

This manual offers guidelines and best practice for establishing mentoring schemes for women academics in Europe. It is based upon a systematic comparison between four existing mentoring programmes at universities in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. This approach provides an important basis for transferring expert knowledge on mentoring to countries where there is as yet no mentoring scheme, as demonstrated in the example of Bulgaria.

Through these case studies the readers are given examples of best practice in how to design, implement, and prepare the ground for mentoring programmes under specific conditions at local, regional, and national levels.

In its final part, the manual also provides a framework for how mentoring schemes can be connected throughout Europe by the transnational network eument-net in order to realize gender equality in academia more effectively.

# Establishing Mentoring in Europe

Strategies for the promotion of women academics and researchers

# **Establishing Mentoring in Europe**

**Strategies for the promotion of women academics and researchers**

**A guideline manual**


**edited by Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti**

**on behalf of eument-net**

This publication stems from the project “eument-net – Building a European Network of Academic Mentoring Programmes for Women Scientists” (2007–2008).

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Fribourg 2008

 **eument-net**

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*Publisher and editor*

eument-net  
c/o Service de l'égalité  
University Fribourg  
Av. de l' Europe 20  
CH-1700 Fribourg  
Switzerland

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*English copy-editing*

Julene Knox, London, UK

*Design*

Vlatka Nikolic-Onea (machessa), Konstanz, Germany

*Printing house*

REMA-Print, Vienna, Austria

ISBN 978-2-9700611-0-6



eument-net is a project funded by the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The information contained in this manual does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.

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## Towards a European platform of mentoring schemes: Introduction to eument-net

**Helene Füger, Herta Nöbauer, and Evi Genetti**

### Promoting women's careers across Europe by means of mentoring schemes

In light of its ambitious goal set out in Lisbon to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy in the world, the European Union faces numerous challenges to use and develop its potential in a positive and sustainable way.<sup>1</sup> It is widely recognized that this will in part also depend in a decisive way on the effective promotion of equal opportunities and the realization of an adequate integration of women into decision-making positions in the realms of research and science.

Since the 1990s, mentoring schemes have been among the most prominent instruments established in European countries to promote women in higher education and research. These programmes provide important new support structures for women researchers in their early career. They also help to foster institutional change and innovation in academic career development. However, a closer look reveals that in many cases such mentoring programmes are not (yet) secured on a long-term basis and their position within academic institutions often remains precarious. Moreover, in many countries of the European Union, mentoring programmes for the promotion of women in academia and research are altogether non-existent.

When working to meet the challenges and to realize the integration of the European Research Area it is useful to draw on the knowledge

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1 This chapter is the result of discussions among all participants in the eument-net project. Beside the authors mentioned above these are: Aline Robert and Muriel Besson (Réseau romand); Nikolina Sretenova (BAS); Dagmar Höppel, Christine Brunn, and Lisa Peschel (MuT); Sabine Lask and Louise Graf (Mentoring Deutschschweiz).

acquired by academic mentoring programmes promoting gender equality in academia and research and to engage in a debate about the role and potential of mentoring to promote women researchers at a European level. We therefore have to ask how mentoring programmes can best participate in structuring the European Research Area and promote mentoring as an effective tool for addressing and strengthening the position of women in academia and research in Europe, especially in countries where mentoring is still rare, such as in southern and eastern Europe.

### Connecting people and mentoring schemes in Europe: Aims and activities of eument-net

Supported by the 6th European Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6)<sup>2</sup> within the specific programme for Science and Society, the project eument-net – Building a European Network of Mentoring Programmes for Women Scientists – in January 2007 began to lay the groundwork for a transnational network of mentoring programmes promoting women academics and researchers. Five institutions from European and associate countries participate in the project consortium. Among them, four have long-standing experience with mentoring for women researchers in their early career. The partners are:

- Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes, University of Fribourg, Switzerland [coordinator];
- Mentoring Programme muv, University of Vienna, Austria;
- Institute for Philosophical Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia;
- Mentoring Programme MuT, Universities of Mannheim and Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany;
- Mentoring Deutschschweiz, University of Berne, Switzerland.

As its name suggests, eument-net describes itself as a European network of academic mentoring programmes promoting women in the early stages of their career in academia or research (doctoral studies and beyond). Within the context of eument-net, mentoring is de-

2 [http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/index_en.cfm) (Access: 13-05-08).

defined as a supportive relationship outside institutional hierarchies, established within the framework of a formal mentoring programme, between a woman researcher (a mentee) who wishes to engage and gain experience in a specific field, and a senior academic or researcher (a mentor) who is ready to share their specific experience and knowledge related to the mentee's needs, or between peers with the aim of fostering the mentee's or the peer's personal and career development in academia and research.

*By developing a European network of mentoring programmes for women in academia and research, eument-net aims to:*

- foster the exchange of experience and best practice among mentoring programmes;
- highlight the role of mentoring as a tool for the promotion of women and gender equality in academia and research and for the transfer of knowledge and expertise;
- facilitate cooperation among programmes and the promotion of new mentoring services and activities;
- help to put mentoring for women in academia and research on national and European science policy agendas.

These aims have provided the basis for the activities undertaken during the project phase of eument-net. Between January 2007 and September 2008, the partners of the eument-net consortium have organized their activities along four main lines.

*Assessment of experiences with the implementation of mentoring programmes and with strategies of institutionalization, taking into account the impact of specific contexts:* The partners have made detailed comparisons of their mentoring programmes and strategies of institutionalization, assessing similarities and differences, as well as the relevance and impact of the contexts in which these programmes are implemented. In particular, the situation of the Bulgarian partner in the consortium has been discussed in relation to these experiences, highlighting specific needs and dimensions to be taken into account in knowledge transfer. The main product related to the first aim is this eument-net guideline manual, which has been directed by the Austrian partner. It reflects on the manifold experiences and various strategies of the partners in establishing mentoring schemes in their

respective institutions and countries and gives instructions for designing and implementing mentoring programmes for women in academia and research.

Within the framework of this first line of action, the Bulgarian partner has also conducted in-depth research among early career researchers in Bulgaria, as part of the efforts to prepare the ground for the implementation of future mentoring schemes for promising women researchers.

*Definition of sustainable structures of cooperation among mentoring programmes at a European level:* Mentoring programmes have to take into account the increasing internationalization of the academic landscape and labour market for research. European science policy makes an important contribution to shaping this new research space and its rules. Therefore, the second line of action of the eument-net project phase has concerned the elaboration of legal structures for the eument-net network, which links mentoring programmes in Europe around common goals and a set of international, cooperative activities. In order to assess the landscape of mentoring programmes in Europe and evaluate expectations of and interest in a European network, the eument-net consortium has conducted a survey among European stakeholders and coordinators of mentoring programmes and established minimum quality standards.

*Organizing debates and discussions between mentoring programmes and stakeholders in the promotion of women's position in academia and research:* Findings and results of the eument-net project have been debated with other mentoring programmes and stakeholders in the promotion of women's careers in academia and research at several international and European conferences.<sup>3</sup> For eument-net, the organi-

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 3 "The Future of Mentoring Programmes. Linking Programmes, Experience and People in Europe", eument-net international conference, University of Berne, Switzerland, 18 April 2008. "Start-Up of New Mentoring Initiative for the Balkan Region and Strengthening the Visibility of Women Scientists as Role Models for Early Career Women Academics and Researchers", eument-net international conference, Bulgarian Academy of Science, Bulgaria, 16 May 2008.

At the workshop on mentoring at the 5th European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education, Berlin, 28–31 August 2007, eument-net participated and organized an expert meeting. Project results and the network were also presented at the epws annual conference "Women Shaping Science" in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 5–7 June 2008.

zation of conferences, debates, and workshops for coordinators and researchers involved in mentoring programmes as well as other stakeholders is considered an important field of activity in pursuit of its aims in the future.

*Creation of an electronic platform and a European database of mentoring programmes as a tool for the dissemination of knowledge and experience:* A fourth line of activity during the eument-net project phase has consisted in the elaboration of the eument-net database and platform of mentoring programmes. The platform with its database is designed to become the virtual home of the European network of mentoring programmes and an effective and dynamic tool for the exchange, dissemination, and transfer of knowledge on mentoring.

Providing favourable conditions in higher education and research for women researchers to be able to wholly participate in and contribute to the areas of science and research and decision-making processes therein is a prerequisite for a sustainable development of European societies – an aim of the 7th Framework Programme.<sup>4</sup> Strengthening the role of women in scientific research is thus a core issue to be targeted by European and national science policies alike, in order to allow experiences of good practice to be discussed and adapted to the specific needs of stakeholders in all European and associate countries.

We hope that our initiative will stimulate many more mentoring measures at the local but also transnational levels as central instruments for the promotion of women in academia and research.

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 4 [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html) (Access: 13-05-08).

# Establishing mentoring in Europe:

## Introduction to the guideline manual

**Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti**

Since the early 1990s a remarkable number of mentoring schemes have been established in academia in many European countries. Their implementation within academic institutions has been recognized as one significant tool for empowering women in science and for networking female scientists in order to further women's participation in and integration into the academic field. As such, these schemes have also proved to be an important tool for the enhancement of gender equality and the mainstreaming prescribed in European and national equal opportunities policies. Hence, among the more specific and most crucial aims of these programmes is the advancement of women's academic careers by providing them access to promotional relationships, important professional networks, and, through these, to the necessary skills and often hidden knowledge on mechanisms for successful academic careers.

However, in many regions and countries women do not yet have access to such opportunities. Therefore, five higher education institutions in Europe have decided to establish a transnational framework of mentoring programmes by means of the EU-funded project "eu-ment-net". For the project's workpackage 1, on which this manual is based, the project partners defined their activities and aim as "Knowledge transfer on mentoring as a measure to enhance the advancement of women scientists and their position in science governance across Europe".

Accordingly, we have collected, intensely exchanged, and structured our diverse experiences and expert knowledge in order to distribute guidelines on and best practice for mentoring. These are presented in this manual and hopefully will provide useful conceptual and or-

ganizational guidelines to preparing the ground for and establishing professional mentoring schemes Europe-wide.

The manual addresses all the diverse individuals and bodies concerned with women scientists' support, career guidance, personal development, equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming policy, and diversity management at regional, national, and European levels alike. As a matter of course, these guidelines are also directed to all people interested in academic mentoring more generally and especially to potential mentors and mentees.

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### Structure of the manual

This manual is the result of knowledge exchange among the partners of the participating mentoring programmes and of the transfer of knowledge to one participating country, Bulgaria, where there is as yet no mentoring scheme but where the ground for preparing formal mentoring structures has been laid. A systematic exchange of similarities and differences between existing mentoring programmes and an elaboration of the structural contexts in which they are situated together provide the ground for structuring best practice as presented in the following. Each part can also be read separately, according to readers' interests in the specific organizational stages of establishing mentoring schemes.

In Part I we provide a detailed insight into the diversity of designs of mentoring programmes for women academics and researchers as they were discussed during the first workshop of workpackage 1 in Vienna (in May 2007). We present four different mentoring programme designs in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. We show their similarities and differences so that readers may better understand which design may work best with specific conceptual approaches and organizational and financial backgrounds at the local, regional, and national levels.

Part II is the result of a detailed comparison of the structural and institutional contexts of the participating countries, which was also elaborated during the first workshop of workpackage 1. Based on a mapping of the European/national/regional contexts for mentoring

schemes, it discusses critically those factors that are likely to support or hinder the development of mentoring programmes. In this way, Part II provides an outline for stakeholders to map the specific situation in their own country or institution.

Part III highlights in more detail the project partners' particular experiences of and strategies for implementing mentoring programmes. While the mapping in Part II reflects more generally the supportive and limiting factors for mentoring programmes at diverse levels, this part clarifies the very specific ways in which the partners in countries like Austria, Germany, and Switzerland have used their national, regional, and local contexts in shaping the processes for developing and implementing mentoring programmes. In the Bulgarian case study, on the other hand, it is shown how through an initial study of the needs and demands of early stage women researchers, a four-step strategy for implementing a mentoring scheme has been developed.

Finally, Part IV highlights another core goal of eument-net in its improvement of the European mentoring landscape: namely, building a European network of mentoring programmes. In order to assess the landscape of mentoring programmes and evaluate the expectations of and the interest in a European network, the eument-net consortium has conducted an extensive survey. The results of this survey, which indicate a great interest in a European network, are presented briefly here. In addition, the electronic platform with its database, which constitutes the virtual home of the eument-net network, is presented. The part concludes with the future prospects of eument-net as an important association for connecting mentoring schemes throughout Europe.

We wish to conclude this introduction by expressing our deep gratitude to three people who have contributed greatly to the editing of this manual: to Rahel Baumgartner from the Vienna mov team, who has consistently supported us in terms of organization and her critical comments on the texts from an "outsider", that is non-mentoring, expert perspective; to Julene Knox, who has brought to perfection the whole manual with her most careful English editing; and last but not least to our graphic designer Vlatka Nikolic-Onea for her creative manual design and flexible cooperation.

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# Part I

## Designing mentoring programmes for women academics



## Introduction to Part I

### Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti

In Part I we provide a detailed insight into the diversity of designs of mentoring programmes for women academics. The four programmes presented below are involved in eument-net and are examples of best practice. All these models, however, had already been developed according to the participants' needs prior to the eument-net project. In order to facilitate comparison between the programmes' designs, we structure the following presentations around certain key issues and chronological stages, which can be identified as characteristic of the organization of formal mentoring schemes in academia, and these are also highlighted in the headings of this part. These criteria and stages must be understood as representing quality standards for formal mentoring schemes in general, while at the same time they can be identified more specifically as standards applied in the day-to-day practice of the respective programmes. As characteristics of successful management, they can also be seen as best practice for future mentoring programmes in Europe.

## muv – mentoring university vienna

### Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti

The University of Vienna was the first university in Austria to organize a mentoring programme for women academics. Representing one crucial measure among others for strengthening gender equality in academia, muv (mentoring university vienna) is characterized by its innovative design and structural approach to career development. It has become a role model for other universities in Austria. This formal mentoring scheme is based on cross-disciplinary small-group mentoring and comprises four cycles planned to run at the University of Vienna over the period between 2000 and 2009. Altogether, 160 women academics have participated as mentees and 40 women and men professors as mentors during these cycles. While in its earlier stages muv was funded by the European Social Fund, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the University of Vienna until 2006, it has been completely funded by university financial resources since 2007.

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### Understanding of mentoring in muv

Feminist research on higher education together with engaged individual actors had a significant impact on the initiation and conception of the first mentoring programme for women academics at the University of Vienna. According to research, mentoring practices are very important for academic careers. However, as these studies critically demonstrate, mentoring in its traditional form is based on exclusively informal and individual relationships which traditionally exclude "junior" female academics from career support and promotion in favour of "junior" male academics, who are often conceived of as "those who are more similar" than women or "others" to those – mostly men – in higher positions and with more power. A number of these studies recommend that alternative and more structurally oriented mentoring approaches and gender equality measures must be developed.

