



# LEGME

learning to be a good mentor

## NATIONAL REPORTS OF MENTORS PROGRAMME PILOTING

LeGMe project



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## **LeGMe**

### **Report on the implementation of the mentoring program in Slovakia**

#### **Places and times**

1. Dolný Kubín: 8 mentors were trained and they worked as mentors with local Roma children in July and August 2014 – in cooperation with local school.

2. Prešov: 5 mentors were trained in October 2014 and since then they have been working with Roma children in Šarišské Michaľany – in cooperation with Roma NGO eduRoma.

#### **Recruitment of mentors**

The mentors have been recruited from among students and unemployed people, in cooperation with local labor authority, and schools.

#### **Recruitment of mentees**

The mentees have been recruited through schools, local community organization and Roma NGO in both, Dolný Kubín and Šarišské Michaľany.

#### **Training of mentors**

Two modes:

1. training parallelly with mentoring (in Dolný Kubín), i.e. each training session was followed by a mentoring meeting.
2. entire training followed by mentoring (Šarišské Michaľany)

#### **Mentoring**

Benefits for mentees

- Life skills (e.g. cooperation, patience, problem solving, friendship, observing rules, etc.)
- Read and like reading
- Control one's own emotions
- Communicate: talk about the reading
- Learning skills
- Reading alternated with games, sports, music and art
- Self-evaluation

Benefits for mentors

- Mentoring skills
- Life skills (patience, organization, problem solving, friendship, cooperation, learning, etc.)
- Better understand children, wherever they come from
- Preparing for their own future families – parenting

- Self-evaluation

Mentor 1: "I learnt that it is possible to work with children very well, if we are able to understand them."

Mentor 2: "The learning how to help children with their learning made me think more about my own learning."

Mentor 3: "I learnt that if we give others our time and energy, they will appreciate it. I learnt to understand children more and that it does not matter where they come from, they are very enthusiastic and eager for knowledge. I also learnt that children need a lot of our time and patience."

Benefits for mentor trainers

- New inspiration
- Work with volunteers – learning from them
- Transferring experiences from/to other contexts

Mentor trainer 1: It was great and fun to work with volunteers! They were very devoted to the activities and modelled reading and learning to the children. Furthermore, they created a very pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. Children's interest in reading is much higher now, at the end of the program, than at the beginning.

Mentor trainer 2: „I am very glad that we have developed such a useful program. It will be beneficial for others. I myself also received lots of inspiration. As a trainer, I had opportunity to apply my experiences from other contexts, e.g. training of teachers or working as a homeroom teacher.“

**Stakeholders involvement:**

At some meetings also parents, community workers, local NGOs and municipality representatives, librarians and other adults were present.

**Dissemination:**

Orava ADE website

Project facebook

Project newsletters

Orava Association annual conference in October 2014

**Support materials:**

Handbook for mentor trainers and worksheets (31 pages, in Slovak language)

**Challenges:**

-More than one mentee per one mentor

-Keeping discipline

-Children attendance

**Conclusions:**

Two different places of the project implementation provide not only for a higher impact of the project, but also for a multi-perspective dimension (two different

places have each different specifics). Both times work well: summer vacations in Dolný Kubín and school year in Šarišské Michaľany. Recruiting of the mentor students was easier than recruiting of the unemployed, because the unemployed preferred paid work. The need for more mentors can be addressed by involving additional human resources (e.g. from among seniors and retired people) in the future.

Both training modes worked well. For the program we recommend a minimum of 5 training sessions (20 hours) and the number of mentor-mentee meetings depends on the particular conditions ( 5-10 mentee – mentor meetings). Handbook for mentor trainers and worksheets prepared in Slovak language for both, trainers and mentors are practical and useful, and can be continually supplemented with new materials. Discipline challenges can be targetted by clear rules set up together at the beginning and being referred to during the program.

**At Dolný Kubín, January 30, 2015**  
**Marcela Maslová**



**die lobby für kinder**

Deutscher Kinderschutzbund  
Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e.V.  
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## **Report on the mentors' coaching programme**

### **Model project "Start-Aid"**

#### **A programme by the German Child protection Agency („Deutscher Kinderschutzbund“) in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania for volunteer mentors in the field of child and youth welfare.**

The German Child protection Agency (GCPA) has conceptualized a new mentoring-project for the child and youth welfare in the context of the EU-project "Learning to be a Good Mentor – LeGMe" in 2014.

Target groups are supposed to be juveniles at the age of 14 to 18 years, who are going to leave (or have already left) school without a certificate. The focus of the project will be the training of the soon-to-be mentors.

It is planned as a continuous training that will start with a mandatory full-day course for introduction. In this first course they get taught the basic knowledge for their future mentoring activities. Afterwards individual feedbacks will be given to the aspirants. Together with the Project-management they will make a, preferably consensual, decision if they will actually start to work as mentors. After the mentors start to work with their mentees they have to participate in a, likewise mandatory, module of continued education every four weeks. Problems and difficulties during the mentoring-activities for example will be discussed in these meetings.

First of all this new project had to be approved by the committees of the GCPA. The next steps are agreements and coordination with relevant institutions in this field, the public youth welfare office and the school administration. This is, due to German bureaucracy, a lengthy process, which is still going on.

