- **Impact of Structured, Context-Adapted Mentoring Programmes (Hypotheses 5 and 6):** The report underscores the positive effects of structured mentoring programmes that are sensitive to contextual needs, enhancing the professional roles and success of participants.
- **Resource Allocation and Guidance (Hypothesis 7):** Recognizing challenges in resource allocation and guidance, the report partially supports the hypothesis, pointing to ongoing advancements in overcoming these barriers.

The qualitative evaluation of the field trials

The qualitative analysis of the field trials conducted in Italy was based on a focus group. The participants in this focus group were 7 mentors and 1 mentee.

The focus group was held on November 30, 2023 and included eight educators from primary and secondary education sectors, with teaching experiences ranging from 15 to over 35 years. Many participants also had significant roles in mentorship and tutoring, with experiences spanning from recent to more than 15 years. This mix of educators, with varied backgrounds and teaching levels, provided comprehensive insights into different educational practices and challenges. The online session lasted for 1 hour and 24 minutes, featuring structured discussions and questions focused on their teaching methods, challenges in education, and the impact of their mentorship and tutoring on new educators.

Overall, the qualitative data underline the necessity of mentor training that is adaptable, comprehensive, and context sensitive. Furthermore, discussions highlighted the need for professional and economic incentives. They participants also highlighted the role of reflective practice and practical application. The significance of the probationary year, coupled with additional in-school support was also emphasized as an important element of an effective induction programme.

Below we present the outcomes of the qualitative evaluation of the field trial per hypothesis in Italy:

Hypothesis 1: Formal training of mentors' programmes to train experienced teachers and school leaders facilitates the deployment of effective and formal teacher's induction programmes.

The discussion highlighted the significance of mentor training in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of mentors. It was emphasized that such training is pivotal in enabling experienced teachers to provide a secure and supportive environment for new teachers, helping them manage the various emotional and professional challenges they face at the start of their careers.

The content of the mentor training program was seen as a unifying force, essential for the successful integration of new teachers into the educational system. The comprehensive nature of the program was praised, as it appeared to cover all conceivable areas necessary for effective mentoring, suggesting a well-rounded approach to the curriculum of the training program.

The necessity of adapting mentor training to the specific needs and characteristics of each school was a recurrent theme. While acknowledging the importance of formal training, there was a consensus that such programs should be flexible enough to accommodate the unique challenges and environments present in different schools.

The recognition of mentors, both in professional and economic terms, was raised as a critical issue. Mentors contribute significantly to the educational system, and their work should be acknowledged as such. Participants called for a systemic recognition that extends beyond mere acknowledgment, advocating for tangible rewards and incentives.

The discussion also delved into the challenges of mentorship, including the need for mentors to engage in reflective practice to develop a deeper awareness of their mentoring style and approach. The training was suggested to offer new tools and insights, encouraging mentors to engage in a more conscious and informed manner with their mentees.

The group highlighted the necessity of investing in the mentor role, indicating that mentors should be better defined, protected, and valued within the educational system. Such investment includes providing adequate training, resources, and recognition for mentors, ensuring they are supported in their roles and can perform to the best of their abilities.

Hypothesis 2: The opportunity for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and act as mentors of their peers contributes to their motivation and maintenance on the system.

The focus group discussion shed light on the opportunities for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options by acting as mentors. It was evident from the discourse that the provision of such opportunities is perceived as a considerable benefit that could potentially contribute to the motivation and retention of these seasoned professionals within the educational system.

First of all, participants state that the lack of career diversification in Italy is a critical issue. The discussion revealed a consensus on the need for economic incentives or at least a professional characterization that would benefit teachers who are willing to embark on the mentoring journey.

There was an agreement on the importance of differentiated career paths, especially for those who have spent many years in teaching, whether on a precarious or transitional basis. By doing so, the participants suggest, there could be a move towards policy experimentation based on political advice and specific normative actions that align with the data collected.

Hypothesis 3: Peer-developed teachers induction programs based on mentoring activities support the professional development of teachers initiating their careers and their maintenance on the system.

In general, the collective insights suggested a need for continuous improvement in the mentor training programs to address the evolving challenges and enhance the effectiveness of the mentor-mentee interaction.

Participants reflected on whether a mentoring-based induction program supports the professional development of beginning teachers and their continued presence in the educational system. The Italian regulatory framework, which includes a probationary year for new recruits, was scrutinized to determine its effectiveness in inducting new professionals into teaching careers. The consensus was that such structured mentorship can indeed bolster the professional growth of novice educators and their commitment to the field.