Following critical analyses of higher education, particularly in Austria, *muv* understands mentoring primarily as a “politicized” practice (Schliesselberger/Strasser 1998). Such practice implies, among other things, a critical reflection on the manifold power and dependency relationships in academia, on the institutional rules of the game, and on the existing norms and beliefs about and of scientific soundness, performance, and reward (cf. Schliesselberger/Strasser 1998; Bagilholle/Goode 2001). Building up advancement and equality measures on the basis of multi-personal instead of unilateral relationships is considered an important strategy for intervening in such structures of personal dependency and gender inequality (Nöbauer 2002; Nöbauer/Zuckerhut 2002). According to the authors, three basic orientations should specifically be taken into account for future programmes. First, programmes should simultaneously be extended both horizontally as well as vertically; secondly, they should aim for institutional permeability between those who are “inside” and those who are “outside”<sup>1</sup> or on the margins of the university; and thirdly, traditional structures should continue to be used as much as possible, but at the same time new strategies and structures pertaining to the promotion of women need to be developed and applied in a more forceful manner (Nöbauer/Zuckerhut 2002: 126).<sup>2</sup>

Against this background of a “politicized” practice, *muv* has a mainly structural-strategic mentoring approach combined with the aim of developing the personal skills of the mentees. This means that conceptually *muv* understands social relationships to be of a structural nature and to include power relations which need to be constantly and critically reflected on. In the same vein, it is also committed to strategies which aim at intervening in and transforming discriminatory patterns in academia. In addition, a more content- and subject-related, disciplinary based exchange of academic knowledge is important. Based on this structural approach, *muv* also finally addresses questions about how a mentoring programme can contribute more specifically to a cultural and structural change in academia. As described in Part III of this

1 “Inside” and “outside” signifies the distinction between, on the one hand, those academics who have a position at the university and who have rights and privileges linked to their positions; and, on the other hand, academics who have only time-limited contracts with the university and considerably fewer rights and privileges and who are “outside” or on the institutional periphery.

2 All translations of quotations are by the authors of this chapter.

volume (on “implementation”) *muv* is embedded in the wider context of gender equality policies and human resources.

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### Target groups

The target groups comprise the mentees and the mentors. Both can come from all disciplines within the University of Vienna. In terms of mentees, *muv* has three special target groups: female PhD candidates, post-PhD, and Habilitation candidates. They may have distinct degrees of institutionalized membership or work contracts. As for the mentors, they are women and men with a full or associate professorship at the University of Vienna.

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### Size and duration

Formal mentoring relationships and accompanying measures are linked within *muv* but differ in their duration and may vary also in the number of participants. During each cycle of *muv*, 40 mentees and 10 mentors take part. They are organized into 10 mentoring groups, each usually consisting of one mentor and four mentees. Each formal cycle runs for at least two years.

The accompanying measures comprise various opportunities for the mentees and mentors of each cycle. Unlike the mentoring relationships, the opportunities are not binding or continuous. They are described below in more detail.

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### Type and form of mentoring

Taking a critical stance on the traditionally informal, individual promotion mechanisms and academic relationships mentioned above, *muv* builds on cross-disciplinary small-group mentoring based upon same- and cross-gender mentoring relationships. This organizational form focuses simultaneously on both vertical and horizontal promotional relationships: It underscores the relevance of promotion and support not only by those with higher status, but also those of the same status (peers). In doing so, it significantly extends the potential for supportive

networking. In addition, this cross-disciplinary group mentoring makes it possible to reveal the hidden mechanisms for academic success and to render visible a whole range of discrepancies in academia. This allows all participants – including the mentors – to reflect critically not only on differences and similarities between and within the different university departments and disciplines, but also on the distinct degrees of integration of women academics and of access to important resources that are closely linked to the hierarchies between disciplines. As shown by the first evaluation report (Buchinger/Gschwandtner 2005) these critical reflections within the mentoring groups result, among other things, in a substantial “acceleration” in the accumulation of individual experience and knowledge on the part of mentees due to access to “hidden” information about academic careers, and this also leads to the de-individualization<sup>3</sup> of experiences.

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## Goals

Goals are defined by *muv* on three distinct but interlinked levels:

- *Mentee-oriented goals*: Fast-tracking career paths by providing access to new informal or formal professional networks; “experience acceleration” through access to informal and formal knowledge; de-individualization of women’s experiences of gendered disadvantages within academia; promotion of cross-/interdisciplinary teamwork and cooperation; reaching the next level of qualification through motivation and support.
- *Mentor-oriented goals*: Profile creation for cross-/interdisciplinary team processes; transfer of mentoring skills to teaching courses and lectures (especially to MA and PhD candidate seminars) in order to establish a more effective promotion and support culture at the university; heightening awareness of gender structures; strengthening experience and promoting early stage researchers.
- *Institution-oriented goals*: Implementation of formalized mentoring for early career women academics and scientists as a regular part of the career development programme of the University of Vienna; institutional recognition of mentors’ activities; increase in mentoring skills and tools within university teaching.

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<sup>3</sup> De-individualization refers to comprehending the structural conditions of social relationships in academia and of gender as a social category implying gendered experiences.

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## Required resources

The institutional setting of a mentoring programme is crucial for its establishment and success. Right from the start, the Center for Gender Equality of the University of Vienna has successfully organized *muv*, and due to it being formally headed by the then Vice-Rector for Personnel and the Advancement of Women, responsibility for *muv* fell to the Rectorate. Currently, *muv* is overseen by the Rector himself.

The coordination team of *muv* comprises two part-time employees plus the operational head, who is one of the directors of the Center for Gender Equality.

As already mentioned, *muv* was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the University of Vienna between 2000 and 2006. However, since 2007 it has been completely funded by university resources, and this will continue until 2009.

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## Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships

As *muv* is based upon cross-disciplinary small-group mentoring, one of the most fundamental and sensitive stages is the careful organization of small mentoring groups by the coordination team. This requires several preliminary stages which also need to be carefully prepared. They are: 1) selecting the mentees, 2) selecting the mentors, 3) matching mentees and mentors, 4) separately training mentors and mentees, 5) establishing commitments between the participants, and 6) preparing the formal end of the mentoring relationships.

*Selection of mentees*: After a defined period during which potential mentees are invited to apply, they complete the detailed application form (including a section on their motivation for participating) and send in a CV. The coordination team then carefully selects the mentees according to a range of criteria. There are two concomitant levels of selection criteria for mentees: First, there must be a broad disciplinary representation of mentees combined with a balanced representation

of the three target groups mentioned above; and secondly, at the individual level, motivation to pursue an academic career, the need to develop specific skills, and the desire for cross- and same-disciplinary cooperation and access to particular mentors according to the mentees' current career steps are all influential.

For the most sensitive part of the process, that is, composing the peer groups, it is especially important to pay attention to keeping a balance within each group regarding the mentees' institutional positions, their disciplinary backgrounds, their career steps, and their focus on specific needs and skills.

*Selection of mentors:* After a preliminary proposal for group composition the mentors are, at more or less the same time, recruited by the coordination team according to the mentees' wishes, for example, regarding the mentors' gender and/or the mentees' specific needs. Besides the mentees' wishes for a particular mentor, other selection criteria are important. Among them are the secure status of a full or associate professorship at the University of Vienna, international experience, membership in important academic networks, positions on university committees, experience with cross-disciplinary work, and, last but not least, a positive attitude to women's promotion and gender equality as well as a readiness to support "junior" researchers in a formal mentoring programme.

*Matching process:* After the agreement of all mentees to the composition of their peer groups and to the choice of mentors, and after the assignment of the mentors to their groups (which are presented to the mentors anonymously during the recruitment procedure), the sensitive matching process is complete. In order to avoid possible conflicts of interest, it is especially important that mentees are not matched with mentors who are their PhD supervisors or superiors within their department or institution.

*Training courses:* The next stage consists of initial training courses, which are held separately for the mentors and the mentees. In these courses, all participants are instructed in detail on the whole programme, their specific roles, their respective responsibilities and duties, how to organize the mentoring meetings, discuss expectations and define goals, and, finally, they learn about the benefits of being

a mentor and a mentee. It is only after these courses that the formal mentoring relationships can begin.

*Commitments:* muv also defines a framework of obligatory commitments that the participants need to meet. These agreements can be written or oral. They comprise a minimum of 10 hours of meetings between the mentors and their mentoring group for each term. Apart from that, the groups can choose whether they want to extend the relationships by email contact and/or meet more often – and in fact many do so. Each group must also write short minutes of each meeting and submit them to the programme coordinators. As each group must state certain short- and long-term goals, the minutes have also proved to be especially useful for mentoring groups in regulating their own progress in relation to group and individual agreements and goals. All other activities and opportunities are recommended but not obligatory.

*Formal end of mentoring relationships:* At the beginning and again towards the end of the programme, the coordinators propose specific guidelines to the mentoring groups for handling the formal end of mentoring relationships. The groups are advised to set up a formal final meeting in which they reflect on their activities and progress. After participation in the programme and despite the end of formal mentoring relationships, several mentees and mentors usually decide to continue with informal meetings.

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### Accompanying measures

Apart from the mentoring relationships at the core of the programme, muv also provides accompanying measures for mentees and mentors in order to offer as much support and coaching as possible. These include a gender training course for mentors in order to promote gender sensitization and gender equality in academia; diverse seminars on specific presentation skills for mentees (such as performance styles, strategies for solving conflicts within hierarchical contexts and for making applications); coaching for mentors; if required, supervision for all groups in order to clarify unclear or conflictual situations; information seminars (for example, on funding, taxes); the evaluation of the mentoring programme; and, last but not least, an institutional recognition system for the activities of mentors.

### Institutional recognition of mentors' activities

Committed as it is to a structural approach to mentoring, muv sees the institutional recognition of mentors' activities as critical to the establishment and implementation of a mentoring programme (here see also National Academy of Sciences et al. 1997). It is fundamental for the development and extension of an academic culture of promotion and support. Developing both symbolic and material forms of recognition for the (normally) unpaid duties of mentors has therefore been a prime focal point of muv from the very start. Despite numerous institutional obstacles and controversial discussions in muv's initial period, a specific concept of recognition was successfully realized: All mentors receive assistance from additional "tutors" (in German-speaking academia these are usually advanced or MA students who assist professors in their teaching courses) whom the university pays for the duration of the mentoring programme. With this student assistance, the time professors invest in the mentoring programme is replaced and becomes a central "object of exchange"; thus it becomes a significant symbol in the institutional recognition of mentoring activities. The fact that university management recognizes the work of mentors also leads to an overall and significant strengthening of the mentoring programme. To this day, this has not only proved to be motivating for the mentors in particular, but also to be a quite sensible continuation of the promotion of advanced students and early stage researchers beyond the formal mentoring programme.

### Information policy, communication, and networking

Information policy and exchange of knowledge on mentoring play a most significant role for and in muv. In fact, this has contributed to strengthening its publicity and recognition remarkably. It directs its intensive public relations activities to all relevant organizational units of the University of Vienna and to the Austrian media. In addition, it establishes strong ties and networks with mentoring programmes in Austria and other countries by exchanging knowledge on mentoring through individual contact, conferences, and publishing.

Furthermore, muv has become an important contact point for advising other academic/scientific institutions interested in establishing

formal mentoring schemes and, more generally, informing people interested in mentoring. In this regard, muv has already supported a significant number of academic institutions in establishing mentoring programmes, and, moreover, it has become an important role model for other mentoring programmes at Austrian universities.

### Evaluation of muv

The first and second cycles of muv were extensively evaluated by external scientific teams using qualitative and quantitative methods. Not only were the evaluation results important for the quality assurance of muv and its legitimation for institutionalization, but equally for improving and adapting the programme appropriately. Summing up the general results, the type of cross-disciplinary small-group mentoring based on same- and cross-gender mentoring relationships has in many respects proved to be very much accepted by and successful for most participants. To a similar degree, the structural-strategic approach of muv combined with the promotion of personal skills has proved widely accepted and highly promising. More details of the evaluations are published for the first cycle in Genetti/Nöbauer/Schlögl (2003) and in Nöbauer/Genetti/Schlögl (2005) and for the second cycle on [http://www.univie.ac.at/women/fileadmin/user\\_upload/muv\\_Zusammenf\\_Eval2006.pdf](http://www.univie.ac.at/women/fileadmin/user_upload/muv_Zusammenf_Eval2006.pdf).

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## RRM – Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes

### Helene Füger and Muriel Besson

The Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes (RRM) is a one-to-one mentoring programme for women in their early career in academia and research. RRM was among the first mentoring programmes to be funded by the Swiss Federal Programme for Gender Equality in Higher Education.<sup>4</sup> It has played a pioneering role in the development of academic mentoring in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. Since 2000, RRM has conducted four programme cycles with a total of 93 mentees from RRM's six partner universities.<sup>5</sup>

The key elements of RRM are stressed in its name: Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes refers to the regional dimension of the programme and its objective to build a network of and to strengthen women academics and researchers through mentoring.

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### Understanding of mentoring in RRM

The definition and understanding of mentoring in RRM is the outcome of a (partly still ongoing) process. It is based on a critical analysis of academic structures and the situation of women in their early career, and on an appraisal of mentoring as a tool to strengthen women's position in academia and research, drawing on examples of other mentoring programmes.<sup>6</sup>

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 4 For information see <http://www.crus.ch/information-programme/chancengleichheit.html> (Access: 07-01-2008).

5 These are the Universities of Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel, Lugano, and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL).

6 Examples were MuT – Mentoring und Training (<http://www.lakof.uni-mannheim.de/mut/>) and the AWIS mentoring programme (<http://www.awis.org/careers/mentoring.html>) (Access: 07-01-2008).

In the 1990s, the main deficiencies in the Swiss academic system regarding the situation of early career researchers were the importance of informal rules structuring the PhD phase and the academic career path, precarious and insufficiently regulated employment conditions, and the high degree of dependence on one, generally male, professor. These conditions proved to be particularly pernicious for women (Lévy/Roux/Gobet 1997). They contributed significantly to the declining proportion of women on the career track, in particular after PhD and during the post-doctoral career. They also reproduced the lack of role models as well as women's "token"<sup>7</sup> position (Nadai 1992) at high levels in academia and research.

The initiators of RRM did not conduct specific needs analysis before setting up the mentoring programme. They built on examples of other programmes and benefited in particular from a national conference on mentoring organized by the Swiss feminist association FemWiss. The conference and proceedings (Page/Leemann 2000) dealt with the potential of mentoring to tackle academic structures, as well as its limitations in this regard, and the power imbalance between women and men in academia and research. They also provided valuable examples of and information on requirements for successful programmes.

Consequently, and with regard to the above mentioned deficiencies, mentoring was defined by RRM as a specific form of personal support for early career researchers, to be organized in a formal programme (e.g., with transparent application and selection procedures, a defined programme, and clear management and coordination structures), outside traditional hierarchical structures, so as to increase the mentees' autonomy and agency.

For RRM, mentoring should counterbalance the lack of role models and the negative impact of women's "token" position. Accompanying network activities, reuniting mentees and mentors, and the integration of a majority of women mentors – to provide a variety of role models – are therefore part of RRM's understanding of mentoring.

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 7 "Token" in this sense refers to persons belonging to an extreme minority in a group. In groups with an extreme minority and majority, differences between the two groups are overemphasized, with the consequence that the minority is socially isolated. Any person from the extreme minority is taken to be a typical representative of their group.

This understanding was supported by the results presented at the above mentioned conference, which insisted on the need for: a structured programme with regular events for mentees and for mentors; a clear definition of the role of mentors and mentees, and of the mentoring relationship as explicitly distinguished from other forms of support (supervisor; informal network; etc.); and regular evaluation and documentation, to support the reflexivity of the mentoring process.

To explain mentoring as praxis between mentors and mentees, RRM also integrates knowledge on mentoring developed in business and management (see Hamilton 2001).

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### Target groups

Mentees targeted by RRM are women who are advanced PhD candidates, post-doc researchers, or Habilitation candidates from all disciplines in one of RRM's six partner institutions, and who aim to pursue an academic or research career. The target group of mentors is broader, as they may be male or female, and need not necessarily belong to one of the partner institutions. However, they must be full or associated professors or senior researchers in a tenured position (see: Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships).

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### Size and duration

The RRM is organized in two-year cycles. For each cycle, an average of 24 mentees are accepted. Up to 30 mentees per cycle has proved convenient with regard to the size of the target groups, available resources, and for the dynamic among participants.

The two-year programme cycle is divided into several phases. Months 1–4: programme preparation, announcement, and selection of mentees; months 5–8: matching phase; months 6–22: mentoring exchange and accompanying measures; months 22–24: evaluation and reporting. The individual mentoring relationships between mentees and mentors last for 12 to 15 months.