Four prospective Mentor-coaches (social workers) attend the project in cooperation with the Leuphana University in Lueneburg. Some of them have already participated in the bilateral meeting with the Norwegian partners in Grimstad this summer.

The recruitment of appropriate volunteers has turned out to be a significant problem. There are very few unemployed teachers or social workers in Germany.

Our model project "start aid" coaching system previously saw the following steps:

### **Basic Coaching Module**

1 coaching day (9:00 am – 07:00 pm)  
5 x 2 class hours

Coaching content:

- Theory and practice of counseling
- Conversation techniques
- Self-reflection and self-awareness
- Questions regarding the socio-economic living conditions of the family of origin
- child and youth welfare law
- Regional counseling structures (school counseling/job counseling/parenting counseling/debtor counseling/child and
- youth counseling/drug counseling/health services)
- Regional structures of education and apprenticeship

**Advanced module A**

Participation in advanced modules is mandatory as well  
1 advanced module A = 1 x 2 class hours (07:00 pm – 09.00 pm)

There will be a monthly advanced module about various subjects

**Advanced module B**

Additionally there will be quarterly one-day coaching blocks on offer. Participation in these coaching units is voluntary. Requests for subjects from the mentors will be inquired into regularly by an online procedure.

**Practice Consultation**

The state association Mecklenburg-Vorpommern of the German child protection league as the project sponsor offers to the mentors practice consultation through its full-time professionals. Duration, form and content have to be agreed upon by the project adherence in respect to the individual case.

For different reasons our first education seminar could take place only in October, 2014 in Rostock.

For the choice of the participants we have used the application form of our M&E of system. Besides, the query contents of the application form have proved themselves.

7 beginning mentors, 2 mentor's instructors and the coordinator of the mentor's program have taken part in the first training course at the German Child Protection Agency. With the mentors there were 2 groups:

1. The group of the older mentors with long-standing work experience in educational occupations
2. The group of the younger mentors without work experience. On this occasion, these were students of the social work or for the teaching.

By the evaluation of the introduction seminar it has appeared that the seminar has not been sufficient for the younger participants. By the evaluation we have used the questionnaire of our M&E of system. Before admission of the mentor's activity these participants need two things:

1. Still very much time to think about their future mentor's activity
2. Even more technical knowledge
3. Even more information about the personal requirements

The younger participants have also taken over up to now still no care of a Mentees. The participants with long-standing work experience could take over the care of individual Mentees after the seminar in Rostock and Ludwigslust. However, about this care still no practice reports are given to us. These are questioned for the first time at the end of February. For it we will also use the query instrument of our M&E system.

Results:

In the mentor's education must be developed differentiated offers for the different mentor's types. We will continue the training program, but revise the contents of the modules accordingly.

During the last months we increasingly got in touch with other organizations that work with volunteer mentors. Many of these cooperation partners are very interested in the results of the project LEGME. Often they do not have adequate training facilities for their mentors. Instead of the mentor's project, like the model project "jump start", the German child protection association could take over in future nationally education as well as the advanced training and continuing education for the most different mentor's projects. This approach would also open new financing possibilities.

The mentioned partners include

Institute for Learning and Living	Rostock	More-Generation-house(MGH)	
Senior citizen's office	Schwerin	Family Godfathers Youth godfathers	
Verband Soziale Projekte	Schwerin	Projekt Mentor M Father's project	
ZEBEF	Ludwigslust		

In addition, about the contact with the cooperation partners we have won the impression that the mentors often work alone and in isolation from other partners.

Therefore, we check the possibility of other youth projects like „culture makes strong“ or „island of opportunities“ to use it as a cooperation partner for the mentors. Also here you can find additional financing possibilities.

Regardless of our own experiences with the mentor's project we would like to use the EU project "LEGME" to interest also the politicians in our region to long term and with lasting effect and to sensitize them for the need of well qualified mentors. This seems to us very important, because also the federal country Mecklenburg-West Pomerania must continue to expect in future an increase of a unaccompanied refugees minors. Here mentors can offer a good support. An example would be here the project of the Norwegian project partner.

On the 07.07.2015 the German Child Welfare Association will organize in a youth hostel in Schwerin a symposium for about 100 participants on the subject "Mentor's education". Target group of the conference are politicians, professionals from youth work, school representative and coordinators of mentor's projects. The event will also serve for the announcement of the results of the project "LEGME".

Schwerin, 30/01/2015

**Report on the findings from the first implementation of the mentors' coaching programme – Verein MUNTERwegs - Switzerland**

