

# MENTORING

## The role of mentoring in European challenges

Europe is struggling to get out of the crises. The situation is in need of an extra stimulus and strong empowering action. The **Europe2020 strategy** sets a goal of **labour market participation**, **decrease school leavers** and **fight poverty and social exclusion**. To a certain extent, all regions are confronted with youth unemployment, unqualified school dropouts and a growing social isolation among the immigrant population. On the other hand, ageing of the society

### Mentoring

Mentoring is a globally well-known tool for schools, businesses and organizations to guide people to their success. It is an instrument with a broad variety of implementations in our society as a form of coaching and networking. Mentoring provides recognition and acknowledgement, role modelling, stimulus and personal attention to the participants. Key of the methodology is the central position of people and their learning goals. The matches are tailor-made between these goals and the unique experience of the mentors.

### Mentors

Mentors are, just like students, from all walks of life. Some have had a brilliant career and some are just beginning. What binds them is the life experience, the expertise they have and the passion to share it with others. Mentors indicate to develop their own coaching and leadership skills. Companies indicate that mentoring enhances the sustainable development of employees.

### Mentees

Young people achieve their goals sooner when they feel supported and encouraged by someone who has travelled a similar path before. By making use of the success strategies of the mentor, mentees grow in their self-esteem, social, communicational and learning skills. They learn to trust and develop a positive orientation to their future. Young people develop their school career and learn to make informed decisions.

and the knowledge gap due to growing senior professionals urges us to bind generations for knowledge transfer. And this is just the urgency side! The European establishment encourages the **innovative power** of the European economy; to reach this goal, we need to encourage young people to develop their **entrepreneurial mindset** and excellence in study career. At the same time, working professionals seek **life long learning** for their vital development. Mentoring is applicable to these goals. As research has shown, using the instrument of mentoring improves the empowerment of people (see publications on the website [www.ecebmentoring.eu](http://www.ecebmentoring.eu)). This **policy note** aims at establishing the Europe-wide use of mentoring. Thus to help realize an inclusive society, healthy active workforce and the recognition of human capital. The growth in number of senior employees, youth unemployment together with the ongoing flow of refugees asks for expanding the mentoring programmes beyond borders. This can be realized by making mentoring a recognized part of the EU policy and projects concerning social inclusion and beyond. By making mentoring an acknowledged and recognized intervention on all levels of policy making, a broader implementation is made possible. The multi-sectoral effects of mentoring calls for a multi-sectoral support of decision makers on local, national and European level.

### Mentoring as an answer

Mentoring is an instrument that answers the above-mentioned objectives, as evidence shows. Mentoring is an increasingly popular instrument in Europe since the 1990's, initiated by schools, (social) entrepreneurs, NGO's and governments. Mentoring programmes have highly various target groups, such as immigrant children, young people in general, vulnerable groups, starting entrepreneurs, women in leadership positions and more. What programmes have in common, is the wish to contribute to the talent development and empowerment of participants.

## Research shows that mentoring works on a multiple level.

### Personal level

Young people grow in :

- Confidence
- Cognitive skills
- Social skills
- Professional network
- Social network

Mentors grow in :

- Confidence
- Cognitive skills
- Social skills
- Professional network
- Social network

### Institutional level

Schools show :

- Improved school results
- Higher qualifications
- Stronger connections with the professional field

Labour organisations show :

- Improved work results
- Improved work satisfaction
- Stronger connections with schools

### Regional level

- Higher employability
- Stronger cross-sectoral networks
- Regional vitality

The support and guidance of young people in Europe and the sustainable development of professionals is in need of a broader approach, going beyond institutions, structures and sectors. Mentoring answers this need, being a personal, powerful and customized intervention. It connects the development of young people to the development of working professionals. In connecting different worlds, mentoring has developed as a strong **21<sup>st</sup> century tool** for building cross-sectoral networks and vitalizing regions.

## Effects of mentoring

Tackling youth unemployment, early school leaving, low attractiveness of vocational education, but also contributing to excellence in study career, to the integration of migrants or to entrepreneurial behavior are well-known long-term outcomes of strong mentoring relationships. Less exposed is the effect of mentoring for job satisfaction and life-long learning on the part of the mentors. The number and volume of mentoring programs is – mainly due to these wide effects - rapidly increasing in Europe.

## Vital regions

Research shows that both mentee and mentor benefit from the relationship. The impact transcends therefore the personal level; schools and participating companies and institutions benefit from mentoring through the creation of networks and connections. Thus, the participants contribute to the vitality of their region in a process of life-long learning.

## Enlarging the impact

As recognized Europe-wide, education, social partners and corporates can together create partnerships to help and provide youth in their development. Mentoring is an instrument that creates strong ties between people and organizations on a regional and local level. These ties are also needed on a European level among mentoring organizations in order to generate more impact. Therefore, mentoring programmes with experience and know-how took the initiative in 2016 to set up a platform: the European Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, coordinated by MentorProgramma Friesland. Mentoring relationships and the methodology is an interesting object for research. This fact meets the ambition of partner programmes to establish a higher quality in the mentoring relationship and its effects within regions. Through research, knowledge exchange and common innovation, programmes can together look for ways in introducing mentoring on a larger scale in Europe.

## Call for action

**We invite you to give the instrument of mentoring the attention it needs to be available for empowering and revitalizing Europe.**

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