## Type and form of mentoring

The concept of mentoring at RRM is built around the one-to-one mentoring exchange between a mentee and a mentor (see below: Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships), with a distinctive collective or network component.

The privileged one-to-one exchange between a mentee and a mentor has great supportive potential, due to its flexibility, targeted to personal needs. However, the successful outcome depends not only on the interpersonal “chemistry” between mentee and mentor, but also on their personal involvement in the mentoring process, and on their clear understanding of their specific roles. The apparent similarity between one-to-one mentoring and traditional forms of informal support by a “mentor” must be carefully addressed. It must be clear that mentoring provides new structures of support that allow informal practices to be revealed and understood, replacing them with more transparent and self-reflexive forms of support (Füger 2005).

In RRM, the exchange between mentee and mentor in the individual mentoring relationship is accompanied and supported by four network meetings per programme cycle, to which mentees and mentors are invited. During these events, mentees and mentors can exchange and reflect on their experiences and ways of handling the mentoring process. In addition, workshops and discussions on career-relevant topics allow a collective and peer dynamic to develop among mentees and among mentors (see below: Measures accompanying the mentoring programme).

The coordinator has an important role in providing the frame for these different mentoring processes. Where necessary, the coordinator intervenes as coach for mentees or mentors, or as mediator.

## Goals

RRM defines its goals along the individual, the “collective” or network, and the institutional dimensions.

*Individual dimension:* The goal of RRM is to support its mentees in the continuation of their professional careers. Benefits to the individual should include the identification and achievement of relevant career steps, the development of the mentee’s network, her professional identity as a researcher, and her autonomy and assertiveness in the scientific community. In addition, each mentee, together with their mentor, defines a set of specific objectives and goals they want to pursue during the mentoring exchange.

Internal and external evaluations of RRM show that the overall goal and the individual objectives are met in a large majority of cases. Evaluation also shows that achievement of individual goals is supported by both the individual one-to-one mentoring exchange and by the activities and discussions organized during network meetings.

*Collective/network dimension:* RRM aims to contribute to the establishment of a critical mass of women professors in higher education and research in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and to strengthen women’s impact on science policy.

RRM’s regional dimension, uniting six academic institutions, supports this goal. These institutions present an important regional academic labour market.

Due to its regional outlook, RRM has a larger “pool” of women professors, with a variety of career patterns, personalities, etc. Mentees get to know other mentees but also mentors from different fields and universities. The regional dimension also provides space for mentors to exchange experience, for example, on their role and function as supervisors, on gender equality policies in their respective institutions, and their strategies to support them.

*Institutional dimension:* RRM aims to contribute to the discussion of policies and instruments for the support of early career academics and researchers that advance gender equality. The continuous documentation by RRM of its activities, experiences, and results provides an important stock of information that can be drawn on in pursuit of this aim.



## Required resources

The management structure of RRM comprises the programme leader, the coordinator, and a board of partners. The programme leader is responsible for the concept of the programme, its representation (especially to authorities and funding institutions), and supervision of the coordinator. The coordinator is in charge of implementing the programme cycles and cooperates in renewing the programme's concept. Both programme leader and coordinator work part-time on the project (together they have the equivalent of a 0.55 full-time position) and are located at the Office for Gender Equality at the University of Fribourg.

From the start of RRM in 2000, programme coordination (leader and coordinator) has been supported by a board of partners, which comprises a gender equality officer and one or two (women) professors from each of the partner institutions. The board of partners discusses the selection criteria for mentees and evaluates the candidates. Its members also support the matching process and regularly participate at network meetings. Their cooperation is counted as non-monetary funding of the programme.

The first three programme cycles of RRM were funded by the Swiss Federal Programme for Gender Equality, matched mainly by non-monetary funding (e.g., infrastructure, workforce). Since 2006 (fourth programme cycle), RRM has also received funding from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), and partner universities also participate by contributing money.

## Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships

*Programme announcement:* The programme announcement can be considered part of the process of establishing the mentoring relationship, as it is an important source of information that will shape the mentees' and mentors' expectations (see: <http://www.unifr.ch/f-mentoring>).

*Selection of mentees:* Candidates are requested to fill in an application form (available on RRM's homepage), and to submit it together with a CV and covering letter. In the application form they are asked to

specify their professional and research background, and to describe their career plans for the next three years. They also have to describe how they would like to benefit from the mentoring programme. The form allows them to specify preferences with regard to the mentor. So far, applications for RRM have outnumbered available places by approximately three or four to one.

For the selection of mentees, each dossier is analysed by one professor and one gender equality officer from RRM's board of partners. The selection criteria are: the motivation to continue an academic career and the plans outlined for the next three years; stated expectations regarding the programme in general and the mentoring relationship in particular; the degree of integration in the academic world; and the intrinsic quality of the applicant's dossier and research work. The criteria have been designed to focus on profiles for which the support provided by RRM can be effective, without reinforcing dominant but highly questionable criteria such as age limits. Issues of mobility, maternity, and non-traditional career patterns are given special attention.

*Selection of mentors:* Through individual contact, the coordinator establishes with each mentee the required mentor profile, taking into account the mentee's specific needs. Ideally, for RRM, the mentee and mentor should be from a similar scientific background but should not work in exactly the same specialization, in order to avoid clashes of interests and to enable the mentoring relationship to develop without the interference of hierarchical concerns. For the same reason, the mentor is generally a professor, and must have a tenured position in a university or a research institution. RRM also advocates searching for mentors from a different university, so as to increase the mentee's network and knowledge of other institutions. Other criteria, such as gender, and specific experiences such as family, international experience and connections, dual career issues, will be discussed individually. It goes without saying that the capacity to support without judging and a positive attitude towards the promotion of women should also be assessed. Contact with partners of RRM in the respective institutions can be very helpful in finding out about a potential mentor's background.

About two out of three mentors in RRM are women professors. RRM's policy in favour of women mentors may partly explain this. In

RRM's experience, many mentees ask for women mentors. And many women professors are motivated to share their experience. Being a mentor also enhances the professors' experience and expertise. It is therefore a way to strengthen women in their function as professors within their institution.

Apart from these criteria, the matching procedure at RRM is not very formalized. The mentee is encouraged to participate actively in the search. Once the appropriate mentor has been identified, it is the coordinator who contacts the person by email and telephone to ask whether they are willing to become a mentor. If the answer is positive, the mentoring relationship is established. It is now up to the mentee to contact the mentor for the first meeting. Mentee and mentor receive a detailed file containing information on mentoring in general, and on how to establish their mentoring exchange within the framework of RRM in particular.

***Mentoring agreement:*** At an early stage (first or second meeting), mentee and mentor are asked to draft and sign a mentoring agreement, and send a copy to the coordinator. This agreement states the aims and expectations of the mentee with regard to the mentor, as well as the terms of their relationship, and practical details such as frequency and duration of meetings, or the means by which they intend to keep in touch, etc. It also contains a confidentiality clause. Experience of four programme cycles shows that the individual goals stated in the agreements are mainly concerned with exchange of experience and knowledge about informal rules, and strategies to address and cope with these "rules"; an outside perspective on the mentee's career, competences, and career plan; support and advice for the planning of objectives and career steps, such as the submission of a research project, the definition of a post-doc strategy, the application for a junior professorship; support in and advice for the development of their own network.

The coordinator keeps record of each matching process.

***Mentoring exchange:*** In the experience of RRM, mentee and mentor have on average four or five face-to-face meetings during the 12 to 15 months. Each meeting lasts on average 90 minutes. Generally, mentee and mentor also communicate through email and phone calls.

The progress of the mentoring relationship is discussed at network meetings (see below: Measures accompanying the mentoring programme), and assessed in an intermediate evaluation. This allows the detection of difficulties, provides impetus, and stresses the importance of the mentee's involvement.

***End of the mentoring relationship:*** It is important to be clear about the termination of the formal mentoring cycle. Mentees are asked to address this issue in a "last" meeting. In most cases, the end of the mentoring process is not the end of contact between mentee and mentor.

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### Measures accompanying the mentoring programme

RRM's accompanying measures to the one-to-one mentoring relationship consist of four network meetings (three one-day and one two-day meetings).

At each network meeting, to which mentees, mentors, and partners are invited, two kinds of workshops are organized. One kind of workshop focuses on the development of skills and competences related to the academic career, such as communication skills, career planning, the academic portfolio and CV, strategies of publication and networking. In a second kind of workshop, mentors and mentees discuss in separate groups specific issues related to their mentoring experience, and then address selected topics in plenum. All workshops are moderated by an external specialist or a member of the board of partners.

Each network meeting assumes a specific function in the programme cycle. The first or "kick-off" meeting allows discussion of roles and objectives in the mentoring process. The second and third meetings strengthen the mentee's sense of belonging, not only to the network and the group of peers in the programme, but also to the scientific community in general. These meetings will provide the occasion to develop skills and competences and to learn from each other, getting to know different role models with a variety of career paths. The fourth meeting is mainly intended to prepare the last formal meeting between mentor and mentee within the context of the mentoring programme, and to prepare feedback and evaluation.

For each meeting, a written report will be drafted by the coordinator. The report is sent to all mentees, mentors, and partners, and is – anonymized – published on the website.

### **Institutional recognition system**

Mentors in RRM do not get paid, nor even compensated for their activity. However, they get their expenses refunded (up to a certain limit) when they meet their mentee, or participate in a network meeting.

Part of the continuous effort to institutionalize RRM further is for mentoring activities to be recognized in the job specifications of professorial positions at the participant universities. This is also consistent with the European Charter for Researchers (European Commission 2005: 22). Until now, professors who have agreed to become mentors in RRM have done so because they feel that, as a mentor from RRM stated, this is an “effective investment” and because they are committed to the goals (Müller et al. 2007: 45).

However, even if mentoring is not yet explicitly stated in the job specifications of professors, by supporting RRM, partner institutions implicitly recognize mentoring as part of their professors’ activities and services.

### **Information policy, communication, and networking**

Partly to save resources, but mostly out of principle (change and innovation depend on sharing of knowledge; resources invested in RRM are public and must be made to profit the public), RRM has opted for open access via the internet to most documents, information, and results, but at the same time the privacy of participants is protected.<sup>8</sup> The programme announcement is also an important channel for communication. Most professors, but also many early career researchers, do not spontaneously visit RRM’s homepage. Direct mailing of the programme leaflet announcing the new cycle of RRM is a very im-

8 The website and documents only mention the names of the coordination team (leader and coordinator) and of RRM’s board of partners. Names of mentees or mentors are never mentioned (<http://www.unifr.ch/f-mentoring/programme>) (Access: 07-01-2008).

portant way to call the programme to the attention of a wide target population. Partly due to this, RRM benefits from high “brand recognition” among its partner universities. Because of the open information policy, RRM has been contacted regularly for information or to participate at conferences, including from abroad.

RRM also benefits from the information and communication policy of its funding bodies, in particular the Federal Programme for Gender Equality, which has published best-practice brochures and evaluation reports (Bachmann et al. 2004; Müller et al. 2007).

### **Evaluation of RRM**

In the course of each programme cycle, an intermediate and a final evaluation are conducted by the coordination team.<sup>9</sup> The intermediate evaluation is done in the form of a small survey, in which mentees are asked to answer three open questions. This helps the mentees to take stock of the development of their ongoing mentoring relationship. It also enables the programme’s coordinators to follow up on the mentoring relationships and, if need be, propose mediation or coaching. At the close of each mentoring cycle, an evaluation questionnaire is sent to the mentees and mentors. Questions refer to objectives pursued, support received, and goals achieved; the frequency of meetings and quality of the mentoring relationship; and the relevance of the workshops. Mentees are also asked to write statements (short essays of a half page each), which are anonymized and integrated into the evaluation report.

The evaluations of the first four cycles have shown that mentees are thoroughly satisfied with regard to their participation in RRM and to their mentoring relationship. In July 2006, RRM undertook a follow-up investigation among the mentees who had taken part in the first three cycles. The investigation revealed that 75% of former mentees had made an important career step and were still working in the higher education and research sector, and that 20% had reached the level of professorship.

9 Some questions integrated into the evaluation questionnaire are provided by external experts who evaluate the global outcome of the Federal Programme for Gender Equality.

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## MDCH – Mentoring Deutschschweiz

### Sabine Lask and Louise Graf

MDCH (the Swiss German Mentoring Programme) is a programme for the promotion of women in academic careers. It offers one-to-one mentoring and accompanying measures for women scientists and researchers who are working towards Habilitation or who are engaged in post-doctoral and advanced doctoral studies at German-speaking Swiss universities. The programme is a personalized springboard for advanced early career researchers, and was developed in 2001 in an attempt to fix the "leaky" pipeline<sup>10</sup> of women in science. In 1999 and 2003 the Swiss government devoted funds to the support of gender equality programmes at Swiss universities.<sup>11</sup> The main goal of this Swiss Equal Opportunities Programme was to double the proportion of women professors from 7% to 14% by the year 2006. MDCH has been developed in this context as a regional and interdisciplinary programme, which is conducted jointly by gender equality departments at the Universities of Berne, Basle, Fribourg, Lucerne, St. Gall, Zurich, and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. Since 2006, the programme has also obtained funds from the Swiss National Science Foundation. Since MDCH's beginning in 2001, four programme cycles have taken place, and in total 158 mentees have participated.

MDCH effects the formalization of a common supportive relationship (informal mentoring), thereby strengthening women's participation in exactly these relationships and rendering women scientists more visible as scientists and as potential professors. As an instrument for promoting early career researchers, MDCH is conceived to

10 The "leaky pipeline" describes the gender-specific loss rate in academic and scientific careers. Educational gender differences are on the decline, but gender segregation at the middle and top levels of universities remains. As it is, a rise in the number of female students does not necessarily translate into increasing numbers of women in higher academic positions.

11 Each time 16 million Swiss francs (about € 10.5 million) were contributed.

fit optimally in the “scientific world” with the latter’s rules and its constant lack of time. The formalized mentoring relationship is complemented with accompanying measures that impart not only personal skills to the mentee, but also knowledge about the functioning of the scientific system, its selection criteria, and exclusion mechanisms – thus unmasking the scientific myth as a social construct. This knowledge empowers the scientist to de-individualize her experiences in the scientific community and to recognize the social boundaries and mechanisms of segregation that work in favour of the inclusion of men and the exclusion of women.

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### Understanding of mentoring in MDCH

Despite diminishing educational gender differences, there is a clear tendency towards gender segregation at the middle and top levels of universities in Switzerland. One of the causes of female under-representation in the upper hierarchy is the science community’s structure and its lack of support and encouragement of early career women scientists, with its traditional patterns and role models distorting the perception of their scientific excellence. As Leemann (2002) stresses, the structuring of the scientific system in Switzerland is based on a masculine academic habitus, normative male-oriented biographies, and homosocial co-optation. Accordingly, the climate for women in science is rough, much rougher than for men. Leemann considers the exclusion of women from informal networks and informal supportive relationships to be one of the most important factors hindering the academic careers of women scientists. The networks of women scientists are significantly smaller than those of their male colleagues, and women therefore have less access to relevant information, get less support, and have fewer opportunities for collaboration than men.

This is why MDCH and other institutionalized mentoring programmes have been established exclusively for women scientists. Mentoring describes in this context a professional relationship between an experienced member of the science community (mentor) and a less experienced early career researcher (mentee). The mentor provides support, giving advice, introducing the mentee to networks, and gi-

ving her an insight into the mechanisms and unspoken rules of academia and research. MDCH thus uses mentoring as an instrument to enhance advanced early career women scientists deemed to have the potential for an academic career. The purpose of the programme is to improve the integration of early career researchers in networks and to encourage them to actively address issues of academic career planning.