Whom to M&E	What to M&E
<p><b>The mentors:</b></p>	<p>From our interviews with the MUNTERwegs mentors we learnt that they don't focus so much on educational issues during the trainings (e.g. theory about socio-psychology of the child, psychology on child development or social exclusion). They rather want to organize the meeting as a intravision with the trainer as supervisor and mediator. They also appreciate the group activities organized from from the trainer for mentees and mentors (e.g. joint pick nick, theatre workshops etc.).</p> <p>The feedback we received also made us reduce the amount of coachings within the 8 month period of our program from 6 to 5. And we now offer one of the coaching sessions not as a group session but as an individual coaching. The mentors get a "voucher" they can use any time after the first third of their mentoring time with their mentee. We understood that these individual meetings can help improving the mentor-mentée relationship much better and is a more suitable tool to work on individual goals. It satisfies the needs of the mentors for personal support and the trainer can help with his/her expertise in order to support the commitment of the mentor/mentée to improve their relationship (also with the appropriate theoretical background ..much better transfer! Problem-based or best practice based learning in individual context).</p> <p>Concerning the theory related to their mentoring relationship we now offer more day or evening workshops on different topics (communication, resilienz, supporting German as a second language with games etc) for all MUNTERwegs mentoring groups in our region (not only mentors who are actually involved but also former ones). From this set of different workshops our MUNTERwegs mentors are free to choose what they want to attend (according to their needs / menté-relationship etc.). Some of these workshops are also open to the mentée's parents and are therefore a perfect design to also foster the mentors' relationship to the family of their child.</p>
	<p><b>Monitor progress</b></p> <p>In terms of monitoring the progress of our mentors, only those from university and high school students are using written documents (some as an electronic diary) because their mentoring commitment is part of their formal learning (accreditation). It became apparent that this documentation is quite time consuming to these mentors and in the case of the university students we had to give up on this on-going documentation on learning outcomes because of lack of time. Together with the training manager of the universities we discussed a "lighter" solution: the students now have to have a learning contract where they describe their learning goals and duties and then after the program has finished they ought to write a report on their experiences. This solution is very helpful for us because on the one hand it can still support the pool for potential mentors and on the other hand the students are still motivated to assign to this project.</p> <p>The written questionnaire from the mentors as well as the oral interviews with the mentees pointed out that overall the MUNTERwegs participants are very satisfied and thankful for this program. They appreciated the various experiences and activities they could live within this social program. The critical feedback and constructive</p>

	<p>points for improvement addressed the duration and some content / methodology of the mentor training sessions (coachings) and we considered them as mentioned above.</p> <p><b>the Mentor trainers/ coaches:</b> This feedback on the clarity of the content and methodology of the mentor training programme made the team of mentor trainers/ coaches sit together (face-to-face meetings) with the mentoring programme coordinator and work on a new coaching design. The programme coordinator supported this change in the mentor training on a strategic and administrative level and then communicated the improved project design to the new mentors / families and stakeholders, associated partners like staff of community work, school, kindergarten etc.</p>
<p><b>the Mentees</b></p>	<p>Thanks to our strong network of associated partners and the trusting relationship we constantly foster with the MUNTERwegs families we receive(d) good information on the various learning needs and interests of the mentees. However, we learnt that many children are already very busy with after school activities and their parents are eager to have their children enrolled in any supporting program (such as MUNTERwegs as well). The fact is though, that some of these children already have enough support / or even to much activities. Consequently it is then very difficult for the mentors to even allocate free time for meetings with their menté. A part from that we learnt if the menté is not really socially excluded the mentor feels abused. In order to keep the motivation of its volunteers high, MUNTERwegs needs to analyse each application of the child very carefully and talk to its social network to make sure he / she hits the criteria of the program. It proved that it is not enough just to collect written applications for the children and informing the parents orally prior to the program.</p>
	<p><b>Assess progress:</b> Concerning the assess of progress of our mentees we again rely on our supporting network and on the written and oral report / questionnaire of the mentees' parents. Here we received very positive feedback. Most parents are deeply grateful for this support of the volunteer. However, we must state that a big amount of our MUNTERwegs parents are not fluently German speaking / writing and their vocabulary isn't that elaborated. We also know that the parents want to be polite as they know that their child could enjoy an extra, free of charge program.</p> <p>In this sense the oral and written feedback of our mentors are much more sophisticated for us. Depending on their professional background they had clear goals towards the learning progress of their child. Most of them found out that 8 months of the MUNTERwegs programm just isn't enough to have sustainable change towards inclusion and that the situation is much more complicated and holistic than they had thought in the beginning. Most of the MUNTERwegs mentors therefore decided to stay in regular contact with their mentee even though the program has officially finished (80 %). This shows at least 2 things: they believe in the progress of their child and see significant signs to stay motivated in this mentor-mentée relationship. But we also consider it as a positive feedback that the MUNTERwegs child and his/her mentor felt secure and supported enough to stay in their new relationship on a sustainable basis.</p>

**Report on the findings from the first implementation of the mentors' coaching programme – Kvalifiseringstjenesten, NO**

Whom to M&E	What to M&E	How	When	Who does ME
The mentors	Assess learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face meetings  Beside regular meetings, we have had four individual meetings with mentors facing complicated issues between mentor/mentee.</li> <li>• Direct observation  We have told the mentors that we are happy to be invited when they wanted us to be present. It has only happened once.</li> <li>• Meetings with mentors and mentor trainers  Our monthly meetings have been positive and fruitful. Around 70% of the mentors showed up. Every time we shared a good meal.</li> </ul>	Monthly meeting with mentors and mentor trainers	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed face-book group</li> </ul> <p>It has been an important key to success regarding communication between mentors and mentor trainers.</p>		
The Mentors	Monitor progress	<p>Logs</p> <p>The logs give us very useful information about their activities. 80% (mid January) have handed in logs.</p>	Monthly	Mentor trainers
The mentors	Assess the mentoring process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation form</li> <li>Our electronic form has been answered by 70% (mid January).</li> <li>Face to face meetings</li> </ul>	In the middle and at the end of the program Monthly meetings with mentors and mentor trainers	Mentor trainers
The mentees	Assess learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentee interviews by mentor trainers</li> <li>Despite some language problems, these meetings told us about very happy (except two) mentees.</li> <li>Informal contact with mentor trainers</li> <li></li> </ul>	In the middle and at the end of the programme  Throughout the program	Mentor trainers
The mentees	Assess progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentor logs</li> <li>The logs give us very useful information about their activities. 80% (mid January) have handed in logs. The logs</li> </ul>	Monthly  In the middle and at the end of the program  In the middle and at the end of the program	Mentor trainers