The group discussed the critical role of mentoring in addressing the challenges faced during the implementation of induction programs for new teachers. They explored actions that could be taken to improve the training program for mentors, which in turn would enhance the quality of interactions and support provided to new recruits.

One of the challenges identified was the pre-existing attitudes and behaviors of teachers who may already have several years of teaching experience before being formally inducted. This scenario necessitates a mentorship activity that is both formal and informal, as veteran teachers often seek advice from younger colleagues. Mentorship becomes more challenging when individuals are not open to self-reflection and improvement.

Group activities and in-person sessions were emphasized as very beneficial components of the course, facilitating better communication and practical skills that are essential in a classroom setting. Such activities were seen as advantageous not only for the professional development of the mentors themselves but also for the mentees who receive more effective guidance.

Hypothesis 4: Formal induction programmes applied at the school level contribute to the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers.

The Italian regulatory framework, which mandates a probationary year for new hires, was considered a potentially effective practice for professional insertion.

The discussion also touched upon the nuances of such induction programs, suggesting that sometimes the probationary work could be more beneficial if carried out in a different or unknown school context. This could encourage a multidisciplinary approach and potentially avoid unpleasant dynamics that may arise in a familiar school setting.

Furthermore, the conversation included the perspective that sensitive data management and subject-specific mentoring might require multiple figures, not just a single figure, reflecting on the complexity and multifaceted nature of a teacher's role in a school setting.

In other words, the focus group participants recognized the value of formal induction programs in fostering the social and cultural development of new teachers. They noted that while the regulatory framework provides a foundation, the real impact comes from the active support and multidimensional engagement within the school, which aids new teachers in becoming integrated into the school's social and cultural milieu. This integration, supported by mentoring and a diverse set of school-based activities, contributes to the overall professional growth and well-being of new educators.

Hypothesis 5: Structured mentoring programs adapted to the context increases the interest and success of its participants.

In the focus group discussion, the insights related to structured mentoring programs and their

adaptation to context were concentrated around the importance of training that is both timely and targeted. Participants emphasized that training should be designed with adequate time and be directed towards individuals who are potential mentors, underlining the significance of listening skills and the ability to give empathetic feedback. The ability to communicate effectively and to intervene appropriately was also seen as crucial. These skills are not only applicable during mentorship but also in class observations, suggesting that such structured programs can improve the interactional abilities of mentors.

The discussion further delved into the practical application of these mentoring programs. Although a thorough field trial of the specified activities was not possible, the sentiment was that these structured programs could be highly beneficial as support for those who are mentors or wish to become mentors.

The discussion highlighted the need for such programs to be tested and implemented in a way that is tailored to each school, suggesting that a more nuanced and detailed approach to program structure could be underway.

Hypothesis 6: The training of mentors facilitates the implementation of teachers' induction programmes.

During the focus group discussion, it was acknowledged that the training of mentors plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of teacher induction programs. The participants reviewed the development of mentors' capabilities and the impact of the LOOP mentoring training program on personal and professional development, including areas that needed improvement.

The content of the mentor training program was described as a binding agent for the integration of newly hired teachers. It encompassed all conceivable fields necessary for effective mentoring, indicating a comprehensive approach to the structure of the program.

Furthermore, the focus was placed on the importance of feedback within the mentor training, which had been specifically developed based on primary themes considered essential for effective mentoring. This training was not just theoretical but also required to be implemented practically, taking into account the specific needs of the school and the teaching profession that need to be supported on the ground.

In conclusion, the training of mentors is seen as an essential component that facilitates the implementation of teachers' induction programs by providing mentors with the skills and knowledge necessary to guide new teachers effectively. The structured approach to mentor

training, including feedback and practical application, is crucial for integrating new teachers into the educational system and supporting their professional development.

Hypothesis 7: Lack of resources and guidance are the reasons for not implementing induction programmes in schools.

During the focus group, the issue of the lack of resources and guidance as barriers to the implementation of induction programs in schools was discussed.

This insight suggests that the absence of a structured, recognized, and adequately resourced mentorship system can be a significant impediment to the effective implementation of induction programs. Without proper support and clear guidelines, it becomes challenging for schools to maintain a sustainable mentoring environment that can support new teachers' transition into the educational system.