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### Target groups

The target groups of MDCH comprise the mentees (women) and the mentors (women and men). A precondition for the mentees is that they have a degree from or hold a post at a Swiss German university. They come from all disciplines and are working towards their Habilitation (post-doctoral lecture qualification) or are engaged in post-doctoral and advanced doctoral studies and wish to pursue an academic career. The mentors normally have a full professorship and come from Swiss universities or from abroad. That the mentors have a full professorship is important because they are meant to be established members of the scientific community and to have a wide network; only in rare cases are mentors associate professors.

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### Size and duration

In MDCH there is a distinction between the duration of the programme cycle (24 months) – which begins with the announcement and selection of the mentees and finishes with the evaluation of the programme, the duration of the mentees’ involvement in the programme (16 months), and the duration of the mentees’ personalized mentoring relationship (12–15 month). In each cycle of MDCH, 30 to 33 mentees and the same number of mentors participate. For the mentees, the programme starts with an official kick-off event, and it ends with a conclusion meeting for mentees and mentors. The programme is accompanied by training courses exclusively for the mentees and additional courses, seminars, and supervision offered by all partner universities.

## Type and form of mentoring

MDCH means one-to-one mentoring. Using the traditional promotion mechanisms and in accordance with knowledge about the functioning of academic relationships, the programme establishes an exclusive disciplinary mentoring relationship between a female junior scientist and a male or female professor. The sharing of a disciplinary interest or a related field of research is of vital importance for this relationship. These shared interests are reminiscent of the usual cooperation between an up-and-coming scientist and a professor, but focus on another dimension, namely, that of mentoring, i.e., career counselling. MDCH draws on a shared interest between mentor and mentee for the following reasons.

*Specific career counselling:* Most important is the awareness that only an expert in the specific field of the junior scientist can best support her and provide an accurate assessment of her opportunities and potential. The mentor can thus give the mentee concrete and realistic advice concerning career developments – be it fixing the next stage of her research or overseeing new collaborations. Moreover, each specific field has its own unspoken rules and mechanisms, with which the mentee has to become familiar, and about which only a mentor from the same field has in-depth knowledge.

With this kind of disciplinary mentoring, however, it is very important to avoid a conflict of interests. MDCH has therefore established the rule that mentee and mentor must not work at the same university.

*Recruitment of mentors from Switzerland and abroad:* The very specific matching in MDCH, which means that mentee and mentor share a field of interest or research, increases the interest of the potential mentor in participating in the programme. This is very important for MDCH as there is no institutional link between mentors and mentees, or between mentors and the programme, nor is there a financial reward for the mentors' cooperation with the programme and their supporting a junior scientist.

*Extension of networks:* Belonging to a network is one of the major factors influencing an academic career. As mentioned before, the

networks of women scientists are significantly smaller than those of men. By selectively providing the junior scientist with an expert in her specific field, who comes from a different university, MDCH is able to make a fundamental contribution to the mentee's networking. Furthermore, the programme encourages the mentee to use this arranged contact to establish other ties, both vertical and horizontal.

## Goals

Within the Swiss Equal Opportunities Programme, MDCH serves as an instrument for the promotion of early career researchers at Swiss universities. The ultimate objective of MDCH is thus to increase the number of women professors at Swiss universities. In order to achieve this aim, the programme pursues further, related goals. MDCH seeks to encourage women scientists and researchers to plan and pursue their academic careers, to strengthen their self-esteem as scientists, and to provide them with information about the functioning of the scientific system. Furthermore, the programme aims to foster the integration of women scientists into the scientific community. It enlarges the mentees' networks by selective matching, and it attempts to help the mentees to establish adequate formal and informal networks. Another important goal of MDCH is to raise awareness of gender matters and the special situation of women scientists. The programme aims to highlight the excellence of women scientists and promote an attractive means of achieving equal opportunity for women academics.

## Required resources

Crucial factors for establishing a formalized mentoring programme are an institutional connection and the programme's funding. MDCH is organized as a cooperative project of the gender equality departments of the Swiss German universities. The Gender Equality Section of the University of Berne leads the project. The programme's financial backing is jointly provided by the participating universities, the Swiss Equal Opportunities Programme, and the Swiss National Science Foundation. Two to three people work for the programme, amounting to one full-time position.

## Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships

The careful selection of both the participating mentees and mentors is a very important precondition for MDCH to prove successful. First, the programme is announced at all Swiss German universities. This is done via intra-university channels, so that all professors as well as all potential mentees get the announcement, together with some information about the programme.

*Selecting the mentees:* The selection of the mentees is carried out by means of a standardized application and selection procedure that requires the mentees to send an application form, a CV, and a covering letter. The criteria for selecting the mentees are publicized. The most important criterion is that the candidate has clearly defined goals and motives regarding her academic career and the benefits of mentoring. As a cooperative project, MDCH has some additional selection criteria: A proportional allotment of places according to the universities' financial contribution to the mentoring programme and to the number of their female students who finished doctoral theses in the relevant basis year ensures that mentees from all partner universities as well as from the Swiss National Science Foundation are considered. Furthermore, MDCH tries to consider each discipline in proportion to its relative size, but also looks out for applications from fields where women are extremely under-represented at the top level.

*Selecting the mentors:* The selection of the mentors, the matching, is the most important point in the programme cycle. MDCH therefore holds a special first workshop for the mentees that is dedicated to the task of working out the mentors' desired profile. The coordinator coaches the mentee in searching for a suitable mentor in her scientific discipline, the search being based on the mentee's career objectives and her self-defined individual needs. As mentioned before, mentors are sought nationally and internationally. Once a potential mentor has been found, the coordinator initiates contact by phone, providing details on the mentee concerned in standardized form and in strict confidence. If the mentor agrees to participate in the programme, the mentee contacts the mentor herself to see whether cooperation is feasible. This being the case, in a written mentoring agreement the

partners define their mentoring goals as well as the form and frequency of their exchanges.

*The mentoring relationship:* Mentoring partnerships usually last between 12 and 15 months. Their main focus should be on aspects of career counselling; however, issues related to the mentee's scientific work are also likely to be addressed. Mentee and mentor are jointly responsible for the way in which they implement and conduct the mentoring. Clearly formulated objectives and mutual expectations, and a well-defined mode of contact make mentoring partnerships easier. This is why it is advised that the mentoring partnership be based on a written mentoring agreement.

*Commitments:* For the mentees, participation in additional workshops is required.<sup>12</sup> By signing their mutual mentoring agreement, both mentee and mentor define the scope and objective of their regular exchanges in the context of MDCH. The two partners are then jointly responsible for the way in which they implement and conduct their mentoring relationship. If a shift of interest and focus occurs, the agreement may be adjusted. The mentoring agreement includes a confidential undertaking and allows for the premature termination of the relationship.

As a cooperative project, MDCH also needs the commitment of all its partners. A cooperation agreement therefore defines the responsibilities of the respective institutions.

*End of the mentoring relationship:* Mentoring partnerships usually last between 12 and 15 months, and end upon completion of the respective programme cycle. MDCH provides guidelines for a final meeting and suggests that mentor and mentee assess the mentoring and conclude or redefine their relationship. Special circumstances may require mentoring partnerships to be dissolved prior to the programme's completion, in which case the coordinator has to be contacted.

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 12 The mentees pay a small fee (about € 130) for their participation in the programme, whereas travel costs for both mentees and mentors are refunded in proportion to available funds.

### Accompanying measures

MDCH offers the mentees accompanying measures consisting of several workshops designed to complement the mentoring relationship in its different stages. Besides advice regarding the organization and optimization of the mentoring relationship, the mentees are provided with knowledge relevant for an academic career, as well as with pragmatic tips, for example, concerning opportunities for research funding. In addition, the accompanying measures allow for an exchange between mentees from different disciplines and universities, holding different degrees – an exchange that is beyond academic competition and which gives the mentees a further opportunity to expand their networks. The combination of disciplinary mentoring and interdisciplinary peer groups in MDCH is much appreciated by the mentees, as the evaluation shows.

### Integration of the mentors

Coming from all parts of Switzerland and from abroad, the mentors participating in MDCH get basic information in advance of joining the programme, and brief reports on activities and other concentrated information by email during the programme cycle. This condensed way of informing the mentors has proved to be very effective as there is no institutional connection between mentors and the programme. A stronger integration of the mentors into the accompanying measures had been intended in former programme cycles, but the mentors were not interested in extra meetings and training sessions. Brief information seems to suit the tight time budget of the mentors best.

### Information policy and communication

MDCH is well integrated in the Swiss academic landscape. It cultivates networks, and exchanges experiences on mentoring programmes on a regional and national level. Due to the programme being a cooperative project, a meeting of representatives of all the partner universities takes place twice a year, and the coordinator keeps in touch with

the partners throughout the year. Periodic reports and evaluations are sent to the partners as well as to the other financial contributors. Information policy and communication are very important in maintaining and possibly broadening a supportive base for the programme, but also in raising awareness of gender equality issues. An important instrument for MDCH is its webpage (<http://www.mentoring.unibe.ch>). In addition, several documents and brochures on the subject of mentoring have been published to disseminate knowledge about it and to promote it.

In the formation phase, MDCH has benefited from the experience of other mentoring programmes, especially from “MuT” (LakoG, Germany). The programme has been developed in close cooperation with the “Réseau Romand de mentoring pour femmes” (Switzerland). Now, as a well-developed and optimized programme, MDCH supports other Swiss mentoring programmes. In its cooperation with eument-net, MDCH has established further ties on a European level.

### Evaluation of MDCH

MDCH has been evaluated by extern professionals (Spreyermann 2004; Müller et al. 2007), and also intern evaluations regularly take place. These evaluations have been performed using qualitative and quantitative methods. The results of the evaluations are not only relevant for the continuation of the programme, but have also been of great use for its optimization.

The evaluation shows that most of the mentees profited a great deal from participating in MDCH. The mentees stated that they received support concerning career-relevant issues and strategies, as well as personal capacities such as self-assurance and their self-conception as scientists. The mentors stated that they appreciated the opportunity to support an excellent junior scientist personally and, in some cases, to learn about gender segregation, and that the programme organization fitted easily into their limited time budget. More information about the evaluation and about MDCH is to be found on the programme’s website (<http://www.mentoring.unibe.ch>).



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## MuT – Mentoring und Training

### Lisa Peschel and Dagmar Höppel

In 1997, the state of Baden-Württemberg launched a so-called Habilitation programme for women (Margarete von Wrangell-Habilitationprogramm für Frauen, named after Germany's first female full professor). This programme is still running; its focus was and is granting scholarships for women aspiring to qualify for a full professorship. It became evident, however, that financial support was not enough as an affirmative action measure. So in 1998, the MuT programme was developed as Germany's first mentoring programme for female early career researchers. The acronym MuT was chosen to mean "courage" in German. MuT is not affiliated to any individual university, but is an extra-university research institution affiliated to Baden-Württemberg's State Conference of Equal Opportunities Officers (LaKoG), which has been based in Stuttgart since January 2008. Costs are covered partly by participants' fees and partly by the State Ministry for Science.

Since 1998, about 650 early career researchers have taken part in the programme and are in the MuT-Database. MuT has served as a model for mentoring programmes in other German states and abroad. Besides mentoring, MuT's programme concept combines other measures for the empowerment of early career researchers in a five-fold approach:

- Orientation Course, with Orientation Session on expectations about mentors;
- Informational Activities;
- Individual Counselling and Coaching;
- Matching with a Mentor;
- Networking.

These five points will be dealt with in more detail below.

## Understanding of mentoring in MuT

Höppel (2000: 81 f.) sums up MuT's understanding of mentoring: *"Unter Mentoring wird heute verstanden, dass eine geachtete, gebildete Person für eine jüngere, weniger erfahrene Person eine beratende und erzieherische Verantwortung übernimmt"* (Mentoring as it is understood today means that an accomplished, educated person takes up the responsibility of being a counsellor and educator for a younger, less experienced person). The mentor supports the mentee in acquiring technical knowledge in her respective field as well as the values and norms of the scientific community. Mentors should help mentees to become aware of their skills, to develop them, and to plan strategies to reach their goals. They should give mentees constructive feedback on professional issues as well as advice for personal development. That mentoring is voluntary is very important. In particular, there are two aspects to the voluntary nature of mentoring relationships: First, hierarchies in academia, such as supervisor/supervised or employer/employee, should not be involved in the mentoring relationship. This means – secondly – that both parties are free to end the mentoring relationship at any time if they feel the need to do so. Mentoring works best if mentee and mentor have a good understanding on the personal as well as on the professional level.

## Target groups

The mentee target group of MuT comprises women in the early stages of their career in academia or research (Privatdozentinnen/women with a post-doctoral lecture qualification; Habilitandinnen/women in the stage of their post-doctoral lecture qualification; Juniorprofessorinnen/junior professors; women with a PhD; and women working towards their PhD) working at universities in Baden-Württemberg. So far there have been no funds to extend the programme to undergraduate students.

Concerning mentors, MuT targets male and female academics with full professorships.

## Size and duration

About 20 participants are currently in active mentoring relationships. These active mentoring relationships are managed by 20 active mentors, out of which 13 are female and 7 male. MuT's pool has another 70 mentors who are currently not in an active mentoring relationship.

Those interested in joining MuT can apply at any time; the Orientation Course for new participants is held twice a year. In the process of establishing a mentoring relationship, mentor and mentee negotiate the terms of the mentoring relationship, i.e., means of communication, frequency of meetings, topics to be addressed, duration, and end of the mentoring relationship. So mentors and mentees are quite free to shape their mentoring relationship according to their wishes and needs; there is little formalization.

## Type and form of mentoring

As follows from MuT's understanding of mentoring, MuT has a one-to-one approach to it. If a mentor has more than one mentee, they meet with each mentee separately. Each mentee decides individually whether same- or cross-gender, same- or cross-discipline mentoring suits her situation best.

Its one-to-one approach to mentoring notwithstanding, MuT recognizes the importance of horizontal networking. This is why workshops and training sessions, where participants have a chance to meet and network, are an essential part of MuT.

However, one-to-one relations in mentoring offer a chance for deeper involvement and commitment to the relationship on both sides. Participants' individual needs can be better met. In addition, addressing difficult topics is easier in a one-to-one situation. So the advantages of one-to-one mentoring far outweigh the disadvantages in Höppel's (2005a: 124) conclusion: *"Für die individuelle, passgenaue Unterstützung von High Potentials ist One-to-one-Mentoring der entscheidende Mosaikstein, der der Karriere der Mentee Glanz verleihen kann"* (For individual, tailored support of high potentials, one-to-one-mentoring is the crucial keystone which can enhance the brilliance of the mentee's career).

## Goals

“Die Wissenschaftlerinnen sollen in die Lage versetzt werden, ihre Kompetenzen zu erkennen, zu entwickeln und zielgerichtet umzusetzen und ihre Karrierechancen erfolgreicher auszuschöpfen“ (Bredbusch 2005: 67) (Women researchers are to be enabled to recognize and develop their skills and use them in a goal-oriented way to make better use of their career opportunities). This process leads them to realize that many of the obstacles they face in their academic career are not due to personal failure, but to structural barriers. This should enable participants, as a third step, to state their wishes and goals for their career more clearly, and, as a fourth step, plan and make progress towards these goals, e.g., to expand their professional networks in a strategic way. The final goal of MuT is for participants to obtain a full professorship. By effecting change on the individual level and bringing more women into high positions at universities, MuT hopes to effect change on the structural level and an academic working culture that is more favourable to gender equality.

## Required resources

In 2006, MuT had a budget of approximately € 20,000. As mentioned above, the costs for the running of the programme are covered partly by the State Ministry for Science and partly by participants' fees (€ 65 for one-day workshops, € 130 for two-day residential workshops). Apart from the two-woman coordination team, one full-time and one part-time (currently 40%) employee works for MuT. As mentioned above, mentoring relations themselves are not very formalized, but mentors and mentees have to be selected and accompanying measures have to be organized.

## Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships

There are three processes involved in establishing a mentoring relationship – selection of mentees, selection of mentors, and the matching process. Once this is accomplished, mentee and mentor negotiate the terms of their mentoring relationship, especially their commitments to this relationship and its duration and end.

*Selection of mentees:* People interested in joining as mentees can download the application form from the MuT website or request to have it sent. This form asks applicants first to state their qualification and current employment situation. They are then asked to describe their achievements so far in the academic field and to reflect on factors that have supported and hindered them in their academic career. Questions then turn to participants' goals for their further academic career, and their plans for steps to reach these goals.

Mentees should show above average commitment in the field of science, and have clear goals for their career in higher education and science. Personal or professional dependence on the mentor is to be avoided.

*Selection of mentors:* Mentors either make an application themselves or others suggest them. To raise awareness of the goals of MuT, once a year MuT sends information letters to the rectors, presidents, and equal opportunities officers, and calls for interested professors to apply to be a mentor. About 10% of mentors are recruited in this way. Mentors may also be suggested by other mentors or by MuT partners. Mentees, who often know about movers and shakers in their scientific community, may also suggest mentors. In the Orientation Session they discuss and develop criteria for the most appropriate person. If they are not able to suggest a person or if they ask for help, the MuT coordinators look for suitable people. The decision is made together with the mentee. Now that the programme has been running for several years, some mentees, after the end of their mentoring relationships, have entered new mentoring relationships, this time in the role of mentor.

In general, mentors should hold full professorships, be able to share valuable know-how with their mentees due to their senior academic positions, and be ready to devote time and energy to a relationship with mentees that is personal as well as professional.

*Matching process:* Matching begins at the Orientation Course. The aim of this course is for participants to reflect on their skills and career goals and to specify their expectations of mentoring. They then develop a professional profile of a possible mentor accordingly. They must decide, for example, whether they prefer same- or cross-gender, same-

or cross-discipline mentoring. They discuss this profile with the programme coordinator, who in turn uses it to find a suitable mentor.

Disclosing participation in a mentoring programme may sometimes, depending on differing circumstances, have negative consequences for mentees. There may be conflicts with official supervisors, or participation in a support programme may be interpreted as an admission of incompetence. Therefore, the decision whether or not, and to whom, to disclose their participation in MuT rests entirely with the mentees. MuT facilitators discuss the advantages and disadvantages of doing so with mentees, but do not disclose their identity in any way.

*Commitments:* The openness of the programme notwithstanding, mentors and mentees have to agree to some fundamental mentoring rules. These include confidentiality, clarity and honesty in feedback, the overall aim of empowering the mentee (and not making her dependent), and the need for clearly stated goals in the mentoring relationship, which, given the openness of the programme, mentee and mentor develop together.

*End of the mentoring relationship:* As mentioned above, mentors and mentees negotiate the duration and the end of their mentoring relationship. The formal mentoring relation may end, e.g., when the mentee successfully takes the next step in her academic qualification. After the end of the formal mentoring relationship, mentoring often continues informally.

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### Accompanying measures

As mentioned above, MuT has a five-fold approach to empowering early career researchers and to supporting them on their way to a full professorship.

The first element is the two-day Orientation Course, where participants reflect on their career goals, on whether or not to look for a mentor, and, if so, on their expectations of mentoring.

Secondly, there are Informational Activities. These are an essential part of the programme, consisting of one- or two-day workshops on

topics of interest to young academics, such as self-management, presentation techniques, acquisition of third-party funds, and academic appointment procedures. People who are not MuT participants can nevertheless attend training sessions, e.g., within the framework of MuT's agreements with Konstanz University and Max Planck Institut. MuT participants are encouraged to attend mixed-gender training sessions by other providers, too. Among other things, these workshops give participants a chance to do some horizontal networking. Participants are expected to attend at least one of them per semester.

Thirdly, MuT offers Individual Counselling and Coaching. This is different from mentoring: first, it mostly involves a short-term relation between counsellor and counselled, and, secondly, it mostly deals with a specific issue introduced by participants. So a mentoring relationship is altogether wider in its scope.

The fourth part, Matching with a Mentor, is not compulsory. For participants who decide they want a mentor, the process described below in "Stages in establishing the mentoring relationships" is followed.

Networking, the fifth element, is another essential part of MuT concepts, as networks are crucial to career building. Within MuT, networking can happen formally or informally, horizontally, as between participants during training sessions, or vertically, as when mentors or MuT facilitators introduce participants into influential academic networks potentially conducive to their careers.

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### Institutional recognition of mentors' activities

MuT so far has not been able to offer financial or institutional recognition for mentors. Whereas mentees are trained extensively, to date there has been no training for mentors, as they lack the motivation to be trained. Mentors in the highest academic positions are not accustomed to being trained. It is part of their academic professional understanding of themselves that they are experts and evaluators. A possible motivation for mentors to get training seems to be a gain in reputation or insight in new scientific fields. Awareness on the part of mentors about positive effects of mentoring for themselves is needed: becoming aware of their mentees' situations gives them new insights

and a chance to reflect on their own academic careers. We are still looking for ways to provide them with this motivation.

### Information policy, communication, and networking

MuT programme coordinators use a variety of ways to promote the programme, e.g., magazines, info boards, and posters. Potential participants can use the MuT website to get information about the programme. On the website (<http://www.lakof.uni-mannheim.de>), they can find the MuT programme for the current year, complete with programme profile, course descriptions, and information on other LaKoG activities. There is a link to the MuT website from the site of the State Ministry for Science and Research. There is also a brochure containing MuT's programme for the current year and a request for an information slip. Several articles (see: References) have been published about MuT. University deans get an annual information letter asking them to advertise MuT in their universities.

For participants, there is a newsletter and an email list, in which they are informed about upcoming events.

MuT cooperates with the Max Planck Society, whose female members are eligible to attend MuT training sessions. Furthermore, there is an agreement with a graduate school of Konstanz University to reserve a few MuT seats each year for participants from Konstanz, whom the university sends within the framework of its excellence cluster.<sup>13</sup> So MuT might be called a regional programme covering the whole of the state of Baden-Württemberg.

Besides MuT, LaKoG is involved in several other equal opportunities programmes for women in academia, e.g., the Schlieben-Lange Programme for female early career researchers with children.

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13 Junior staff development and gender equality measures were among the criteria for receiving government funds within the framework of excellence initiatives.

### Evaluation of MuT

The programme coordinators evaluate MuT in two ways. Interviews with mentors and mentees help to evaluate the mentoring component of the programme. After the training sessions, participants fill in a feedback questionnaire for the specific training. Participants are asked about their expectations of seminars and whether they have been met, the technical and didactic competence of the instructors, and the relevance of workshop contents to their working lives, as well as their general benefits from the training. Once a year, another questionnaire is disseminated asking participants about their ideas and wishes for new training sessions and workshops. So every year one or two new topics are introduced, e.g., patents and licences, according to participants' needs.

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## Summary of Part I

### Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti

As has become apparent, the programme designs presented above share many similarities just as they show differences according to their theoretical (self-)understanding, goals, target groups, economic circumstances, organizational preferences, and institutional backing.

All four programmes have in common that they offer mentoring to target groups of women researchers in the early stages of their career. These include advanced doctoral candidates, post-doctoral researchers, and junior professors or Habilitation candidates. While all four schemes aim at promoting and fostering women's careers, they differ more or less significantly in size, their specified goals, the accompanying measures, and the resources available (staff, funding). Among their more visible and organizationally substantial differences are the types of mentoring (one-to-one or group mentoring relationships) and, according to these, the selection procedures of mentees and mentors and their matching. As is evident, the differences in the amount of resources, the origin of resources, and the formal institutional leadership of a programme are also strongly related to the degree of institutional integration of the programmes. Last but not least, one further thing all programmes have in common is that they have been evaluated, even though by different methods and to a greater or lesser extent.

According to specific needs and circumstances, each new mentoring programme can decide which design fits it best. Other important factors for establishing a mentoring scheme will be described in Part II.

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## Part II

Mapping the European/  
national/regional contexts  
for mentoring schemes:  
Supportive and limiting  
factors

## Mapping the European/national/regional contexts for mentoring schemes: Supportive and limiting factors

**Helene Füger and Nikolina Sretenova**

### Introduction

The planning and implementation of mentoring schemes are facilitated by the assessment of the specific context and the presence of factors likely to support or hinder their development.<sup>1</sup>

This part provides an outline to help stakeholders map the specific situation in their own country or institution. In this sense, it aims to foster cooperation among stakeholders at the different levels of science policy detailed below, and to provide support for the initiation of new mentoring schemes.

Conclusions presented here draw on the discussions of a working group of eument-net project partners and experts.<sup>2</sup> Based on their experiences, this part addresses the following questions:

- Which conditions can we identify as supportive for initiating and organizing mentoring programmes?
- Which conditions and current developments hinder and restrict the introduction of this kind of equality measure?
- What conclusions can we draw from this analysis for future strategies to implement mentoring initiatives promoting women in academia and research?

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1 This article is based on a conceptual idea from Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti and has greatly benefited from their recommendations and support.

2 Vienna Workshop, 14–15 May 2007. Working group: Regional/local/national contexts and conditions for mentoring schemes (participants: Barbara Bagilhole, Helene Füger, Dagmar Höppel, Maca Jogan, Sabine Zauchner).

Discussion of these questions and the comparison of eument-net partners' specific experiences has made it possible to identify different levels of science policy that appear to be relevant in the mapping of contexts for the development and implementation of mentoring schemes. The six identified levels of science policy are as follows:

- European decision-making bodies;
- national governments;
- regional or local state governments (subnational level);
- academic or research institutions;
- agents;
- beneficiaries.

An assessment of the different levels allows the mapping of available resources and of priorities, in order to prepare the ground successfully for the development of a mentoring programme. This part presents the general results of the eument-net partners' discussions. More specific analysis and descriptions of their experiences are presented in Part III of this manual.

### The European level

European decision-making bodies have drawn increased attention to the promotion of women in academia and research since gender mainstreaming has been adopted as strategic approach to EU policies in 1996. Today, European policy is conducive to mentoring initiatives which tackle gender inequality in academia and research. Support for mentoring as an instrument to enhance women's position in academia and research mainly takes the form of commissioned studies, recommendations, and funding for specific mentoring initiatives.

The European Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, starting with FP5 from 1998 to 2002, have been fundamental in this respect. By stimulating "discussion and the sharing of experience" among member states, and by working to "develop a coherent approach towards promoting women in research financed by the Union" (European Commission 1999: 4) the Commission's strategy to foster women's position in European science and research also



provided momentum for mentoring. Seminal studies and reports such as those by the ETAN (European Technology Assessment Network) Working Group on Women and Science and by the Helsinki Group on Women and Science highlight the role of mentoring and of role models as concrete measures to support the advancement of women's careers in academia and research (ETAN Expert Working Group 2000; The Helsinki Group on Women and Science 2002). Commissioned reports and studies in FP6 (2002–2006) continue to point out the interest in mentoring programmes and their potential for advancing gender equality. For example, the feasibility study for the European platform of women scientists (epws) highlights the need expressed by networks of women scientists for knowledge transfer on mentoring (Bradley Dunbar Associates 2003: 6). Mentoring is further advocated as good practice to support women in industrial research (European Commission 2004a) and is highlighted in the compendium *Gender Action Plans* (European Commission 2005a). Mentoring is also advocated and defined as a particular recommendation to the European Commission by the Enwise (Enlarge Women in Science to the East) expert group (European Commission 2004b: 125–130). In addition, under FP6 the European Commission supported initiatives aimed at promoting the role and place of women in science and research at all levels, as part of its Science and Society subprogramme, in order to contribute to the structuring of the European Research Area. Within the framework of FP6, several calls were published, allowing specific mentoring initiatives and coordination actions to be funded.<sup>3</sup>

Other science policy recommendations from the European Commission also refer to mentoring. For example, the recommendations contained in the *European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* (European Commission 2005b: 22) not only stress the need for national gender equality policies, but also recognize the role of mentoring as part of a researcher's competence and creativity.

To achieve the goals set forth in the Lisbon agreement, the EU will depend on a substantial increase in women's participation at all levels

3 Among the mentoring initiatives supported in FP6 are Advance Project, TAN-DEMplusIDEA, eument-net.

of higher education and research.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore understandable that one of the central recommendations related to gender equality in FP7 is that “the proportion of women in leading positions should increase to at least 25% by 2010” (Commission Staff Working Document 2005: 17). In FP7, the Science in Society Work Programme contains a call for a “Survey of positive action schemes” and a “Meta-analysis of gender and science research”, to be completed by a compendium of specific initiatives implemented at national, regional, and institutional levels, such as mentoring, and supportive initiatives, tailored to the needs of policy makers. This call can be expected to give further momentum to mentoring initiatives.<sup>5</sup>

But European support for mentoring in academia and research is not restricted to the Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development. In Austria, for example, the European Social Fund has supported a pilot mentoring scheme for early career researchers.

These considerations point to the fact that current developments at the European level provide a supportive backdrop for promoting and initiating mentoring programmes. However, the impact of European science policy in member or associated states strongly depends on the specific national contexts and on the degree to which these contexts favour the dissemination of information and the implementation of measures in their national science policies, which support the activities of their own national delegates and representatives.

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## The national level

Notwithstanding the reform of academic curricula following the Bologna agreement in 1999 and initiatives to harmonize the European academic and research landscape, national science policies still widely differ from each other. These differences concern in particular the distribution of power and of resources, and the organization of academic

4 At the Lisbon summit in March 2000, European Union leaders set out a strategy, to become the world's most competitive, dynamic, and knowledge-driven society. After initially modest results, the Lisbon Strategy was simplified and relaunched in 2005.

5 Work Programme 2007 Capacities (European Commission C(2007)563 of 26.02.2007), Call: SiS-2007-2.1.2.1 – Meta analysis of gender and science research.

career paths. In addition, they determine the specific obstacles and opportunities that will favour or hinder the implementation of concrete measures, such as mentoring, to promote women in academia and research.

National regulations on gender equality in higher education and research that admit of positive action and that are linked to an operational public policy or to financial incentives for universities of course present very supportive conditions for the development of mentoring programmes. Experiences in Switzerland, Austria, and Germany exemplify – in different ways – the importance of support at the level of national science policy for the development of mentoring programmes. An administrative entity at the national level charged with the promotion of women in academia and research can play a central role in promoting measures, such as mentoring, through the dissemination of information, support for networking and knowledge transfer, and through its impact on national science policy and the definition of operational measures.

The Swiss experience highlights the importance of associations and political lobbying in a context where the role of national authorities in regulating higher education institutions is relatively weak and not directly linked to specific instruments for the promotion of gender equality. In such a context, NGOs, feminist associations, networks, and a political lobby may be important in preparing the ground for a national policy in support of specific measures, such as mentoring, to promote women and gender equality.

Generally, experience tends to show that national governments' policies and funding play a central role in the initial development of mentoring programmes to support women in academia and research.

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### The subnational level

In federal countries, the national government's legal authority over the higher education sector can be limited and at least partially transferred to the level of regional or local state governments. In such a context, important supportive or restrictive factors for the development of mentoring programmes for women in academia and research

can be situated at the regional or local state level. This is illustrated by the German case.

Potential support for mentoring programmes by regional or local state governments is likely to be of a similar kind as mentioned with regard to the national level (legal regulations, positive action programmes, etc.). However, support by regional or local state governments may not entirely replace or compensate for action on a national level. Initiatives to set up national networks of mentoring programmes underline the importance of the national level in nurturing debate and exchange on measures for gender equality such as mentoring.

Experience in Germany and Switzerland shows that competition between regional or local state governments for an effective public policy in higher education may be a positive factor in generating the regional or local government's support for mentoring programmes. Furthermore, such an impact is likely to be fostered by the existence of networks and the presence of NGOs and/or feminist associations at the national level.