		<p>only describe activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation forms by the mentors The last form will be filled in at the end of the program. In this form (you're reading now), we think that this part can be deleted.</li> <li>• Mentee interviews by mentor trainers</li> <li>• Informal contact with mentor trainers After the first month, informal contact has been very limited. Even if we meet eight of the mentees every day, we seldom talk about mentoring.</li> </ul>	Throughout the program	
The mentoring program coordinator/mentor trainers	Administrative support for mentors and mentor coordinators	Meetings in the group (3 persons) We have met twice a month .	Monthly meetings	Mentor coordinator  Informal (oral) feedback

\* At every mentor meeting there will be a session with group coaching.

\* The mentors will be told that the mentor trainers appreciate invitations to visit the mentor- and mentee couples at their meetings.

Kvalifiseringstjenesten, Grimstad Norway

## Synthesis of the findings

It has been very nice building the identity as a mentor at the monthly mentor training meetings. The mentors have grown in self-confidence month by month. The subjects like ethics, cultural understanding, the role as a mentor and how to handle traumas have all resulted in very interesting reflections and debates.

The mentors have been given many opportunities during the mentor training meetings to share experiences from their mentoring.

After a very short time we learned that the relationship with the mentors/mentees also had to go through some bumpy roads (difficulties in understanding other cultures, understanding of time agreements, trauma, lack of language skills etc.). When this happened, face to face meetings have been necessary.

Mid January the M&E system has told us that many did not finish their digital stories in time. Visiting local organizations has not been done as successfully as we had hoped so far. We want to find ways to secure that our mentors do show them this part of our community.

The mentors and mentees have given very positive feedback on how it is to be in the program, but they needed longer time than we expected before they were ready to visit organizations and producing digital stories.

Proposals for improvements: The subjects in the mentor training meetings should make room for traumas earlier.

We should have given more time to finish digital stories. We even wonder if it is a good idea producing digital stories as part of the program.

Grimstad, 20.01.2015

Gunnhild Bratland    Tone Vissheim    Arve Konnestad

## Report on the findings from the first implementation of the mentors' coaching programme – CILSDGC

### **Introduction**

The goal of our LeGMe mentoring programme is to support the mentees' personal development. The mentees are children of primary school age (especially children in a disadvantaged social position). Hence, the mentor training/ coaching programme was developed and has been evolving so as to prepare the mentors for this role of supporting the mentees.

In Romania, the mentor trainers / coaches are at the same time the mentoring programme developers and the mentor training programme developers. As some of the mentors (people in a socially disadvantaged position – pensioners, unemployed people, students) and their mentees are located in cities other than Cluj-Napoca, we have mentor coordinators in Bucharest and Suceava, as well as in Cluj-Napoca. The mentor coordinators are generally not mentors as well.

Coaching is a form of support for the mentors' professional development, which implies shared reflection on the mentors' direct experience with the program, incidents and learning from them, and mutual support among the mentors and between the mentors and the mentor coordinators in identifying solutions to specific issues.

### **Our monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system**

Our mentoring programme monitoring and evaluation system was developed as shown below:

Whom to ME	What to ME	How to ME	When to ME	Who does the ME
the Mentors	Assess learning needs	Interview	Prior to training	The mentor trainers/ coordinator
		Direct observation Questionnaire Focus group	At the beginning of the programme, during mentor training Day 1	
	Monitor progress	Learning logs/ reflective diaries	During the programme, every 6 weeks	
	Assess the mentoring process	Portfolios	During and at the end of the programme	
the Mentor trainers/ coaches	Adequate content and methodology of the mentoring programme	Checklist	At the beginning of the programme, prior to mentor training/ coaching	The mentoring programme coordinator
	Monitor the mentors' transfer of learning and the mentoring process	Direct observation Learning logs	During the programme	

the Mentor coordinator	Monitoring and supporting mentors	Reports	During the programme, every 3 months	
the Mentees	Assess learning needs	Mentee interviews Mentee written stories or drawings	At the beginning of the programme and during the programme	The mentors The mentor coordinator
	Assess progress	Mentor report Mentee written stories	During the programme At the end of the programme	

Table 1. CILSDGC Monitoring and Evaluation System

### ***Findings from M&E of the mentors' training/ coaching programme***

We will discuss the findings for each category of persons who have been the target of the M&E system one by one.

