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'Inducing VET trainers with mentoring skills for entrepreneurial growth'

mENTERing

**Report identifying good practices and synergies in mentoring training for
VET trainers in entrepreneurship
based on the findings of desktop research for**

WORK PACKAGE 2

Research and Interactive Needs Analysis

Produced by the *mENTERing* project

Created by OLN Learning, Greece

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1. Introduction

1.1. The context of VET and an overview of the mENTERing project

Vocational Education and Training (VET) makes a major contribution to the competitiveness of Europe by supporting and facilitating the professional and personal development of its citizens. In this context, VET teachers, trainers and tutors have a primary role since it is they who undertake the task to reach citizens, update them with new knowledge, skills and attitudes so that their access to the labour market and professional opportunities are enhanced.

Access to a labour market that is characterized by fast and unpredictable change demands that VET trainers are constantly updated in order to effectively adopt new roles and support their learners. At present, a new role that emerges for VET trainers is that of mentor to their trainees. Integrating mentoring principles in VET trainers' continuing education facilitates their acting as mentors. VET trainers who can act as mentors can significantly benefit their mentees since they are able to guide and counsel them, provide psychosocial support and act as role models. Mentoring skills and competences help them to respond better to mentees' learning needs and play an important role in the acquisition of new skills and competences.

This is even more important for VET trainers who train entrepreneurs. Mentoring can be an important step towards offering entrepreneurs of all ages a better training and in general support the aims and goals of VET by shifting focus from teaching to learning, and from formal, inflexible systems to active self-directed learning and participation.

However, there is a clear gap in the policy and pedagogical framework for training VET trainers in mentoring skills and competences for entrepreneurship in most project countries as well as in most other EU countries. VET provision (systems and policies) must be updated in consideration of the new role of VET trainers as mentors, standardize mentoring training, validate mentoring skills and competences in the career pathway of VET trainers and offer them the opportunity to formally qualify as mentors.

With this aim, the *mENTERing* project seeks to support the initial and continuous training of VET trainers and develop their skills and competences in order for them to cope with the future challenges and especially with the challenge of mentoring entrepreneurs.

The specific way in which this aim will be achieved by the project is through the transfer of existing material on mentoring, the Mentor's Training Materials and Resources from the EU co-funded project MAITRE, and the development of a customized train-the-trainer blended course for VET trainers who wish to act as mentors of entrepreneurs. The train-the-trainer course will include specialized modules on mentoring and entrepreneurship while addressing specific skills and competences. The newly developed course will be tested and updated so that it constitutes a sustainable and effective model to be implemented throughout Europe and have a lasting impact on the VET provision of project countries and Europe in general.

1.2. Aims of the desktop research

The aim of this research is to identify existing VET programmes for VET trainers with a focus on mentoring training for entrepreneurship in Bulgaria and Greece as well as mentoring training courses and materials in Europe and internationally, based on a concrete research framework for desktop research matching the aims of the *mENTERing* project, while avoiding duplication of work and creating synergies between related initiatives funded by the EU and other national and international players and stakeholders.

This desk research forms the backbone for the activities of the *mENTERing* project to follow in other WPs (especially WP3- Transferring and updating mentoring training core content) by enriching the partners' knowledge and awareness of the training programmes for VET trainers in Europe with a focus on mentoring for entrepreneurship and also of the ways in which *mENTERing* can have a lasting impact on the provision of VET at a national and European level.

2. Research methodology

2.1. The phases of the research

The desk research undertaken in the frames of this work package was structured as follows:

1. Desk research was carried out by partners in related training programmes in project countries (Bulgaria, Greece, the UK), in Europe and internationally. Specific countries were allocated to each partner by the work package leader as defined in the project proposal (see below for the allocation of countries).
2. In the second phase, partners sent all the findings to the WP Leader (i.e. OLN) and the WP Leader drafted the present report based on them. When the draft report was completed, it was distributed among partners for feedback and recommendations in order to safeguard its quality. The report covered VET programmes for VET trainers in general, mentoring training, entrepreneurship training for VET trainers, future actions to be undertaken by the *mENTERing* project.
3. The last phase, the finalising of the report, included the incorporation by the WP leader of partners' comments and suggestions as well as the production of the final version of the report. This version, translated in BG and EL, is submitted to the funding agency, and will be uploaded on the project website for access by interested parties such as VET trainers and VET training providers, entrepreneurs' associations or policy makers.