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### The level of academic or research institutions

Considerations above have stressed the importance of the European, national, and subnational levels for the development of mentoring schemes for women. When mapping the context for the development of mentoring initiatives, resources at the level of academic or research institutions also represent an important factor. As a matter of fact, internal regulations that allow for or require policies for the promotion of gender equality are significant in the development of mentoring programmes. They are particularly relevant for the lasting implementation of mentoring programmes, as exemplified by the Austrian case, *muv*.

However, these regulations are only effective if they are supported by the presence of organizational and administrative structures and resources. If regulations for gender equality are linked to strategic and operational objectives, they will provide a very favourable context. In this case, the questions will be: Who is in charge of the definition and implementation of these policies? Do they have adequate knowledge about mentoring?

Organizational and administrative structures, such as gender equality offices, appear to play an important role as facilitators in implementing measures, such as mentoring, for the promotion of gender equality in higher education. Their role ranges from the assessment of specific needs, to the dissemination of knowledge and the elaboration of a targeted project design, to fundraising and project management.

The lack of institutional resources to take on these tasks will therefore be a limiting factor, even in cases where there is a national policy that promotes mentoring schemes.

Institutions that have regulations and resources for the promotion of gender equality are very likely to be institutions that are open to structural change and innovation. Such an institutional culture also represents a supportive factor for the implementation of mentoring programmes, because it will strengthen the perception of mentoring as an instrument to promote excellence, and participation in such a programme as a form of recognition.

The existence of a human resources and staff development policy concerned with gender equality may also provide support for the development of a reward system for researchers and professors participating in mentoring programmes.

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### **The level of supportive agents**

The successful development of mentoring programmes depends on the presence of individuals within the specific institution who are interested and willing to invest time and energy in setting up such a programme. In other words, supportive institutional structures by themselves are not sufficient for the successful development of mentoring programmes.

Supportive agents are needed in the administrative sector of the institutions, for example, in gender equality offices, who are willing to take over coordinating and administrative functions. Furthermore, support from agents within the academic field is also crucial for the development of mentoring programmes. Mentoring programmes

benefit greatly from the resources of high-ranking individuals within the academic and scientific body who are willing to give support, for example, by being on its “advisory” or “scientific board” and by sharing their experience and personal networks for the benefit of the mentoring programme; that is, by assuming a role that goes beyond that of a mentor in the programme. Besides their status, the effectiveness of supporting agents depends on their gender competence and their feminist sensibility.

The lack of such agents will clearly be an obstacle to the development of mentoring programmes. If mentoring is new in an academic or research institution, supporting agents may be motivated by their interest in getting involved with a new form of support for women in their early careers, and by the prospect of enriching their own experience and exchanging on it.

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### **The level of beneficiaries (mentors and mentees)**

The presence of a critical mass of potential mentors who are willing to share their knowledge and experience is a decisive factor for the development of a mentoring programme. The experiences of eument-net partners suggest that even if programmes do not draw entirely, or even largely, on women mentors, a critical mass of female role models is an important element for successful mentoring programmes to promote women in academia and research.

The potential mentor’s readiness to provide support and to network through alternative channels and in a different setting from traditional, male-dominated structures is also an important factor for successful mentoring programmes. Likewise, the absence of information on mentoring and the absence of a culture of networking will represent a considerable obstacle to the development of mentoring programmes: an obstacle that needs to be addressed.

The possibility of providing recognition for mentors’ activity in the programme constitutes an important supportive factor for the development of successful mentoring programmes. This recognition may take different forms. The experience of eument-net partners emphasizes

the importance of the “symbolic” reward that is sometimes underlined and supported by compensation in the form of additional tutorial staff (see, for example, the case of *muV* in Vienna), rather than a salary in exchange for mentors’ work.

The aspects mentioned with regard to mentors are also relevant for the potential mentees of a mentoring programme. Besides the presence of a critical mass of persons from the programme’s target population, the development of a mentoring programme will be facilitated by the target population’s prior knowledge about such forms of support, and by the advantages of and symbolic recognition conferred by the selection for and participation in a mentoring programme.

## Conclusion

The discussion above underlines the importance of contextualized strategies for the development of mentoring programmes for women academics and researchers, and it takes into account the specific circumstances on different levels, reaching from the European level to that of beneficiaries. Similarly, it also shows that the promotion of gender equality in higher education and research, and the development of adequate measures require action and information on different levels. This in turn highlights the structural dimension of gender equality measures in higher education and research in general, and of mentoring programmes in particular. This structural dimension not only involves academic and research institutions, but also engaged actors and individuals, associations, and networks on various levels.

Part III highlights in more detail specific experiences and strategies of implementation of mentoring programmes by *eument-net* project partners. While these examples reflect the general discussions presented in this part, they also highlight and underline the specific way in which national and even regional and local contexts shape strategies and processes in developing mentoring programmes to promote women in academia and research.

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## **Part III**

Implementing mentoring programmes: Different understandings and different strategies

## Implementing a formal mentoring scheme at the University of Vienna: Interventions in several directions

Herta Nöbauer and Evi Genetti

### Some theoretical reflections

Based on theoretical reflections and feminist research on higher education, we wish to discuss implementation issues in their broader context. In our view, gender equality policies should not be detached from feminist research and critical gender studies. As a consequence, we also argue that questions of implementation should or need to be linked with questions of cultural and political interventions into and changes in the deeply gendered structure of academia through mentoring initiatives. However, mentoring schemes committed to gender equality do not necessarily change the hegemonic, male-dominated mechanisms and structures simply by existing. Rather, a continuous critical reflection on structural and institutional prerequisites and university organization is necessary. More specifically that means gender equality measures should not just aim at a higher quantitative representation of women in the academic field; nor should mentoring measures merely be understood as instruments of individual promotional or personnel development. Instead they should also include institutional, structural, and scientific criticism as much as they should relate to broader and more global change and restructuring processes going on with(in) the university. Such an understanding of a “politicized”<sup>1</sup> and critical-theory-oriented practice has, indeed, decisive effects upon the conception and design of mentoring programmes. By also taking into consideration institutional dimensions and scientific-political reflections, we argue, the potential of mentoring programmes’ implementation processes for women academics could be increased and thus be used in a much better way for cultural and structural changes in academia.

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1 See our definition of “politicized” practice in Part I.

### Some reflections on a complex, long-lasting, and discontinuous process

As described in Part I on the design of mentoring programmes, from its inception *muV* has set as one important goal among others the implementation of formalized mentoring for women academics as a regular instrument for gender-equal career advancement at the University of Vienna. *muV*’s process of institutionalization, however, clearly demonstrates that its implementation has been a complex, long-lasting, and discontinuous process. It is not only influenced by various factors, but is also characterized by manifold top-down and bottom-up measures taken at the levels of university politics, university organization and legal regulations. In addition, the individual actors involved play a decisive role with their specific knowledge, views, activities, and positions in academia.

In the case of *muV*, the concurrence of challenging insights provided by feminist research on higher education, engaged individuals in the university and the Austrian Ministry of Science and Research in the late 1990s and in 2000, new available EU and national funds, and politically driven university reform processes made it possible to initiate the first mentoring project for women academics at an Austrian university in 2000. However, convincing the respective university committees and individuals, so as to achieve the necessary acceptance and overall support for realizing the organization of the first formal mentoring pilot project at the university, was a way paved with numerous obstacles.

### Windows of opportunity: conditions in the initial stage

In what follows we will illustrate more specifically how the ground for initiating our mentoring programme was prepared by making use of the opportunities available. By focusing on the first stage of *muV* we especially wish to reveal those levels and conditions which were of greatest significance for initiating the implementation process. In doing so, we also want to exemplify how interventions may take place and interrelate with the potential for cultural and structural change.<sup>2</sup>

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2 For a more detailed discussion on this process of structural interventions see Nöbauer and Genetti 2006 (in German).

From a more analytical perspective, the initial stage of formal mentoring at the University of Vienna can be considered as a process of disparate interventions on three different levels. Such interventions into the university with regard to initiating mentoring for women academics have been made through “top-down” politics and policies, “bottom-up” interventions, and from the organizational periphery of the university.

*Through “top-down” politics and policies:* The Ministry for Education, Science and Culture or, to put it more precisely, the division of that time that was in charge of gender equality and gender studies in higher education as well as the then minister himself, strongly encouraged the University of Vienna and specific members of the university management to initiate a gender-specific mentoring project. This was mainly due to the instructive and also striking results provided by feminist studies on higher education and mentoring funded by the same ministerial unit.

*Through “bottom-up” interventions:* Freelance and university feminist researchers and (politically) engaged individuals cooperated with individual actors in the respective ministry in order to initiate a mentoring scheme at the University of Vienna. This was during a period when new possibilities for funding emerged (especially the European Social Fund and national co-funding). Thus freelance feminist researchers have been integrated into the university as mentoring developers and coordinators by third-party funds.

*From the organizational periphery of the university:* The Coordination Office for Gender Studies (as it was then known) was most active in stimulating and initiating a mentoring project at the University of Vienna. However, it was the then newly founded and distinct unit known as the Project Center for Women’s Advancement (today called the Center for Gender Equality) that was fully engaged to apply for all necessary funds and to locate the mentoring project within its centre.

The fact that the Vice-Rector for Personnel and Women’s Advancement headed this centre had a notably positive impact on the whole implementation process of *muV* due to its integration into the top

level of university management and the wider context of human resources and gender equality policies.<sup>3</sup>

After the end of the pilot project, which lasted from 2000 until 2003, unfortunately *muV* had to be interrupted for several months. This was the period when we had to wait for the granting of new funds that we needed for the second cycle. Between 2004 and 2006, however, *muV* could once more offer mentoring to new mentees with new mentors.

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### Conditions now

Today *muV* is in its third round and is formally headed by the Rector of the University of Vienna and as already mentioned it is fully funded by university financial resources. It has been incorporated step by step but with a continuous effort into all main strategic documents and regulations of the University of Vienna such as: the Development Plan of the University of Vienna, the Performance Agreement between the university and the Federal Ministry for Science and Research, the university’s Affirmative Action Plan, and its Intellectual Capital Report.

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### Conclusion

To sum up, these interventions illustrate that the activities of feminist researchers and proponents in their various positions in the government ministries, freelance research, and university fields together with the existing political, legal, institutional, and structural conditions at different levels have played a key role in initiating the mentoring project.

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 3 The integration of *muV* into the university top level has also been very important for successfully implementing the institutional recognition of mentoring activities that professors offer as mentors to the mentees of *muV*.

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# Implementing mentoring programmes in a regional setting: Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes (RRM)

**Helene Fügler**

## Changes in Swiss national science policy: an opportunity for gender equality

The Swiss academic system is characterized by a highly decentralized structure. Only the Federal Institutes of Technology of Zurich (ETHZ) and Lausanne (EPFL) are under the authority of the federal (i.e., national) government. The other 10 universities come under the authority of their respective cantonal governments. As a consequence, the federal authorities have only limited means to regulate the Swiss academic landscape. Accordingly, the laws and organizational structures of Swiss universities are quite diverse. This is also true with regard to the universities' gender equality regulations and policies. At the end of the 1990s, only six out of 12 universities had gender equality offices, and mostly these had very limited resources and hardly any relevant competences.

In 1999, a new federal law introduced project-related funds for innovation and cooperation in strategic areas as a new tool for financial support to universities.<sup>4</sup> This new tool represented only a small proportion of federal funding to universities. However, it provided an opportunity to finance gender equality measures. Through the combined impact of lobbying by feminist associations, politicians, and gender equality officers, and a sympathetic/strategic attitude by the then Secretary of State for Science and Research, the federal government included a programme for gender equality in higher education in its four-year policy plan from 2000 to 2003 (renewed in 2004 and 2008).

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4 Loi fédérale du 8 octobre 1999 sur l'aide aux universités et la coopération dans le domaine des hautes écoles (Loi sur l'aide aux universités, LAU): [http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/c414\\_20.html](http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/c414_20.html) (Access: 17-12-07).



The programme comprised three modules and also provided seed money for gender equality infrastructures in universities. Thanks to knowledge about mentoring, made available to stakeholders through conferences and international contacts, one of the modules was dedicated to financing mentoring projects promoting women in their early career in the academy and research. To qualify for funding, projects had to be submitted by a university and provide 50% matching funds (30% for joint projects).

### **Different resources for the development of RRM**

At the outset of the federal programme in 2000, in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, only the University of Fribourg and the EPFL had an office for gender equality. The others either did not (yet) have such a unit, or the position had been vacant for several years. This situation helps to explain why the University of Fribourg took a leading role in the implementation of mentoring programmes in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

The presence of a part-time gender equality officer provided the necessary resources for the elaboration of RRM in terms of working hours, office infrastructure, mentoring know-how, and contacts with initiators of other mentoring projects.

Additional support came from an active member of the University of Fribourg's commission for gender equality (a representative body that supports the gender equality office) who agreed to become head of RRM, and convinced several colleagues from other universities in the French-speaking part of Switzerland to become members of the board of partners.

Thus while the gender equality office of the University of Berne undertook to submit a regional mentoring project for the German-speaking part of Switzerland (MDCH), the University of Fribourg designed its project as a counterpart for the French-speaking region. From the start, the two projects cooperated. This included creating a joint corporate identity (with different colours), cross-referencing each other's

programmes on their websites, regularly exchanging experience and cooperating in the development of a strategy of long-term implementation.

*Financing and implementation:* The continuation of the federal government's financial support for more than 10 (and probably 12) years has been very important for RRM's implementation strategy. The initial ambition to have mentoring projects established within four years (e.g., to secure 100% funding from sources other than the federal government's programme) proved illusory, if ever it had been seriously envisaged, particularly so in the case of a joint project like RRM.

In the case of RRM, the "matching funds" provided by the participating universities for the first three rounds (2000–2005) took entirely indirect forms, such as salaries and infrastructure, with the programme coordination at the University of Fribourg contributing the largest share. This strategy of making the partner universities' contribution non-monetary was adopted in order not to jeopardize the joint project by risking opposition from one of the partner universities for financial reasons. With mentoring being an entirely new concept at Swiss universities, and gender equality offices on the point of being established in many of them, the risk of opposition or non-participation had to be minimized.

Since the fourth programme cycle, RRM has received financial support in the form of cash not only from its partner universities, but also from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF). It was possible to secure this financial support because of evidence provided for the success of the programme, and because gender equality officers in the partner universities and at the SNF provided access to these institutions. Cooperation with MDCH was strategically important in securing SNF funding: together the programmes cover all Swiss universities.

*Background and future of RRM's implementation strategy:* Since the 1990s, science policy in support of young researchers has steadily grown in importance at Swiss universities. This is partly due to the shortage of top academics to replace retiring professors and boost research, and partly to increasing international competition.

Mentoring programmes such as RRM are among the pioneering institutional programmes addressing issues in career development in academia and research and providing support for PhD students and post-doc researchers. As such supportive structures and programmes develop, RRM's focus on networking women, and on taking their experiences and needs as a starting point will be important distinguishing factors.

The experience of RRM shows that addressing the structural shortcomings of academic institutions from the perspective of women's (i.e., a minority's<sup>5</sup>) position in academia and research has much innovative potential. For its medium-term strategy, therefore, RRM does not aspire to the mainstreaming of its concept or its transformation into a mixed mentoring programme. Instead its strategy will be to establish itself as an additional option available to women, defining its aims by regularly reassessing its gender dimension on the basis of women's specific circumstances and needs. Thereby it will continue to draw on this potential for innovation and change. Two dimensions of the academic landscape in the French-speaking part of Switzerland seem to favour such a strategy.