#### *The mentors*

The mentors were monitored and evaluated for the following purposes:

- *Assess learning needs*: this was done in two steps: a) prior to the training through interviews conducted by the mentor coordinator(s) who identified the potential mentor; b) on the occasion of the first training (summer of 2014). As a result of the interviews, which targeted the potential mentor's *interest and adequacy* for the role of mentoring, the mentors were invited to the first training. During the first training, we observed the potential mentors as they interacted with each other and as they responded to tasks, and gave them a questionnaire in two parts: one to assess their self-esteem, and one to find out their learning needs. Depending on their response to the second part of the questionnaire, we developed the second training (autumn of 2014). In addition, depending on their learning about the programme from the first training, the potential mentors accepted to sign the volunteering contract (thus committing to becoming a mentor) or not.
- *Monitoring of the mentors' progress in development* has been done by face-to-face meetings, which take place roughly every six weeks. This entails direct meetings in the three centers (Cluj-Napoca, Suceava and Bucharest) between the mentors and the mentor coordinator(s). In the discussions, we found out what the mentors thought went well in the mentoring programme, and what support if any they needed. In general, the mentors were confident of their skills and the kinds of activities they did with the children. However, one mentor wanted tips for activities, so the group of mentors contributed such tips.
- *Assess the mentors' performance* in the mentoring programme implementation is done by means of their evolving electronic portfolios where they make entries after every meeting with the mentee. These entries are collected on a closed Facebook group, and they are evidence of what the mentors have done with the mentees, and what they learnt about their mentees, about themselves. When the mentors write about difficulties encountered, the mentor coordinators try to provide specific support. Also, when the mentors share things that the mentor coordinators have questions about, then they can address those questions.

The assessment of the (potential) mentors' learning needs went well, the design of the training/ coaching sessions and the instruments we used for data collection proved effective as there were a lot of sources of

information. The major difficulty was that we had to repeat the training several times, as the (potential) mentors had difficulty attending. However, the good side was that the groups of trainee mentors were small, so we could observe mentors very carefully. Also, given that the programme is relatively for a long time, we had difficulty identifying mentors who would fit the required profile, but in truth, we did not cooperate with any volunteers' centre, which in the future could be done to help recruit mentors.

Most of the mentors are using the Facebook group to build their electronic portfolio, and they write regular entries after their meeting with their mentee, so we get to learn about what activities the mentor did with the mentee, and how things went. I would highly recommend this form of monitoring for future programmes as well.

As the mentor coordinators have a relative small group of mentors to supervise, the face-to-face meetings are also quite easy to organize, and where face-to-face fails, people can attend by skype, which is what we did in Cluj-Napoca on the occasion of the first such monitoring activity.

### **The mentor trainers/ coaches**

These were monitored by the mentoring programme coordinator as follows:

- To judge the *adequacy of the content and methodology* of the mentoring programme, at the beginning of the programme, prior to mentor training/ coaching, the mentoring coordinator worked closely with the mentor trainer to finalize mentoring programme concept. Later, the mentoring programme coordinator made judgments about the mentor training agenda and the hand-outs, as well as the reports produced after the mentor training workshops.
- To monitor the *mentors' transfer of learning and the mentoring process*, the mentoring coordinator is monitoring (reading) the entries on the Facebook group, and when necessary steps in which questions or comments for the mentor trainers/ coaches.

Collaboration between the mentor trainers and the programme coordinator went well, and there were no difficulties in this aspect. Careful selection of the mentor coordinators in each location was key.

### **The mentor coordinator**

The mentor coordinator is monitored by the mentoring programme coordinator through the reports which the coordinator produces periodically.

The Facebook closed group was a good mean for reporting – also for the mentor coordinators.

The programme 'lost' some of the volunteers (mentors) for different reasons. The result was that one of the mentor coordinators started to do mentoring with 2 children and later, with 3 children and a partly trained mentor helped her.

Lessons to be learnt for the future include: the mentoring programme should start with more volunteers than needed (have a reserve list); include in the initial training a session on what volunteer work means (rights & responsibilities of the volunteer); use volunteers' organisations for identifying volunteers/ mentors – don't use (only) personal relationships for identifying the volunteers/ mentors.

Not all mentor coordinators reported – and not all the mentors regularly reflected on their mentoring activities. We have to decide what we do in such situation. Till now we were only waiting and expected that people would post their reflections.

Possible solution: Mentor coordinators should ask, on the Facebook group, for the mentors' reflection on a weekly basis or get in touch by telephone with the mentor; the programme coordinator should ask, on the Facebook group or by other means, for the missing mentor coordinators reports.

Starting the implementation of the mentoring programme with children in very difficult situations (one child who lives in a child-care organisation, children who live in Roma communities) brought some new issues in

the programme – the need of contacting the county administration/ organisation dealing with the transportation of Roma children to school.

Solution: mentors coordinators should integrate in the mentors coaching programme relevant information about practical aspects related to the organisation of the mentoring programme/ activities.

### **The mentees**

The mentees have been assessed as follows:

- Their *learning needs* were identified together with the school/ parents who proposed them for the programme, and in the matching event at the start of the mentoring programme. The mentees did drawings, discussed with their potential mentors using a small questionnaire and thus the compatibility between the two and the learning needs of the mentee were identified.
- The *mentees' progress* is monitored and assessed by the mentors through direct observation; in the Facebook group entries that the mentors write after each meeting, the coordinators get to learn about the mentees' progress.