2.2. Research sources

The project partners used a large variety of sources in order to collect data which are mostly dispersed. In fact, in some cases, data and VET programmes for trainers focusing especially on mentoring or entrepreneurship training could not be identified.

The criteria followed for the implementation of desk research included the:

- aims of the *mENTERing* project;
- target group, i.e. VET trainers;
- end- beneficiaries; i.e. entrepreneurs;
- search terms and key words, such as training for VET trainers, mentoring training, train-the-trainer courses for VET trainers in mentoring for entrepreneurship etc., which represent the aims and focus of this research.

The sources used for the collection of data included:

- the ADAM database;
- VET providers' websites;
- state websites (e.g. Ministries, National Accreditation Organisations);
- organisations providing information on VET training, initial and continuing education of VET trainers, certification in Europe and internationally (i.e. CEDEFOP, OECD).

A specific template (Appendix 1) was used by all partners in order to produce consistent findings.

2.3. Working scheme

The consortium partners involved in this WP undertook mapping of existing content (**i.e. VET programmes for VET trainers**) on: mentoring train-the trainer courses for VET trainers for entrepreneurship at a national level (i.e. BG, EL, UK); and state-of-the-art mentoring training courses and materials in Europe and internationally in order to identify good practices in VET in mentoring courses for VET trainers.

Partners were assigned with research in specific countries as follows:

- **SE BGCPO-branch Pazardjik** (Bulgaria) conducted research in national initiatives on training for VET trainers in BG;
- **BICC-Sandanski** (Bulgaria) conducted research in national initiatives on training for VET trainers in BG;
- **OLN** (Greece) conducted desktop research and mapped relevant projects in Greece and internationally;
- **Inova** (United Kingdom) conducted research on past and present projects, seminars and courses in the UK, and in Europe;

- Scierter (Spain) provided information on projects on mentoring in Spain.

2.4. Expected results

The expected results from this desktop research were the following:

1. the collection of data in project countries (i.e. BG, EL, UK), in Europe and internationally relating to VET programmes for VET trainers with a focus on mentoring and entrepreneurship training;
2. better understanding of the current situation in Europe in relation to IVET or CVET for VET trainers;
3. best practices in training for VET trainers, cooperation among countries and organizations, and recommendations for action so that VET trainers can act as mentors of entrepreneurs and support them in sustaining and growing their business;
4. awareness raising and information of all interested actors (i.e. VET trainers and providers, entrepreneurs' associations, chambers, policy makers) of the possibility of implementing mentoring training for entrepreneurship for VET trainers at a national and EU level in a formal way and through the provision of accredited programmes (based on the principles and provisions of ECVET and EQF) which can lead to a professional qualification.

2.5. Structure of the report

This report has the following structure presenting:

- the MAITRE project that is transferred by the *mENTERing* project
- the VET programmes identified in Bulgaria, Greece and the UK
- the VET programmes identified in other European countries
- VET programmes identified internationally as well as OECD comments and recommendations for VET provision at an international level.

The report concludes by highlighting the main findings and providing recommendations for action at a national and European level so that VET provision for VET trainers in mentoring training for entrepreneurship can be enhanced.

3. Mapping of existing training programmes for VET trainers in project countries and in Europe

The following section presents the existing training programmes for VET trainers that are implemented in project countries and in Europe. For each country the same template was used (See Appendix 1) so as to consistently collect and present information about these programmes.¹

The discussion of training programmes for VET trainers begins with the presentation of the EU co-funded **MAITRE** project, which is transferred by the *mENTERing* project, and then programmes implemented in Bulgaria, Greece, and the UK are presented. Following is a discussion of training programmes in other European countries.

3.1. The MAITRE project

The project '**MAITRE- Mentoring: trAining maTerials and Resources**' (2006) aimed to raise the quality of mentoring programmes by improving their training schemes, techniques and materials that would allow mentors, for the first time, to progress towards an enhancement of profile. In particular the project:

- carried out a study on mentors' training needs in the vocational & educational training (VET) sector and in the business sector;
- defined the skills of the "European Mentor", laying the basis for a European profile of mentors;
- identified and compared training materials as well as the learning schemes available for mentors employed in the VET and business sectors, checking their quality and providing recommendations for future developments of training courses;
- identified, integrated and adapted the most comprehensive training resources and tools for mentors, in order to make an extensive promotion of the best practices identified during the lifetime of the project.

