

# Effects of an Adaptive Mentoring Program on Mentors' Mentoring Practices and Novice Teachers' Perception of Mentoring

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\*\*\*\* Abstract ECER \*\*\*\*

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Numerous studies show positive effects of mentoring on the mentored teachers (e.g. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Kraft et al., 2018). The quality of the mentoring offered is important here. Crasborn et al. (2011) and Richter et al. (2013) point out that the selection of a suitable mentoring approach is a prerequisite for positive effects on the prospective teachers. The fit between mentoring practices and the needs of the mentored teachers is therefore a quality indicator for the offered mentoring. In disadvantaged schools, it is particularly crucial to promote the professional development of teachers (Hall et al., 2020). A mentoring approach that addresses the specific needs of trainee teachers could potentially reduce teacher shortages and improve teaching quality. The research project NEST (Novice Educator Support and Training) implements a mentoring program in seven European education systems (e.g. Catalonia, Bulgaria, Romania) aimed at teachers in disadvantaged schools and tries to ensure better support for the needs of mentored teachers through adaptive mentor training. The paper examines the following research questions: 1. Do the mentors' practices change after the first training period (and during the second school year)? 2. Is there a better fit between mentoring practices and mentee needs in the novice teacher intervention group compared to the control group? A total of 229 mentors took part in the surveys on the overall project (179 of them in the intervention group, who received mentor training). The mentors in the intervention group were surveyed three times (before the training, after the first and second project year) using online questionnaires. Furthermore, a total of 1,603 beginning teachers (957 were in control groups with and without mentors) were surveyed twice (at the beginning and end of the 2021/22 and 2022/23 school years). Among other things, all groups were asked about mentoring practices. The items on mentoring styles used were based on Crasborn et al. (2008; 2011). To investigate whether the mentors' practices change over time and how well the beginning teachers assess the fit between the practices used by their mentors and their own needs, t tests were calculated. For mentors, we found an overall tendency towards a decrease in directive practices and an increase in facilitative practices. Furthermore, the intervention group is more satisfied with the fit of the practices than the respective control cohort if a significant change in the practices of the mentors was also visible during the time period.