The meeting where the potential mentors and mentees were matched went well: parents and social workers in charge of the children from social assistance programmes attended, and the children had a good time getting to know the mentors, while the programme coordinator had time to discuss with the children's carers and teachers. Some of the parents changed their mind when they heard what the programme was about, some may have had higher expectations, so not all those who attended the matching meeting ended up being part of the programme. Also, the mentors had to adapt, because some of the children (e.g. in Cluj-Napoca) had much more serious need of support than our mentoring programme could offer, therefore a group of mentors decided on weekly meetings with more than one child (three children/2 mentors).

### **Synthesis of the findings**

In our opinion, the mentors' training and coaching programme has gone well: learning needs were identified adequately in the first training, and the second training could be designed so as to meet those needs identified in the first.

The monitoring of progress in the mentors' performance and the mentees' learning is very successful using the closed Facebook group. Mentors can learn from each other's activities, and the coordinators are constantly informed about what is happening in the programme.

Where we need to improve is in the recruitment of the mentors and the mentees. As concerns the recruitment of the mentors, we need more time and better promotion of the programme, coupled with better cooperation with specialised organizations (e.g. ProVobis, in Cluj-Napoca). For the recruitment of the mentees, we need to make it clearer to the schools / carers what kind of support we can provide, and what level of expertise the mentors have. Some of the mentees are clearly a challenge. We can take this challenge, but need better, differently trained mentors and a different structure of the mentoring programme for those children who come from a highly challenging family background, and whose basic skills are at a stage of development that makes it difficult for them to keep up with the rest of the class.

## Interim report on the findings from the first implementation of the mentors' coaching programme in Lithuania

Modern Didactics Centre

January 2015

Two local partner organizations are actively involved in the implementation of the mentoring programme. Holy Cross house and Child Day Center “Akimirka” are the organizations working with the children of different age groups and have rich experience in providing after school activities. Representatives of both partner organizations contribute to the programme development, implementation and evaluation. Mentees are from the group of children who spend time in Holy Cross House and Day Centre “Akimirka”. All selected mentors are more or less known by mentor trainers, actively volunteering in these two local partners organizations.

**Mentor training** started in June 2014 and took place over the course of four days. The first 6-hour training was organized on 5-6th June 2014 for 11 mentors, and the second 8-hour training on 25-26th September 2014 for 16 mentors. The training took place in the evenings, at time convenient for all volunteers - students, unemployed and employed people.

The mentors found the training useful; they particularly liked the topic about temperament. It was relevant as they were able to apply gained knowledge working with individual children in a more informed manner. They also learned about themselves and understood what to expect from people and how to communicate with different temperament persons. The stages of children’s development were another topic, rated as very important. It helped them better understand their mentee’s behaviour. The session with quest speaker was the most important moment. The quest speaker was volunteer who had participated in similar mentoring programmes. She shared her experience, talked about activities that had proved to be very effective and motivating for her mentee.

Right after the trainings, we started matching mentors and mentees: 15 couples were matched according the needs, personal characteristics and monitoring results. The first meeting took place in October 2014 with participation of the mentor trainer. After this meeting, the mentors and the children began their activities. The children meet and interact with their mentors once a week during a period of six months. The meeting time lasts from two to three hours.

At the beginning of the programme implementation we agreed on the main indicator of success – child improvement. When child’s learning and behavior improves and that is noticed by parents, the child’s teachers, the mentor, and others involved in child’s life, then that will be considered success.

Method called “Star” was used to evaluate development of mentors’ competencies at the beginning of the **programme implementation**. And it is continuously used during the whole programme (beginning, middle and at the end). All mentors agreed on things that are the most important for them to improve. They rated the most important competencies to be developed in following way:

- communication - 6,6;
- effective listening – 6,9;
- creativity – 6,1;
- conflict solving – 6,7;
- empathy – 6,5;

- time planning – 7,3;
- responsibility – 7,8
- self-control – 7,8;
- reflection – 8,3.

Mentors and mentees diaries (notes) as self monitoring and self reflection tool have been proposed by the trainers and coordinator. Diaries contain activities descriptions, comments, impressions from the meetings.

Trainers, mentors and coordinator meet and reflect on progress and mentoring process once a month. We call such meetings monitoring meetings. Till now we have had 3 meetings (October and November 2014, January 2015). Mentors reflect on their mentoring progress - share what activities they have done together with mentees, how they have felt first time, how they feel after 3<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> meetings, do they see some signs of growing friendship, etc. We try to create safe, friendly environment, with cup of tea/coffee, some snacks. We never rush, as each mentor needs time to say whatever he /she wants to say.

#### **What went well from mentors' point of view:**

- Building friendship, joy of the meetings – mentors and mentees want to meet each other, spend more time together;
- Involving activities, for example cooking together;
- Flexible time for the meetings – mentors and mentees are free to decide on meeting time;
- Knowledge gained during the training is very useful, especially practical recommendations given by the guest speaker – volunteer;
- Convenient conditions for meetings - mentors and mentees can meet even on weekends but it has to be arranged in advance;
- Useful monitoring meetings: *„I'm taking away new ideas“, „Sharing experiences, knowing that you are not alone is very good feeling“, „At the same time these meetings are like commitment, control which is necessary“;*
- Learning how to communicate and creatively cooperate with the child individually;
- New experience - to discover a child, learn from him; *„was very interesting, had fun together“*
- *„All programme is one big PLUS“*
- Mentors are feeling much braver.