The adapted resources were tested within mentoring programmes so as to validate their effectiveness and impact in terms of quality and benefits.

Its target groups were mentors, organisations delivering, or intending to deliver mentoring programmes (training organisations and schools, firms, SMEs, voluntary organisations). (<http://www.amitie.it/maitre>).

3.2. VET programmes for VET trainers in project countries (Bulgaria, Greece and the United Kingdom)

BULGARIA

In Bulgaria several training programmes were identified for VET trainers as well as general mentoring programmes for entrepreneurs.

¹ This report is accompanied by a database of identified VET programmes.

Top class (2011-2012, ongoing) aimed to provide a platform for sharing experience among entrepreneurs and managers, while at the same time helping them expand their business network. In **Top Class** experienced entrepreneurs act as trainers and mentors to help participants address the challenges faced.

Its target groups are managers and entrepreneurs and the project provides them with monthly practical training, B2B meetings, conferences and exchange of experiences and best practices.

(<http://www.ceed.bg/web/ProgramSites/TopClass/Pages/Program/default.aspx>)

The second project in Bulgaria, '**The "European House of Entrepreneurs" project /EUROENT/'** (2010), aimed to develop a product to identify, train and support young entrepreneurs and to prepare efficient methods for networking focused on international business. The project will encourage pragmatic and practical training, simulations, role plays and sharp projects defined by enterprises and will also offer a series of tutorials based on best practices from the participating countries. One tutorial will consider Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which will be essential for all new entrepreneurs in the future. The project will result in a product called "European House of Entrepreneurs" that educational institutions can use if they choose to work according to the new method.

Its target groups included students & teachers/faculties/citizens/owners of enterprises.

(<http://www.euroent.eu/en.html>)

The other project, '**STARTENT**' (2010-2011), had as an objective to contribute to developing the entrepreneurial culture of young people and to improving entrepreneurship education in Europe.

It had as target groups young people in general, would-be entrepreneurs, new entrepreneurs and academic and non academic entrepreneurship educators.

Its outcomes included a compendium of case studies on real examples of European businesses, successful practices of entrepreneurs operating in the EU and a Manual with methodological guidelines for successful cooperation between educational and business organizations.

(<http://www.startent.eu>).

The project '**Validating Mentoring 2'** (2007) was a European project aiming to promote and mainstream mentoring programmes as a tool for career development of people who are in a disadvantaged position in the open labour market.

Its target groups were disabled people and other kind of disadvantaged individuals. Its outcomes included a procedure for the analysis and prognosis of the VET requirements, evaluation methods as well as teaching material.

(<http://www.vm2-project.eu>)

GREECE

In Greece two projects were identified relating to mentoring training and entrepreneurship. The first project, **'Business Mentors'** (2011-2013), is a 24-month initiative implemented by a consortium including partners from Greece only and is co-funded by the European Commission, under the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry.

The Business Mentors action aims to set up the Greek part of the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs, to:

- boost female entrepreneurship;
- recognize and support the distinctive nature of women's business start-ups;
- ensure sustainability of newly-established business led by women entrepreneurs especially during the first very challenging years of their operation.

The action will rely on voluntary relationships to be established between mentors and mentees. More specifically, the action foresees:

1. the identification of successful (male and female) entrepreneurs across Greece, who will act as mentors, and their training in mentoring techniques, as well as the identification of women entrepreneurs across Greece, who will be engaged as mentees;
2. the set-up, monitoring and fostering of a mentoring relationship between mentors and mentees in Greece.

The Business Mentors partners will provide mentoring training to successful entrepreneurs so that they can act as mentors of women entrepreneurs who have had their business between one and four years and employ one individual. Trainings will be implemented all around Greece so as to achieve a multiplier effect and train as many individuals as possible. The training will cover several aspects of mentoring including the process and relationship of mentoring, the mentor's skills, and the needs of women entrepreneurs in Greece.

Its target groups include existing entrepreneurs, new entrepreneurs, and VET trainers.

(<http://www.businessmentors.gr>)

The other initiative identified in Greece is **'Mentoring training'** and is ongoing. This specialized service refers to a learning process during which selected mentors support new or candidate female entrepreneurs who are only at the beginning of their professional course by transferring them their know-how and expertise. Mentors are usually professionals with a proven record in the labour market; they assist beneficiaries in undertaking their preferred career path and in becoming successful. This service not only reinforces the spirit of entrepreneurship and enhances the competitiveness of the local economy, but also brings the beneficiaries in contact with successful businesspeople and cultivates the quest for self knowledge in order to respond to daily circumstances.