Since the 1970s, the cantonal authorities of the universities in the French-speaking part of Switzerland have started to coordinate initiatives to promote exchange among researchers and academics across institutions. In recent years, the Conférence universitaire de Suisse occidentale (CUSO) has focused its activities at the level of PhD and post-doctoral programmes, and has financed joint initiatives of member universities (mainly doctoral schools). This corroborates the regional context and RRM's strategy.

A second dimension is the current development of gender studies and feminist research around the Laboratoire interuniversitaire en études genre (Liège) at the University of Lausanne. Researchers around Liège engage in critical research and discussion on university structures and on the role of mentoring programmes. This provides a context that will support and favour debate around aims, activities, and achievements of mentoring programmes such as RRM.

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 5 In 2006, women represented 13.4% of professors at Swiss universities and Federal Institutes of Technology (i.e., category A positions according to She Figures), 23.7% of other teaching staff (B positions according to She Figures), and 38.8% of post-doc, research and teaching assistants (C positions, according to She Figures).

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## Implementing Mentoring Swiss German (MDCH) at the University of Berne

**Sabine Lask and Louise Graf**

### The beginning of the era of mentoring programmes in Switzerland

The implementation of mentoring programmes at the beginning of 2000 at Swiss universities and Federal Institutes of Technology was the result of manifold, interdependent activities. The various initiatives of the strong feminist political movement in Switzerland, the commitment of gender equality activists within and outside academic institutions and that of policy makers and facilitators have been very important. These activities were not restricted to Switzerland alone, but can be situated in a broader context, because the same process was taking place in other European countries too.

With their critical reflection and research at the turn of millennium, feminist scientists in Switzerland and abroad exposed the gender inequalities in the Swiss scientific system. The feminist movement's analysis and findings form the theoretical basis of the work of academic gender equality departments. In addition, this theoretical work is linked to concrete gender equality measures, such as the development of mentoring programmes to promote women's careers in higher education and research.

FemWiss, the Swiss Association of Feminist Studies, established in 1983, played an initial and supporting role in the implementation of mentoring programmes in Switzerland. FemWiss is a national association of freelance and university feminists, which has not yet been structurally integrated into official scientific organizations. It has been lobbying for gender studies and has influenced gender equality in national policy.

In the run-up to transforming the new national gender policy into concrete measures, FemWiss organized the first Swiss mentoring conference in 1999 to emphasize the importance of mentoring as a means of advancing women scientists. Since then, mentoring has been accepted as an effective instrument against structural barriers in the scientific system, and has been used as a measure to enhance equal opportunities in academia and science.

### Swiss national gender policy and mentoring programmes

The actual initiation of formal mentoring programmes in Switzerland was closely linked to a national gender policy, to the development of which all the forces mentioned above have contributed substantially. In 1999, the Swiss executive, the Federal Council, took the decision to no longer tolerate the under-representation of women in professorships at Swiss universities. When compared internationally, the proportion of women professors in Switzerland at that time was below the average for OECD countries, which was then 10%. In order to advance the equal opportunities of women and men at Swiss universities, the Federal Council considered it imperative to double the percentage of women professors from 7% (1998) to 14% (2006). Subsequently, the Federal Programme of Equal Opportunities (FP) was created, its objective being to raise the number of women professors at Swiss universities and thereby implement the new national gender policy. The FP has supported measures on different levels, namely, financial rewards for universities that appoint women professors, mentoring programmes, and childcare services. Moreover, the FP has also provided financial support for the creation of gender equality structures at all Swiss universities. Within only two years, gender equality departments were established at all Swiss universities, and on the national level gender equality structures were put in place as well. The University of Berne has done some pioneering work in establishing gender equality structures. The Gender Equality Section of the university dates back to 1990 and is one of the oldest established in Switzerland. Furthermore, very early, the University of Berne had drawn up gender equality regulations that could serve as a role model for others.

### Individual approach – structural effects

Academic mentoring programmes in Switzerland constitute a gender equality measure that has been developed in the context of feminist science, with an awareness of gender inequalities and gender-related barriers in academic careers. MDCH transfers the awareness of these inequalities to the participants of the programme, and also makes the former public via different channels.

The formal mentoring programme MDCH has been implemented as a policy instrument to promote advanced early career scientists, with the ultimate objective of raising the number of women professors at Swiss German universities. MDCH promotes individual scientists; in this regard, MDCH does not explicitly intend to change the male-dominated structures of the scientific system. However, from a long-term perspective, the existence of a mentoring programme as an explicit measure to increase the proportion of women in the higher ranks of the university nevertheless contributes to structural changes in academia, because changes concerning individuals in the long term also bring forth changes at the structural level.

An important and specific achievement of mentoring programmes is sensitizing both mentees and mentors to gender aspects of the scientific system and to gender-related challenges on the academic career path. This is mainly done within the mentoring programme by the systematic transfer of knowledge about the mechanisms that form the basis of gender inequalities in academia and research. The interaction between mentee and mentor also plays an important role in this process. Furthermore, through its public relations work, MDCH affects a wider circle of individuals. This sensitization and the raising of personal awareness of gender inequality account for structural change in academia. Certainly, the degree to which a structural alteration actually takes place depends very much on the personal attributes of the individual actors involved in the mentoring programme. The role and status of the actors are thus important factors, as are their gender knowledge and attitudes, how they act within the specific structures, and to what extent they use the scope of their actions or do not comply with the given rules. So, even if MDCH does not explicitly tackle change in the underlying structures of the scientific

system, by working with individuals involved in this system, it does affect these structures.

### Institutionalization of MDCH

MDCH has been developed as a regional and interdisciplinary programme, which is conducted jointly by the gender equality departments of the Swiss German universities. MDCH is (created as) a joint project for two reasons. First, the programme is designed for women scientists and researchers who are working towards their Habilitation (second book) or are engaged in post-doctoral and advanced doctoral studies. It is therefore pitched at such a high level in academia and research, that it is beneficial to have an enlarged pool of potential mentees. The second reason is that MDCH places emphasis on networking – an ambition that an interuniversity programme accommodates perfectly.

A public body for equal opportunities had already existed at the University of Berne before the introduction of mentoring programmes, and with the gender equality regulations, a local policy had been formulated. Thus the climate at the University of Berne could be characterized as favourable for the introduction of formal mentoring programmes. The Gender Equality Section with its relatively long history had a secure financial status and constituted a supporting agency for MDCH; the gender competence existing within the former enhanced its supportive function. The funds that the FP provided for gender equality measures at Swiss universities ensured personnel resources for the coordination of MDCH.

However, there were some difficulties concerning the implementation of MDCH that mainly resulted from it being a joint project. The fact that different universities, with their different institutional structures and different sources of funds, jointly conduct MDCH implies certain difficulties regarding the complete and long-term implementation of the programme.

Nonetheless, several big steps towards the full implementation of MDCH have been taken. In 2001, the first programme started, and

at the time of writing (in 2008) the fifth programme is already taking place. Since 2006, the programme has obtained funds from the Swiss National Science Foundation, and the financial contribution of the partner universities has been increased, so that they currently fund nearly two-thirds of the programme. The goal now is to build up a long-lasting organizational and financial structure for the programme.

## Implementing a regional mentoring scheme in Germany: MuT – Mentoring und Training

**Lisa Peschel and Dagmar Höppel**

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### Understanding of implementation

MuT has a broad understanding of implementation. According to this understanding, implementation includes analysing given conditions; deciding which strategy is best to promote early career researchers under the given conditions; creating the conditions necessary for setting up a mentoring programme; gaining political acceptance and support, securing funds etc.; designing and starting the programme itself; and the practical day-to-day running of the programme. The following will address the different levels that figure in the implementation of MuT.

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### Regional/federal state level

The regional or federal state level is very important for academic mentoring programmes in Germany, as education is regulated on this level. Federal states have their own laws for regulating higher education institutions, their formal structures, and their finances.<sup>6</sup>

Baden-Württemberg was one of the last German federal states to introduce an initiative to increase the percentage of women among professors. This was the Margarete von Wrangell-Habilitation Programme, set up to support female early career researchers in working towards their post-doctoral lecture qualification. In addition to the financial support provided by the Wrangell Programme, MuT was set up to

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6 To understand the importance of federal structures in Germany, a glance at population figures may be useful: The federal state of Baden-Württemberg has 10.7 million inhabitants (for comparison: Austria: 8.3 ; Bulgaria: 7.8 ; Switzerland 7.5).

offer mentoring relationships and training courses in leadership skills. As a programme that was to cover the whole of the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, MuT was affiliated to the Landeskonferenz der Gleichstellungsbeauftragten an den Wissenschaftlichen Hochschulen Baden-Württembergs/LaKoG (State Conference of Gender Equality Officers at Baden-Württemberg's Institutions of Higher Education). So Baden-Württemberg turned out to be the first German state to introduce a state-wide mentoring programme.

In 1998, its first year, the budget of MuT was only 10,000 DM (roughly corresponding to € 5,000). The low-budget character of the programme made it even more acceptable to some science policy makers. However, the budget covered only material costs and course instructors' fees, but no salaries for permanent employees. As today, costs were partly covered by funds from the State Ministry for Science and Research and partly by participants' fees, as well as voluntary work. Ministry funding was possible within the framework of the Hochschulsonderprogramm (Special Universities Programme). This programme was replaced by the Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsprogramm (Universities and Science Programme). In the first year of MuT, Orientation Courses were the only accompanying measures to mentoring. But repeated applications to the Science Ministry for more funds were successful, so that additional training measures could be introduced (see Part I).

The transition from a low-budget to a better-equipped programme was achieved with cooperation agreements between MuT and other institutions and gender equality programmes like the Schlieben-Lange Programme. Participants in these programmes are required to take part in MuT workshops and training. In return, MuT receives funds. A similar agreement has been made with the Max Planck Society's Minerva Programme and with the University of Konstanz within the framework of its excellence cluster.<sup>7</sup> In 2007, a new part-time position (50%) for coordination activities was allotted to MuT as acknowledgement for years of high-quality work.

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 7 Junior staff development and gender equality measures were among the criteria for receiving government funds within the framework of excellence initiatives. See also Part I "MuT – Mentoring und Training".

When MuT started in 1998, it was initiated from within existing and established gender equality structures: LaKoG, under whose roof the programme ran and still runs. LaKoG is involved in other gender equality measures too of course, making mentoring just one measure among others.

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### National and EU level

As mentioned above, the national level is less important than the federal state/regional level in Germany, and its importance has decreased further since the mid 1990s. Mentoring programmes from different federal states have organized themselves on a non-governmental level in the "Mentoring Forum".

However, EU funding policies (e.g., FP7, European Social Fund) give the European level a new importance for mentoring programmes. Networking projects like eument-net open up new horizons and give the participating mentoring programmes a new impetus. The participating mentoring programmes get the chance to reflect on distinct forms of mentoring, the role and function of mentoring in different national and educational contexts, as well as contexts where there is little gender awareness and where the problem is more to get a career perspective in science at all, regardless of gender. However, these different conditions, forms, and understandings of mentoring can also be obstacles to the cooperation process. It is necessary to find a common denominator before deciding on joint activities.

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### Supportive agents

Of course, the success of MuT would not have been possible without the commitment of supportive agents. Many such agents have been so committed as to contribute their own free time. Among the supportive agents for MuT are individuals at the Science Ministry, the programme coordinators, university deans and vice-presidents, individual professors, former mentees, and many more who are part of the ever-growing MuT network.

One point which has become crucial for the implementation of the mentoring programme is the ability to bring in resources of one's own – to make personal contributions. In the case of MuT, LaKoG staff contributed their work time, and often their free time too, and LaKoG rooms could be used for MuT seminars. When representatives of funding bodies see such commitment in a programme's organizers, and see that due to the organizers' contributions, they will not have to fund the whole programme, they are often more easily convinced to give support. Fundraising efforts by organizers can have the same effect. It is estimated that a tripartition of funding, with equal shares contributed by the organization itself, fundraising efforts, and the Science Ministry is ideal. In the case of MuT, the ministry's contribution was about 60% of the total budget in early 2007, whereas personal contributions made up 40%. This is because so far there have been no personal resources available for fundraising campaigns.

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### Level of beneficiaries

From the beginning, MuT has pursued a top-down approach. Women with or in the process of attaining their post-doctoral lecture qualification are the main target group. The programme is also open to participants at an advanced stage of their PhD, but not for students. MuT recognized that the beginning and the end of qualification stages are crucial points at which futures are decided, and at which there is a need for mentoring. In addition, many individual universities have their own mentoring programmes to cater to mentoring needs at these other stages, e.g., at the student stages.

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### Conclusion

The example of MuT shows two things: First, that in different contexts different levels may be crucial to the implementation of mentoring programmes. Due to the federal structure of the academic landscape in Germany, it is the regional level that is most important. In contexts with little or no governmental support policy, the EU level may be the most important.

Secondly, the example shows that there are many opportunities and different ways to start a mentoring programme, and that it is possible to start a programme even with very little funding and then expand it step by step. Dependence on a single, large funding body for significant sums of money is a risk for high-budget programmes if their source of funding fails. Low-budget programmes – which need less funding and are thus more flexible – and their effects may prove even more sustainable in the long run.

## A contextualized perspective for initiating a pilot mentoring scheme in Bulgaria

**Nikolina Sretenova**

During the Vienna workshop in 2007<sup>8</sup> discussions focused among other things on the specific regional, local, and national contexts and conditions for mentoring schemes. It was argued that the start-up of a mentoring programme is strongly dependent on the synergy between specific supportive conditions on several levels – national, institutional, and that of agents (actors), and potential beneficiaries (mentees and mentors). Thus knowledge about the specific supportive and limiting factors inherent at each constituent level is needed in order to create a strategy for implementing mentoring programmes in any given country.

This chapter aims to provide insight into and to highlight the specific factors currently operating at each level in Bulgaria by comparing them with those in the countries of the other eument-net project partners – Switzerland, Germany, and Austria. In doing so, we outline a contextualized perspective for the start-up of a pilot mentoring scheme in Bulgaria.

### **The national level: can a policy of non-discrimination bring about gender equality in higher education and research?**

EU membership imposed a new agenda on the national level. According to that, Bulgaria had to harmonize its legislation with that of the EU during the so-called “accession period” (1998–2006), i.e., to transpose the Union acquis onto its national legislation. In relation

<sup>8</sup> The workshop was held at the University of Vienna on 14 and 15 May 2007. The working group focusing on these particular issues was entitled “Regional contexts and conditions for mentoring schemes”. Barbara Bagilhole, Helene Füger, Dagmar Höppel, Maca Jogan, and Sabine Zauchner participated.

to recommendations made in Chapter 13 of the acquis, “Social policy and employment” (Commission of the European Communities 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004),<sup>9</sup> dealing with the framework legislation on equal treatment for men and women, Bulgaria adopted a Law on Protection against Discrimination in 2003 (State Gazette 2003b). In early 2004, an Equal Opportunities for Women and Men sector was established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, with a view to coordinating and implementing the state policy in this area. A National Council for Equal Opportunities was then established at the Bulgarian Council of Ministers. It is a consultative body that is supposed to support the development of the gender equality policy’s coordination in all spheres of the country’s economic, political, and public life. Some Bulgarian NGOs have been invited to take part in the work of this body. However, the anti-discrimination policy has not been translated into a policy of mainstreaming gender equality in the HE and R&D sectors.

The recommendations made within Chapter 17 of the acquis, “Science and research” (Commission of the European Communities 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004) gave impetus to the enactment of a new Law for Scientific Research Promotion (State Gazette 2003a).

This law envisages the creation of a new structure – a “National Council for Scientific Research” – that will assist the Minister of Education and Science in implementing the state policy aimed at scientific research promotion and it will contribute to the development of the “National Strategy for Scientific Research”. It also provides a new statute of the “National Fund for Scientific Research”.