#### **Difficulties from the mentors' point of view:**

- Big worry before the first few meetings with the child – what to do, how to start, what activities to suggest. Therefore mentor trainers were always nearby to listen, to calm down and support, especially right after the meeting with the child;
- Not all planned activities went well so during monitoring meetings we tried to discuss what could be done differently;
- Mentors themselves are not always prepared for meeting with mentees and have to look for last minute solution - plan. On the other hand, if it is not very formalized activity, but „friendship“, so maybe not all details have to be planned?

**What went well from mentors trainers' point of view:**

- Children who used heavily participate in the day centre activities became more proactive and more responsible in group activities and even encourage others to engage more;
- Children take on initiative – plan meetings themselves, look for centers opening hours;
- Meeting each other raises self esteem and independence of both – mentors and mentees;
- Children learn to communicate with the adults. Most of them lack such skill;
- Individual meetings help mentees to express themselves better – they talk and share more freely. It helps organizations specialists to know children better and provide more adequate support for them;
- Mentors - volunteers are becoming real team. They feel stronger with each time, feel need to come and work at the centre;

**Difficulties from the mentors' trainers' point of view:**

- Lack of the time: all mentors are really busy but try to dedicate as much as possible time for the project;
- Because of flexible planning of mentors-mentees meetings, sometimes it is hard to „follow the track“;
- We have mentors who can not participate in the monitoring meetings but meet regularly with their mentees. Thus mentor trainers contact them by phone to find out what's new;
- It was hard to match the pairs of mentors and mentees. We had to split up one of the pairs because they were not able to find common interests and start communicating. This problem has been solved and both of them have new pairs now;
- Some of the mentors have dropped out;
- There's a lack of men volunteers. One of the mentors has two mentees but there's a need for more male volunteers.

**What went well from mentees' point of view:**

- *„ I felt relieved, when I got acquainted with my Big Friend“;*
- *„It was fun“;*
- *„I liked to talk and to know more about her“;*
- All mentees say that they want to spend more time with the mentor;
- Almost all mentees have mentioned that they really like to cook together with the friend and prefer more active time together;

**Difficulties from the mentees' point of view:**

- Not all suggested activities are liked equally;
- Children think that meetings are too short.

## INTERIM REPORT ON MENTORS' COACHING PROGRAMME

In Italy the mentor training programme was developed two times. Below you can find a description of both trainings held in Palermo, at CESIE office.

	1 <sup>ST</sup> TRAINING	2 <sup>ND</sup> TRAINING
<b>DATE</b>	June – July 2014	November – December 2014
<b>MEETINGS</b>	5	2
<b>PAX</b>	12	8
<b>TARGET GROUP</b>	People without any experience in mentoring	People with already some experience in mentoring. The pax are already voluntary in the local centers.
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	The 5 meetings consisted in two 90-minute sessions and were planned totally by project coordinator and mentors' coaches. The meeting were about: frame of mentoring, mentoring tools, advice and suggestions, local centers' visits, match mentors/mentee.	Each meeting lasted 3h and half. The first meeting focused about: frame of mentoring, mentoring tools, advice and suggestions. The second meeting was born from the mentors' requests and needs; these were mainly about: 1) how to face aggressive and shy children, 2) how to organize and plan voluntary activities together with the responsible of local centers' in relation to the mentees' needs. CESIE organized the 2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting about the first topic (trainer prosed to tackle it by using non-violent communication). CESIE planned to organize another meeting concerning this second topic in February.
<b>METHODOLOGY USED</b>	Non-formal education.	Non-formal education. Since the topics were partly known by pax, coach decided to use this method deeply. Strong and wide sharing and feedback moments were foreseen.
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	Pax dropped out	Currently they are mentoring children aged 5-10 years old in multicultural kindergarten.

### Below you can find main findings:

- Mentors liked very much the methodology used during the training and the implementation. Especially for the mentors of the 2<sup>nd</sup> training, the non-formal method was deeply appreciated, since they could better share their voluntary and mentoring experience (any concerns, doubts, facts happened). Moreover they found very useful for reflecting about their role in relation not only with children but also local centres where they are mentoring. In LEGME project, they found out an educational path and tool for their own personal and professional life.
- The evaluation of training by mentors (written evaluation after every meeting) allowed to balance other following meeting and, mainly, focusing on themes requested by mentors (see the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> training). Both trainer and mentors liked this system.

- The evaluation of mentoring implementation used by mentors (blob tree) was appreciated a lot by mentees. Moreover mentors liked very well, since they found it as a very creative and useful tool for pondering their mentees.
- The main problem faced during the mentoring programme is that mentors of the 1<sup>st</sup> training dropped out just during the implementation of the mentoring. Main reasons are:
  1. Drop of motivation
  2. Too gap from the training (June/July) and the start of implementation (October)
  3. Family or study motivation

For that, we decided to do involve for the 2<sup>nd</sup> training people already volunteering in local centres. It was highly appreciated by these centres, since they usually don't give any training support to them. Also for the new mentors, it was very good (ad described above).