Its target group is mentors of women entrepreneurs.

(<http://www.ergani.gr>).

Another project running in Greece, FRESH START, aims to develop a training course for VET trainers on entrepreneurship as well as mentoring training (the project is further described

further down in the report when findings in Romania are discussed since the leader of the project is a Romanian organisation).

In Greece, further training for VET trainers is mainly provided by EKEPIS (National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training). Trainers can be accredited in training adults by attending a 300-hour programme. This programme, however, is generic and does not focus on mentoring or entrepreneurship training.

UNITED KINGDOM

In the United Kingdom, three projects were identified as most relevant to the themes of *mENTERing* project.

The project '**InterGen - International, Intergenerational Mentoring**' (2010) aimed to create and test new training resources to support Intergenerational Mentoring: one-to-one sessions where older people can spend time with children who need support.

Its target groups were elderly people and children.

(http://www.intergen_project.eu).

'**Fe:male**' was another project in the UK (2010). It aimed to encourage women facing double disadvantage to start up in business through the provision of supportive Mentoring Circles led by experienced facilitators across the UK, Cyprus, Malta and the Netherlands. FE:MALE will provide e-learning opportunities for potential female entrepreneurs to develop personal competencies in soft skills learning areas that will develop confidence and skills to start up in business.

(<http://www.femaleproject.eu>).

The last project in the UK, '**Generic and mentor training for learning support assistants and apprentices (Implementor)**' (2007), aimed to produce a training course for mentors of young people, particularly those who are supporting young people into employment, and to develop the mentoring skills of Apprentices, Learning Support Assistants and those in similar roles supporting disadvantaged, disabled or disengaged children and young people in education and training.

3.3. VET programmes for VET trainers in other European countries

Below are training programmes implemented in other European countries relating to training for VET trainers in several sectors and skills including mentoring and entrepreneurship training.

In Austria, the project '**Womentor**' brought together experienced programme co-ordinators and less experienced co-ordinators of mentoring programmes (particularly focused on women) together to share knowledge and best practice in order to increase the potential quality of programmes provided for both mentors and mentees.

The main aim was to encourage participants to combine new knowledge of these methods and ideas for future activities and implement them in new lifelong learning projects and in particular to:

- share knowledge between experienced and less experienced mentoring co-ordinators;
- increase knowledge of more experienced mentoring co-ordinators in new and more specialist fields of learning;
- understand how lessons learned from working with women in professional spheres (e.g. starting up in business, in universities) could be transferred to the voluntary/community sectors and to other countries across Europe;
- actively encourage virtual mentoring methodology in mentoring for women in member states as well as fruitful networking beyond.

Its target groups were mentors and mentees and outcomes included workshops with target groups.

(<http://www.womentor.eu/projects-4/life-long-learning>).

Another project in Austria, '**Angels for Intercultural and Entrepreneurship Learning**' (2010), aimed to transfer and adapt an innovative cross-cultural and entrepreneurship methodology to be applied in different European countries - with varying cultures, but with similar problems of exclusion and segregation - focused on internal migrants and disadvantaged target groups.

Its target groups included trainers, consultants, training providers, enterprises, NGOs and organizations in the field of vocational education and training.

In Belgium, the project '**VOV's, Lights on Learning Project**' aimed to provide a forum for training and development professionals to discuss trends in learning and development within organisations.

Three learning groups were set up to explore: the links between companies and education institutions; 'talent management and flexible career paths for tomorrow's employees'; 'working and learning': partners considered how learning is implied in day to day work.

The target groups were training and development professionals and stakeholders who discuss the results (government, education departments, universities, labour unions, employer federations, experts, etc.)

(<http://www.vov.be>).

In the Czech Republic, the project '**Training SME coaches and consultants in the Moravia-Silesia region**' (1998) aimed to improve the skills of trainers, consultants and coaches working in or for SMEs in the region; improve the effectiveness of their training activities and broaden their portfolio of training methods and instruments. The needs of trainers working with and for SMEs were previously identified in a survey, involving trainers and consultants in the field.

Its outcomes mainly included training know-how (tools, approaches, methods) and opportunities for networking with other trainers and consultants.
(<http://www.atkm.cz>).