Part D: European surveys of triangulation

The European surveys were distributed online between September and December 2023. The priority was given to disseminating it among school principals and teachers from countries outside the project consortium. Various dissemination channels were used, including:

- i) Dissemination Campaign with Advertisements on Social Media Platforms;
- ii) Email Dissemination to Institutional Contacts;
- iii) Dissemination through Email Contact Lists of Teachers and Schools;
- iv) Dissemination through the communication channels of scientific associations and national and European teacher entities.

The survey was distributed with the aim of engaging a broad audience and collecting a variety of perspectives and insights. This effort resulted in 174 school leaders from different countries participating in the survey, of which 94 responses were valid. About half of these responses came from countries not involved in the project consortium. North Macedonia and Romania were the most represented among these non-consortium countries, while Greece and Portugal had the highest number of respondents within the consortium.

The survey also included 844 teachers from various countries, yielding 488 valid responses. Out of these, 350 were from non-consortium countries, and 138 were from consortium countries. Like the school leaders' responses, North Macedonia and Romania were the most

represented non-consortium countries, while Greece and Portugal had the highest representation within the consortium.

The majority of the surveyed school leaders were aged between 46-55 years, with no significant age difference between respondents from consortium and non-consortium countries. Teachers, on the other hand, were mostly aged between 36-45 years and 46-55 years, a trend observed in both consortium and non-consortium countries.

Most respondents, both teachers and school leaders, were female, regardless of their country's consortium status.

Most teachers surveyed taught in upper-secondary regular education, followed by vocational education and training. They predominantly worked in urban schools and had more than 11 years of teaching experience. This trend was consistent among respondents from both consortium and non-consortium countries.

Teachers and school leaders across various European countries are in consensus regarding the importance of teacher induction programs and mentoring processes. This agreement emphasizes the critical role of mentor qualifications and structured support during the teacher induction phase. It also underscores the need for pre-established teacher induction programs centred around mentoring activities to enhance the professional development and retention of teachers. Moreover, there is strong agreement among respondents that induction processes should be bolstered by trained mentors, and a perceived lack of formal mentor preparation underscores the necessity for comprehensive training programs to improve induction effectiveness. Teachers and school leaders, particularly from consortium countries, place value on the creation and monitoring of mentor training programs. Overall, surveyed European leaders and teachers perceive teacher induction as vital for supporting the integration of new teachers. The findings underscore the perceived lack of formal mentor preparation and emphasize the importance of formal training programs, validation of new teachers, and expert support for experienced teachers transitioning into mentor roles. Respondents also express disagreement with the idea of a rigid, non-flexible induction program, suggesting a need for understanding the diverse needs and contexts of teachers.

In essence, there is a shared understanding among teachers and school leaders from various European nations about the significance of teacher induction programs and mentoring processes. This consensus is evident regardless of whether the countries are part of the consortium or not. This common viewpoint emphasizes the crucial role of mentor qualifications and well-organized support during the teacher induction phase. This perspective is in line with Hypothesis 3, which posits that pre-established teacher induction programs, centred around mentoring activities, bolster the professional growth and retention of teachers. It also supports Hypothesis 5, which proposes that structured mentoring programs, customized to the context, enhance participant engagement and success.

Respondents overwhelmingly agree that induction processes should be enhanced by skilled mentors, a sentiment that aligns with Hypothesis 6, which suggests that mentor training aids in the execution of teacher induction programs. However, there is a perceived deficiency in formal mentor preparation, underscoring the necessity for comprehensive training programs to boost induction effectiveness. This aligns with Hypothesis 1, which asserts that formal mentor training programs enable the successful implementation of effective induction programs.

Moreover, teachers and school leaders from consortium countries place high importance on the validation, recognition, and ongoing monitoring of mentor training programs. The reasons for not implementing induction programs in schools, such as a lack of resources and guidance (Hypothesis 7), or the potential for experienced teachers and school leaders to diversify their career options and mentor their peers, thereby enhancing their motivation and maintaining the system (Hypothesis 2), were not clearly identified. However, no evidence was found to contradict these hypotheses either.

In general, European leaders and teachers surveyed perceive teacher induction as a crucial mechanism for facilitating the integration of new teachers, a view that resonates with Hypothesis 4, which proposes that formal induction programs at the school level foster the social and cultural inclusion and development of new teachers. These results highlight the respondents' perceived lack of formal mentor preparation and stress the significance of formal training programs, validation of new teachers, and expert support for experienced teachers transitioning into mentor roles.