## Report on findings from first implementation/Forum for Freedom in Education

According to the developed mentor's coaching programme, during the September, FFE started to recruit mentors and mentees. As the main goal of the programme is to increase competitiveness and employability of the young unemployed teachers and professors for the labour market, and FFE has volunteer programme since 2008 and has experience in mentoring students and young unemployed people mostly from the fields of social and humanistic sciences, mentors were chosen from volunteer pool. Each candidate had to send filled in application form (personal data, working experience, experience in working with children, volunteering experience, personal skills, hobbies and interests, reason for participation, benefits to the child involved in the project and what knowledge and competences they want to gain through participation in the project). According to the application form it was selected eight candidate for the interview, and chosen seven.

The mentees are pupils (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade) from the Elementary school "Matko Lagina" in Zagreb that are recognized as a gifted children by the school pedagogue. We decided to work with the gifted children because in schools a little number of teachers and professors are dealing with that groups of children. They do not have enough experience and knowledge about their individual needs and how to motivate them in the class.

Pedagogue of the school informed parents about the programme. Each parent sign approval for their child's participation in the programme. On 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 the meeting was held at Elementary school "Matko Laginja" between FFE members, pedagogue and parents of chosen children. During the meeting the parents were introduced with the goal and activities of the project, developed programme and with the FFE work. Also, they were informed with the programme's obligations and outcome, as well as mentors' obligations. All parents were very curious and interested in involving their children in the project. At the end of the meeting they were informed that they children need to fill in the application form (child's personal data, parents' personal data, child's interests, extracurricular activities, the interests in the child's free time, the gain from spending time with the mentor), that was used for matching children with the mentors. Also, they had been informed that during the next two weeks individual meetings (parent, child, external expert – mentor's trainer and mentor's coordinator) will be held.

During the individual meetings, mentor's trainer and mentor's coordinator had time to get to know parent and child and to define child's fields of interest, fears, desires and expectations. All children were very interested and excited to be a part of the programme and to meet their mentors.

After having all individual meetings with the parents and their children done, the meeting with the selected mentors was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. During the meeting, selected mentors had opportunity to meet one another, get all necessary information of the programme (education, supervision, matching, examples of the activities with the mentées etc.), and they were introduced with their obligations and expectations. Also, mentors had opportunity get all answers on their questions.

As the mentors haven't had experience in this kind of the programme and working with the gifted children, the mentor's coaching training has been held from 3<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2014. Two-day education were divided into eight sessions.

In the first session mentors were informed more in detail about the mentoring programme and their obligations. Also, they were educated about competences in general, awareness of their own competences and how to use them for the labour market.

In the second session they learnt about human needs and how people fulfil them. They worked on rising awareness of their responsibilities and choices they make to fulfil their needs. Also, they have learnt that each person have the same needs, but they fulfil them in different ways. The aim of this session was to learn that recognizing own needs and needs of others is essential in building stronger relationships.

In the third session mentors learnt about the mentoring programmes in general, mentor's relation phases, what it means to be a mentor, which competences should mentor have to be successful.

In the fourth session mentors were working on connecting their own competences (that they become aware of during the first session), and competences that mentor in general needs to have. The aim was that mentors become aware that they already have most of these competences, and they were given guidelines how to develop them even more and implement them in building a successful mentor-mentée relationship.

The topic of the fifth session was gifted children. This session was held by specialist in clinical Psychology who works with gifted children. Mentors were introduced with the various types of giftedness and behaviours of gifted children. Also, she shared first-hand experience about various situations from practice.

In the sixth session mentors were introduced with the interests, hobbies and expectations of the interviewed children. These information were provided by mentor's trainer and mentor's coordinator. Also, mentors were able to express their expectations, fears, potential challenges and activities. They were given advice and basic guidelines.

During the seventh session mentors were practicing introduction with the children and their parents through role playing game. The aim of this activity was to empower them for the matching meeting.

During the last session mentors were introduced with the mentor's log. Mentor's log is a tool which helps mentors to evaluate and record their progress in development of the competences and tracking the activities with the mentée.

Matchings' were done according to the application forms of the mentors and mentées, information gained through the individual interviews with the children and mentors during the education by the pedagogue from the Elementary school "Matko Laginja", mentor's trainer and mentor's coordinator.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2014, the Matching meeting was held. Participants were: children, their parents, mentors, mentor's trainer and mentor's coordinator. The concept of the meeting was to connect mentors with the children in the non-formal, fun and relaxed way. This was done by non-formal introduction all participants (energizer). Matching was also done through a fun game. After matching, each mentor and child were getting to know each other.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> of October mentées and mentors started to see each other. They see each other on the weekly basis (once a week).

From the October till February, 4 supervision were held (October, November, December 2014, January 2015.). During the supervision, mentors were talking about their experience with the children, what they were doing with them, where they went with them, how is relationship developing, did they have any problems, or obstacles. Also, during the supervision the individual plan for each child was developed, and according to it, supervisor guided conversation.

Cross section of their encounters: pairs were visiting museums, cinemas, Interliber – International book Fair, music school, talking with the professors according to the interests of the children (professor of music, professor of educational psychology..), talking about children school, subject and grades (some children have improved their grades after that), exploring common interests (such as books, games, love for drawings, etc.). Some obstacles appeared during implementation of the programme such as – inability to meet, difficult agreements on meetings but all obstacles were successfully resolved between mentors and mentées, without the need for an interference of the mentor's coordinator.

Feedback of the programs participants (parents, children and mentors) are very positive. They all are very glad to be a part of this programme, children and mentors are very connecte and parents accepted mentors and they are glad that their children have someone who they believe.