In Cyprus, the project '**women@business**' (2009-2011) aimed to provide young female graduates and young women from an ethnic minority or immigrant background with mentoring and opportunities for internships in enterprises working alongside successful female entrepreneurs for the attainment of valuable first-hand experience. The provision of advice through contacting a telephone help-line also supported the target groups.

Its outcomes included mentoring circles, internships, an e-mentoring zone, and a telephone help-line service.
(<http://www.womenatbusiness.eu>)

In Denmark, the project '**Trainerguide**' (2006) provided support to trainers and strengthened the quality of training contributing to the improvement of VET. The guide is used in companies targeting employees in several sectors.

Its target groups were employers and skilled workers, as well as training coordinators in companies and in-company trainers. Its outcome was a trainer guide consisting of 10 modules.

(<http://www.traenerguide.dk>).

In Finland, the project '**DIALE Deep learning through dialogue**' (2010) concentrated on the transfer of unique and active pedagogical innovation, focusing on vocational teachers, trainers, tutors and the improvement of teacher education. The target group included in-company trainers and teachers working in further education services.

The goal of the DIALE project was to develop the competence of trainers, teachers, teacher trainers and in-company trainers in dialogue through concrete methods.

(<https://wiki.hamk.fi/display/diale/Dialogical+method+cards>).

Another project in Finland, '**A EUROPEAN MENTOR PROGRAMME FOR UNIVERSITY WOMEN – AN INTERCULTURAL STUDY**' (2008), supported the development of innovative activities, services and practices in lifelong learning so as to support women in their daily life and work and enhance interaction through intercultural dialogue by mentoring processes.

Its specific objectives were to:

- exchange experiences and best practises between women, with various experiences and traditions and knowledge;
- organise discussions, seminars and presentations;
- support young graduate women with pathways to improve their knowledge and competence by sharing skills and experience

Its target group(s) included female university/higher education graduates, graduate women in their professional life, female students in university/higher education graduate (min 22 years old).

In France the project '**Validation of acquired experience (VAE)**' has developed a national certificate of professional trainer of adults for CVET trainers.

Trainers can obtain the diploma by attending formal courses or through the validation of their training experience. The validation process provides professionals with at least three years of training experience with a diploma, which recognises their competences and skills. The trainer prepares a portfolio of achievements and work experience and presents it to a committee at an accredited institution. The committee then decides whether to validate the work experience on a partial or complete basis, depending on the person's level of qualifications.

In Germany, '**foraus.de**', the **BIBB online service for the promotion of training personnel in Germany**', was created to respond to the need for learning processes that are faster, more dynamic and adapted to the users' needs in a competitive market. IT-based information and learning environments enable necessary knowledge to be acquired independently of time and place.

Its target group was VET trainers.

Its outcomes provided trainers with an information platform which ensures access to day-to-day training tips; online professional community which provides trainers with the opportunity to discuss with experts; online learning service that offers train-the-trainer opportunities through virtual seminars.

(<http://www.bibb.de>).

Another project in Germany, '**It's time**' (2007) aimed to support "workplace tutoring" and develop useful learning arrangements especially through creating blended-learning modules. The main objectives were to increase the quality and attractiveness of the further training for company VET trainers and enable the permeability between the different educational systems (vocational training, Universities).

(<http://www.workplace-tutor.eu>).

In Iceland, the project '**mentoring in the workplace for VET**' (2011) aims to train employers in developing employees' work based competences. This project will provide a flexible mentoring programme so that employers are better equipped to support learners in the work place.

Its target groups were employers and employees.
(<http://www.workmentor.org>).

In Ireland, the project '**Establishing competence standards for trainers in Ireland**' (2006) aimed to bring innovative elements in the Irish VET context by:

- improving the professional status of trainers;
- supporting quality standards in the provision and delivery of training.

Its target group were CVET trainers in all sectors.

Its outcome was a list of 36 core competences for VET trainers.

(<http://www.calmar.ie>).

In Italy, the project '**EMPOWERMENT THROUGH MENTORING TO PROMOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF REAL WORK EXPERIENCE – EMPIRE**' (2007-2009) was the sequel of MAITRE project. It introduced blended-mentoring as a new concept of quality person-based career development practice. EMPIRE took traditional mentoring practices and blended them with the latest technological advancements to give career counselling and development services the opportunity to adopt mentoring in their ordinary practice without the high cost related to a service totally based on one-to-one mentoring.

Its target groups included free lancers (creative professions), tax consultants, safety officers, unemployed people, and immigrant women.