Additionally, respondents reject the idea of a universal induction program, indicating an awareness of the diverse needs and contexts of teachers.

Part E: Conclusions and hints for policy recommendations

The synthetic analysis of the quantitative and qualitative findings of the field trials conducted in the six participating countries yielded some interesting conclusions and useful policy recommendations.

Overall, the LOOP project proved the importance of peer mentoring in:

- empowering and motivating new teachers to the profession,
- increasing new teachers' ability to interact and cooperate with other teachers and professionals,
- enhancing new teachers' sense of belonging to the school's culture
- creating opportunities for self-reflection and mutual learning between experienced and new teachers,
- increasing the self-awareness and sense of self-efficacy of experienced and new teachers towards the main activities of the teaching profession,
- motivating experienced teachers to the profession and act as facilitators of the integration and learning of new teachers.

The analysis of teachers' responses across all the participating countries resulted to a set of recommendations to support the successful implementation of induction programmes in schools, being the most relevant identified above:

- **Incentives for Experienced Teachers as Mentors** (Spain, Croatia, Greece, Portugal): Teachers proposed the adoption of various incentives such as formal recognition of mentoring, reduced teaching workloads, or financial rewards to encourage experienced teachers to become mentors.
- **Networking among Mentors** (Spain, Croatia, Greece, Slovenia): Teachers suggested creating platforms for mentors to connect, share resources, and support each other, enhancing the mentoring experience through regional virtual communities and school visits.
- **Induction Programmes Integrated into Teacher Training and School Strategy** (Spain, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia): Teachers advocated for integrating induction programmes into the final years of teacher training and the overall strategy of schools, focusing on practical and theoretical aspects to assist new teachers.
- **Monitoring Plan for Induction Programmes** (Italy, Portugal): Teachers recommended implementing a monitoring plan to share best practices and experiences, involving various stakeholders like school leaders, management, and universities.
- **Mentoring in Legal and Formal School Procedures** (Spain, Greece, Slovenia): Teachers emphasized the role of school leaders and management in mentoring, especially regarding legal and school procedures, and suggested the inclusion of mentoring approaches in school leadership training.

- **Adaptation of Induction Programme Length According to Individual Needs** (Italy, Portugal): Teachers suggested tailoring the duration of induction programmes to the specific needs of new teachers, possibly extending beyond a single school year.
- **Online Resources for Mentoring** (Greece, Slovenia): Teachers proposed the creation of digital resource banks and online repositories for mentors and mentees, providing accessible materials and resources.
- **Consideration of New Teachers' Working Conditions** (Slovenia): Teachers highlighted the need to address issues related to new teachers' working conditions, including feelings of being underpaid and undervalued, and the need for support from superiors and colleagues.

In parallel, several other interesting findings emerged with respect to the role of mentors, the training of mentors, the incentives of mentors and mentees, the design specifics of the induction programmes and the school-factors facilitating (or impeding) the effectiveness of induction programmes. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that the profile of mentors plays a crucial role. The motivation and interest to become mentor and their competences are relevant factors for selecting suitable mentors. Traits such as the ability to establish relationships, empathy, communication and listening skills, emotional stability and a lifelong learning mindset are valuable assets to a successful mentor. These personality traits should be accompanied with formal preparation and guidance. Additionally to that, financial and non-financial incentives do matter. Mentoring should be perceived as an attractive career option and as an opportunity for experienced teachers to have a formal and recognized role in the school. The time allocated to experienced and new teachers is a condition considered central for the success of induction programme, followed by the existence of activities and supporting materials to be used during mentoring. School leadership also plays an important role. In particular, school principals should be committed to the success of the induction programmes and provide assistance and encouragement to mentors and mentees. There is also a relationship between mentor training programmes and induction programmes. In particular, the design of formal, structured and adapted to the context mentoring programs can result to more effective induction programmes. The latter point should not be underestimated. As the rich and diverse findings of the LOOP programme demonstrated, a nuanced understanding of the specific needs and particularities of each national context is necessary for designing effective induction programmes. A one-size-fits-all solution is unlikely to work. What is needed more is context-specific approaches which, nevertheless are grounded in basic principles such as the one emerging from the validation of the seven hypotheses of the LOOP programme and reiterated here.

Annexes

Annex I – National report from [Portugal](#)

Annex II – National report from [Spain](#)

Annex III – National report from [Greece](#)

Annex IV – National report from [Slovenia](#)

Annex V – National report from [Croatia](#)

Annex VI – National report from [Italy](#)

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