(<http://www.empire-leonardo.org>)

In Latvia, mentoring is in its early stages of development. The two main mentoring programmes developed so far are:

- the Krajbanka (Banking System) – a mentoring programme to help the integration of new employees in the Client Services department of the bank.
- Lidere – Female mentoring – to support women entrepreneurs in Latvia cities and rural areas. The project is in its second year with around 12 mentor-mentee pairs. It is supported by the Economics Ministry and has a relatively high media profile.

The model was created by the Women's Enterprise Agency in Finland (www.lidere.lv/en_mentorings.html).

In Lithuania, the project '**Mentoring rural women through social networking**' (2009) addressed female rural inhabitants in training and future life long learning activities. We assist females to gain new skills, new qualifications, knowledge and to encourage them to become mentors using the e-learning courses. Women get the possibility to train, mentor colleagues, while mentoring is done through social networking.

Five e-learning courses were produced.

(<http://www.mwsonet.eu/news>)

In Malta, the project '**Train the trainer programme**' aimed to enable in-company trainers as well as those who anticipate taking up a trainer role to give more effective on-the-job

training to new employees. The programme provides participants with the knowledge and skills to assess training needs, design and deliver effective on-the-job training programmes in a motivating manner.

The initiative was initially launched for IVET trainers or employees who wanted to act as trainers in apprenticeship schemes, and has been extended to include CVET trainers.

In Norway, the project '**Vocational pedagogy in enterprises**' (1992) aimed to strengthen pedagogical competences in enterprises, to improve the quality of workplace training, and to enhance the pedagogical skills of workplace instructors and in-company trainers. Against this backdrop, vocational pedagogy in enterprises responds to challenges regarding the role of teachers and trainers.

Its target groups were staff members of professional organisations, training agencies, academic institutions and resource centres; trainers; quality managers and training managers.

(<http://www.hiak.no>).

In Romania, the project **FRESH START** (2010-2012) aims to develop VET trainers' skills and competences in effectively training young offenders on acquiring entrepreneurship skills to start a new business as a sustainable professional path.

The project outcome is a complete online train-the-trainer and mentoring course and an entrepreneurship syllabus for European VET trainers who lack specialised training that enables them to teach entrepreneurship to young offenders, aged 18 to 25.

(<http://www.freshstartproject.eu>).

In Slovakia, the project '**Transition of mentoring supported life-long learning in rural areas**' (2007) aimed to increase the employability of people in rural areas by improving access to training and learning materials. The objective was to transfer existing methodologies for providing lifelong learning - support systems. It produced teaching material for this purpose.

Its target groups were local leaders, entrepreneurs, government representatives, teachers, and active citizens.

(<http://www.vioregio.sk>).

In Spain, the project **REMUC: Red de Estudiantes Mentores en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)** Network of Mentor students at the Complutense University in Madrid is a mentoring programme. The mentors had to be last year University students and be engaged for 1 academic year in the mentoring subject receiving 9 credits for their involvement in the subject.

(<http://www.ucm.es/cont/descargas/documento13141.pdf>)

A second project was **Telefonica mentoring: Ageless Human Resource development programme** based on the "search for talents" in the fields of general management, human resources management and entrepreneurial leadership.

(<http://www.escueladementoring.com/userfiles/ARCHIVOS/ARTICULO%20%20JULIO%20RODRIGUEZ%20PROFESOR%20TO%20C3%91I.pdf>).

Finally, a third project in Spain was **Mentoring Programme Grupo Antolin**: Mentoring programme based on discovering, using all the available experience and talent in the company so as to promote communication for intercultural promotion. It pairs persons with different profiles and without a hierarchical relationship.
(<http://www.grupoantolin.com/%5Carchivos%5Cdocumentos%5Cinformeannual2007.pdf>).

In Turkey, the project '**Raising Awareness & Corporate Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Turkey-RACE**' (2011) aims to enable persons with disabilities to enter the labor market and thus gain more independence and confidence. This will be achieved through adapting and applying existing training materials and tools. Its outcome was a blended training program for managers, VET trainers, VET providers, counselors etc. (<http://www.employdisable.eu>).

4. Training for VET trainers internationally

In Australia, there are ongoing training courses for VET trainers. Two of the projects that have been identified are concerned with **Clients, business development and quality improvement** and include **Administration** and **Budgeting and planning training**. Understanding their present and future capabilities within Clients, Business Development and Quality Improvement is critical knowledge for the VET trainers' professional development.

The ideal result depends mainly on where the VET trainers see themselves as practitioners right now and in which direction they would like to develop. To assist them, the responsible state organisation of Australia provides descriptions of indicative performance at various levels to help guide the process.

The skills in the Administration path include upskilling of the VET trainer in order to:

- handle administrative tasks in a systematic and organised manner
- maintain accurate records of student attendance, progress and enrollment status
- obtain knowledge of the counselling, welfare and career advice services that are available in their organisation for learners.

The Business and Budgeting path upskills them in:

- basic understanding of RTO systems and basic ICT
- learning the policy around the use of ICT for teaching and learning
- growing their knowledge of the use of web/online options, blogging, and SMS messaging.

OECD reports

Further, according to OECD, as the current workforce in VET gets closer to retirement age, and as some teachers and trainers are not adequately equipped to teach because they lack recent workplace experience or because trainers of apprentices and 'in company' trainees often have no specific pedagogical preparation, there is a shortage in VET teachers, trainers and training competencies in many countries.

The VET workforce internationally must be upskilled. In different countries, however, this upskilling takes place to a different extent and in a different way: in Norway, for example, theoretical and practical vocational skills are increasingly taught combined, while in Switzerland general subjects (e.g. sciences) are often adapted to the relevant vocational field (e.g. for electricians) (*Learning for Jobs: OECD Policy Review of Vocational Education and Training, Initial Report, Chapter 3, Effective Teachers and Trainers, OECD, 2009*).

As OECD recommends, VET trainers can act as mentors of apprentices and in this way make the apprenticeship experience more productive (*Learning for Jobs, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training Australia, 2008*).

The recommendations that OECD makes for teachers and trainers are the following:

- adequate recruitment of teachers and trainers for VET providers should be undertaken while ensuring that they are prepared for the needs of the labour market;
- upskilling of trainers and supervisors of trainees in the workplace;
- facilitation of a partnership between VET providers and the labour market in order to support VET teachers and trainers in spending time in industry to update their knowledge while enhancing their skills and competences;
- upgrading of the VET system in order to achieve quality and consistency in the provision of training

(Learning for Jobs: OECD Policy Review of Vocational Education and Training. Initial Report, OECD, 2009).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a general conclusion summarising the aims and findings of this desktop research as well as includes recommendations about ways in which to improve the training provided to VET trainers in general and specifically training provided on mentoring for entrepreneurship.

5.2. Aims of the research

The aim of this research was to explore and map previous work undertaken in Bulgaria, Greece and the UK as well as in Europe and internationally in order to identify training programmes for VET trainers with a focus on mentoring training for entrepreneurs.

The consortium partners conducted research for available training programmes for VET trainers in mentoring training for entrepreneurs with the aim to take into consideration useful related knowledge and experience so as to develop new required skills and competences for VET trainers in order for them to further mentor entrepreneurs.

5.3. Main findings relating to expected results

From the research in project countries and in Europe, it became obvious that the approach to training VET trainers is not homogeneous. Different Member States implement different training for VET trainers and to different degrees and frequency.

Most projects about VET trainers' training (general, mentoring, entrepreneurship) are co-funded by the European Commission. National initiatives are limited or in some cases do not exist (e.g. in Greece). Although training is carried out with VET trainers, in some cases no

information was identified that such training can lead to accreditation and formal qualifications in a systematic way.

Out of the training programmes for VET trainers that were identified in project countries and in Europe, the following points can be highlighted:

The **MAITRE** project, on which *mENTERing* is based in order to develop a customized training course for VET trainers so that they can become mentors of entrepreneurs, aimed to raise the quality of mentoring programmes by improving training schemes, techniques and materials that would allow mentors to progress towards an enhancement of profile. The project focused on mentoring training for VET trainers as well as for business people.

The projects identified in **Bulgaria** aim to promote and mainstream mentoring as a tool for career development of people who are in a disadvantaged position in the open labour market or people with disabilities. They also promote entrepreneurship to a large extent through customised training offered to entrepreneurs. No information was found as to what extent these initiatives are supported by the state in order to provide VET trainers with the opportunity for formal qualifications.

In **Greece** the training of VET trainers in mentoring is not widespread. In the national accreditation system (i.e. through EKEPIS) there is no training which aims to upskill VET trainers in mentoring skills and competences. Despite the important role of training and development for VET trainers, such training is not systematically carried out in Greece and this minimises the opportunities VET trainers have for initial or continuing professional development as well as the extent to which they can support entrepreneurs.

The projects identified in the **UK** relate to mentoring training for the general population, for women entrepreneurs, employers, learning support assistants and apprentices. The use of mentoring methodology seems to be quite widespread in the UK for different target groups and for entrepreneurs more specifically. All the identified projects can provide helpful insights to the *mENTERing* consortium during the design of the VET trainers' mentoring training.

Regarding the rest of Europe, training programmes for VET trainers, mentoring or entrepreneurship training covered almost all of the Member States since each EU co-funded project involved several of them either as co-ordinators or as partners.

Training programmes that were identified, targeted VET trainers, teachers, tutors and also other target groups (i.e. entrepreneurs, employers and employees, managers, disadvantaged individuals, children) and focused on:

- training VET trainers in entrepreneurship and mentoring
- mentoring existing and future entrepreneurs with some of them focusing on women entrepreneurs
- mentoring training for entrepreneurs
- improving dialogue skills
- mentoring individuals at different stages of their professional development

- blended-mentoring as a new concept of quality person-based career development practice
- training employers as trainers and mentors of their employees on the job
- training cultural managers to foster creative thinking, entrepreneurship thinking competence supporting the matching between cultural managers expectations and the labour market
- mentoring rural women through social networking.

5.4 Action to be undertaken by the *mENTERing* project

The situation described above in relation to train-the-trainer courses on mentoring training for entrepreneurs identifies a gap and stresses the need for the implementation of the *mENTERing* project which aims to provide a customised training to VET trainers in mentoring skills and competences, both face-to-face and online, so that they can become mentors of entrepreneurs under the main objective to achieve a multiplier effect in the project countries and also at an EU27 and LLP+33 level.

mENTERing will be a main contribution in the area of VET trainers' continuing education and development and will benefit both VET trainers and entrepreneurs to the maximum by upskilling VET trainers in the mentoring process and enabling them to support entrepreneurs.

mENTERing will undertake specific activities so as to produce a complete blended train-the-trainer course for VET trainers in mentoring skills and competences for entrepreneurs. These activities will be based on the findings of this desktop research as well as on the data of the primary research (i.e. a survey with VET trainers and interviews with experts) to be conducted in Bulgaria and Greece *mENTERing* will:

- transfer the tested training material of the MAITRE project and develop a train-the-trainer course on mentoring skills and competences;
- develop new material on entrepreneurship;
- localise and translate the entire adapted and developed course into project languages (EN, BG, EL);
- test the course in BG and EL and implement updates.

5.5. Recommendations

The future of the continuing education and training for VET trainers, and specifically training helping them undertake new roles emerging for them in the labour market, such as that of mentors for entrepreneurs, requires that consistent VET provision is implemented by Member States affecting both the national and European labour market.

Work needs to be undertaken by national institutions and official authorities with a more long-term orientation instead of relying only on projects with duration between 6 to 24

months, according to the institution organizing it, the parties involved, the country specifics on entrepreneurship etc.

Also, more cross-country collaboration is required so as to share best practices and avoid duplication of work already undertaken.

Finally, it should be beneficial that such training programmes for VET trainers be designed based on the principles, provisions and rules of ECVET and EQF leading to accreditation and official qualifications with the aim to provide VET trainers with more access to national and European labour markets.

Appendix 1

The template used as a guide by all partners so as to produce consistent findings in all researched countries.

mENTERing Inducing VET trainers with mentoring skills to boost entrepreneurial growth

WP 2	: Research and Interactive Needs Analysis (Desktop research template)
Aim:	Desk research in national initiatives on mentoring training for VET trainers in BG and EL, and in state-of-the-art mentoring training courses and materials in Europe and internationally.
Partners involved:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLN Learning (research in state-of-the-art mentoring training courses and materials -in EL and internationally) • BGCPO-Pazardzhik (research in national initiatives on mentoring training for VET trainers in BG) • BICC-Sandanski (research in national initiatives on mentoring training for VET trainers in BG) • INOVA (research in state-of-the-art mentoring training courses and materials- at a European level)
Deadline:	20/01/2012

Research Template Project/ Initiative/Course Information

Country	
Title	
Year	
Objectives	
Target group(s)	
Partnership/ Responsible organisation	
Outcomes	
Contact details	
Website	