The Law for Scientific Research Promotion pays particular attention to the younger generation of scientists. However, the term “gender” does not appear within the provisions of the new law, nor is a requirement

<sup>9</sup> Several “Regular Reports on Bulgaria’s Progress towards Accession” delivered by the Commission of the European Communities at the end of 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 assessed the progress made in preparation for membership, and they recommended some improvements in the field. They addressed the question of Bulgaria’s ability to assume the obligations of membership, i.e., the legal and institutional framework, known as the acquis, by means of which the Union implements its objectives. These official documents have been structured in accordance with the list of 29 acquis chapters. Chapter 13 “Social policy and employment” was one of these negotiating chapters.



for gender balance and equal opportunity among the criteria for evaluating projects submitted to the National Fund for Scientific Research (Sretenova 2006).

The Bulgarian case differs greatly from those of the other countries dealt with in this volume. As has been shown in Parts I and II above, as well as in Part III, at the level of the federal and/or national governments of Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, a national policy for gender equality in higher education has been adopted and further developed in the respective Ministries of Education and Science. The operationalization of these policies results in the creation of departments/units in charge of implementing state policy for gender equality in higher education through the founding of specific target programmes and funding sources to support activities in this area.

In particular, in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland specific laws have been enacted that provide a means for implementing gender equality in higher education and which enable the creation of federal equal opportunities programmes in accordance with the adopted national policy (as was discussed at the Sofia workshop in 2007<sup>10</sup>).

Unlike those in the partner countries, in Bulgaria the Ministry of Education and Science has not developed a similar national policy for gender equality in higher education because it has to address other priorities in its agenda setting. Consequently, the ministry lacks the organizational and administrative structure necessary to engage with the coordination of activities in the field of gender equality in higher education as well as a specific budget for support of such activities. The main assumption operating on this level is that according to the statistics, as far as HE and R&D are concerned, the issue of gender equality has been resolved in Bulgaria (Sretenova 2004; 2006).<sup>11</sup>

However, from the standpoint of gender equality, the important question is “Why are women researchers and academics still under-repre-

10 This eument-net workshop took place on 3 and 4 December 2007 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

11 According to the National Strategy for Scientific Research for the period 2005–2010 (still in progress), the issue of women in science has been resolved within the Bulgarian R&D sector and the current under-representation of women scientists in decision-making positions is instead related to the general issue of emancipation and not to problems within the R&D sector itself.

sented at the highest levels of the academic hierarchy and in decision-making bodies?”

It is also worth noting that five of the “new” EU member states – Bulgaria, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – have the highest relative share of women researchers in their R&D sectors: over 40% (EU Commission/Statistics in focus 2003; EU Commission/Enwise Report 2004; EU Commission/She Figures 2006). As the Enwise Report<sup>12</sup> highlights, the “optimistic statistics” about women researchers in these countries look very different when cross-referenced with another set of statistics: the R&D expenditure per capita/researcher. It appears that with regard to the five countries in question, while they have the highest proportions of employed women researchers in their R&D sectors, at the same time they have the lowest R&D expenditure per capita/researcher. Furthermore, if we take into account the so-called horizontal segregation, i.e., the concentration of male and female researchers across scientific fields and R&D sectors, then it becomes evident that women are squeezed out of competitive, high-expenditure R&D sectors, but are absorbed into struggling low-expenditure sectors as a kind of “back-up” human resource (EU Commission/Enwise Report 2004). In short, the current situation seems to be profitable for the R&D sector itself but not for women researchers employed in this sector.

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### The level of academic or research institutions

The national policy of “non-discrimination by sex in all fields of social activities” has also been translated at the level of academic and/or research institutions. To date, all normative documents regulating the Bulgarian HE and governmental R&D sectors<sup>13</sup> as well as the regulations<sup>14</sup> deriving from them have set texts in their provisions on the prohibition of all kinds of discrimination – be it by sex, ethnicity, religion, etc. However, neither in the regulations, nor in the normative

12 See [http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/page\\_en.cfm?id=3197](http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/page_en.cfm?id=3197) (Access: 06-04-2008).

13 These include the Higher Education Act, Law for the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Law on Scientific Titles and Degrees, Law for Scientific Research Promotion.

14 Regulation of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Regulations for Sofia University’s organization and activity.

documents is there any texts related to the issues of gender equality in higher education and research, the monitoring of gender balance, etc. As a result, there is no office/officer charged with responsibility for the implementation of equal opportunity policy at the level of Bulgarian universities and research institutes.

A comparison with partners' cases once again demonstrates a marked difference. For example, in Switzerland the adopted national policy for "gender equality in higher education" on the federal and/or national level has involved the creation of a particular organizational and administrative structure – Offices for Gender Equality across Swiss French and Swiss German universities; in Germany a particular regional structure – Baden-Württemberg's State Conference of Gender Equality Officers (LaKoG); in Austria the then Project Center for Women's Advancement, which was later renamed the Center for Gender Equality and located at the Rectorate of the University of Vienna. It is not by chance that the mentoring programmes in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria stem from or are still affiliated with these organizational and administrative structures that function at the institutional level of the respective universities. As already mentioned, the Bulgarian HE sector (consisting of 51 universities) as well as the Bulgarian governmental R&D sector, and in particular the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) (consisting of 67 research institutes), lack similar structures that might facilitate the potential initiation of an academic mentoring programme in Bulgaria.

### The level of agents

At this level I will discuss the availability of high-ranking individuals (associate and full professors) willing to invest time and energy in supporting an academic mentoring scheme in Bulgaria. In particular, I will identify two limiting factors operating at this level, one of which is gendered.

The low wages of Bulgarian academics and researchers during the last 18 years have given rise to a new phenomenon of double or even triple employment among high-level personnel (both male and female associate and full professors) in the HE and governmental R&D sectors. Under these extreme circumstances it seems virtually impossi-

le to convince these people to invest additional time in the mentoring enterprise (Sretenova 2003).<sup>15</sup> This specific phenomenon (called "flying-across-the-country professors") is present to only a limited extent in the partner countries and might not even be admitted for by the respective national HE legislation.

In Bulgaria as well as in the other "new" EU member states there are large pools of women academics and researchers studying for PhDs, as well as experienced women scientists who could help set up mentoring programmes (EU Commission/Enwise Report 2004). According to the data provided by "She Figures 2006" (EU Commission/She Figures 2006) the proportion of female academic staff by grade for 2004 is as follows:

*A comparison of the proportion of female academics staff by grade for 2004 in the partners' countries: Switzerland, Germany and Austria ("She Figures 2006" – extracted data for 2004)*<sup>16</sup>

Country	Grade A (Full professors) %	Grade B (Associate professors) %
Bulgaria	18.0	34.9
Switzerland	16.5	23.3
Germany	9.2	16.1
Austria	9.5	16.2
<b>EU-25 average</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>32.2</b>

In Bulgaria in 1987 (just before the country's political change), on average only 9% of women academics were full professors and 22% associate professors. These figures almost doubled in 2004 and nowadays the Bulgarian case is close to that of the EU-25 average; when compared with the partners' countries, it is closest to Switzerland. However, the context of these statistics differs for Bulgaria and Switzerland. I argue that the current visible trend towards the improvement of gender equality in higher education in Bulgaria reflects the difficult economic situation in Bulgarian society as well as the poor

<sup>15</sup> This was also mentioned by Georgi Apostolov in his presentation of the "Advance" project at the Sofia workshop in December 2007.

<sup>16</sup> The percentage in the table refers to the total number of female academics and researchers.

image of science careers, rather than the emergence of a new organizational culture for gender equality in higher education as seems to be the case in Switzerland (Sretenova 2004). In addition, as in the partner countries, the model for scientific career building in Bulgaria is a “male career model”. The current situation in HE and research in Bulgaria is also maintained by a widespread lack of gender awareness and sensitivity to gender-related discrimination, also among women.

### The level of beneficiaries (potential mentees and mentors)

The crucial factor at this level is the local receptivity to the planned knowledge transfer on academic mentoring. In order to make an informed decision about the start-up of academic mentoring schemes in Bulgaria we need more insight into the specific local deficiencies faced by women scientists in their early career as well as feedback on potential beneficiaries’ willingness to participate in mentoring. With regard to this, the Bulgarian team working for the eument-net project carried out an empirical study.<sup>17</sup> It focused on two target groups by using two sociological methods: focus group interview sessions complemented with a questionnaire survey. The first target group consisted of Bulgarian women PhD students in “soft” and “hard” sciences who came from different BAS research institutes and universities; the second target group comprised Bulgarian early career women academics and researchers employed in the Bulgarian governmental HE and R&D sectors.

Our findings show that the instrument of “academic mentoring” if introduced in Bulgaria might fill the existing gaps and in general might improve the current state of career prospects among promising Bulgarian junior women scientists.

Put briefly and generally, our study shows a considerable interest among potential mentees in participating in such academic programmes, were they to be initiated in Bulgaria.

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 17 The study was carried out by N. Sretenova, N. Obreshkov, H. Ambareva, and D. Anguelova. Some of its outcomes appeared in 2007 as a glossy publication in the Bulgarian journal *Human resources* and have been uploaded on the eument-net website: <http://eument-net.gendercampus.ch>.

### Expectations towards mentoring

What do early career women academics and researchers expect from the implementation of academic mentoring programmes in Bulgaria? What kind of support do they imagine they would receive from their mentor? The following brief summary outlines their answers:

- To help me get involved in international projects; to consult me about practical requirements related to the project’s preparation; to facilitate my access to international contacts.
- Professional lobbying – to convince his/her professional contacts abroad of the value of my scientific work; to serve as PR for my scientific output abroad.
- To advise me which is the best place for my planned post-doc abroad and for my career planning (e.g., two-months’ stay at this institution, six months at that, because...); to negotiate the conditions of my forthcoming specialization/post-doc abroad.
- To provide information about recent innovations in my field.

The main concern and scepticism expressed relate to perception of trust and confidence. According to our interviewees (potential mentees) the “mentor is supposed to be a friend of mine and to really care about me”. Their scepticism comes from the fact that friendship could not be administrated – rather, “one establishes it by intuition”.

The experience of the first pilot academic mentoring scheme initiated in Bulgaria within the framework of the FP6-funded<sup>18</sup> project “Advance” is instructive about this level (of potential Bulgarian mentees and mentors). This pilot mentoring scheme involved three matching pairs (mentee and mentor) from the field of natural sciences for a period of eight months (from April 2007 to November 2007). As reported by Georgi Apostolov, the Bulgarian partner in the “Advance” project, at the Sofia workshop in December 2007, one problem identified by the Bulgarian mentees involved in “Advance” was as follows: Due to the absence of predetermined strategies and visions for building their careers, they entered the programme with very general, broad, and abstract expectations of receiving some support, which had not been

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 18 6th Framework Programme for European Research and Technological Development (2002–2006).

sufficiently thought through in advance. At the end of the pilot scheme, the mentees expressed very high levels of satisfaction, but they found it difficult to define clearly the real outcomes of their mentoring relationship.

The mentors' experiences with this pilot scheme have not been researched or recorded but there appears to have been "one-way communication" following the formula "active mentees and passive mentors". The expectation of mentors was to be paid for this extra work (in fact, in most formal mentoring schemes they are not paid) or at least to be compensated with a certain reduction of their academic workload. Because of their multiple workloads – several appointments in different universities (see the above section on the level of agents) – they are unlikely to be able to invest time and effort in mentoring duties without any remuneration.

### Tentative conclusions drawn by comparison

A comparison between the Bulgarian and partners' cases at three of the constituent levels (national, institutional, supportive agents) suggests that the partners' models for starting mentoring programmes cannot currently be transferred to Bulgaria.

In Switzerland, Germany, and Austria efforts are made to redefine the current policy and politics of "gender equality in higher education" as practised in the partners' universities as a policy and politics of gender equality and gender balance among academic staff at the higher levels of the academic hierarchy and in leadership and decision-making positions. Meanwhile, Bulgaria needs to advocate the transfer of current policy and politics of "non-discrimination by sex" into a policy and politics of "gender equality in academia and research".<sup>19</sup>

Given the lack of favourable conditions at each of these three levels,

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 19 See Nöbauer and Genetti's theoretical reflection in Part III of this volume: "gender equality measures should not just aim at a higher quantitative representation of women in the academic field ... Instead ... they should relate to broader and more global change and restructuring processes going on with(in) the university".

how then could an academic mentoring scheme start up in Bulgaria at all? According to our study, the specific restrictive factors of the Bulgarian case might be overcome through a step-by-step approach.

### A four-step strategy for implementation of academic mentoring programmes in Bulgaria

*First step – Networking:* Bulgaria can profit from the current policy at the European level of mainstreaming gender equality in scientific research, which has been in force since 1999. Under FP6 (2002–2006) several projects with Bulgarian participation have been supported in the area of "women and science", such as eument-net, Advance, WomenInNano, to name just a few. As a first step, we therefore propose that local (Bulgarian) coordinators of all projects dealing directly and indirectly with the issue of promotion of women in academia and research that have been funded under the FP5, FP6, and the current FP7 cooperate and elaborate an action plan for future joint activities. Several Bulgarian NGOs such as the Bulgarian Association of University Women (BAUW), the Center of Women's Studies and Policies (CWSP), and the club Women in Industry should join the network. The knowledge about the instrument of mentoring gained by the Bulgarian partners of the eument-net project and of the Advance project respectively is indispensable for the success of this step.

*Second step – Fund-raising:* A Bulgarian network of stakeholders in gender equality (see above) could submit a project to the so-called "Structural Funds" offered by the EU to Bulgaria. For example, the European Social Fund (2007–2013), in particular the Operational Programme "Development of Human Resources", Priority Area 3, offers a specific scheme for providing financial support for "Programmes for development of post-docs and early career researchers". The other opportunity for financial support is the current FP7 (2007–2013) of the EC.

*Third step – Short-term perspective (1–2 years):* It seems promising and feasible to begin with delivering training and coaching courses, seminars, workshops, etc. for early career researchers according to their current needs. In parallel, the network should establish contacts with the Bulgarian scientific Diaspora, and invite Bulgarian scientists

working in universities and research institutions across Europe and the USA to deliver a lecture and/or share experiences with the early career researchers on career-building issues.

The first online database about “women in science” in Bulgaria, elaborated in the context of the eument-net project, could be very useful in the implementation of this step.

*Fourth step – Medium-term perspective (3–5 years):* Start-up of the first academic mentoring programme in Bulgaria: Potential mentees could be recruited from among the participants of the training and coaching courses held during the third step. In turn, potential mentors – high-level scientists from Bulgaria and the Bulgarian scientific Diaspora – could be recruited from among the instructors/lecturers who took part in the range of activities held during the previous step. Our empirical study reveals the importance of the disciplinary field: we identify a clear divide in the academic career planning, expectation, trajectory, deficiencies, and gaps between the respondents from the social sciences and humanities and those from the natural sciences and engineering.<sup>20</sup> One-to-one mentoring relationships and to some extent peer mentoring seem to be relevant for the early career researchers in social sciences and humanities, while group mentoring best suits representatives of the natural sciences and engineering.

## Conclusion

The issue at stake is to develop, through a step-by-step approach, a mentoring culture within the Bulgarian scientific community and elaborate the relevant tools and mechanisms for its implementation.

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## Part IV

### Building a European network of mentoring programmes

## Building a European network of mentoring programmes

**Lisa Peschel, Dagmar Höppel, Helene Fügen, and Christine Brunn**

Promotion of gender equality in higher education and research in Europe takes place in a context characterized by internationalization, increasing competition, and a wave of institutional reforms. The eument-net project is based upon the assumption that mentoring programmes promoting gender equality and strengthening women in higher education and research should participate in structuring the European and international research environment. eument-net aims to disseminate knowledge about mentoring as an instrument for promoting women's careers and gender equality in academia and research, and it encourages exchange of experience and cooperation among mentoring programmes.

In addition to the realization of this manual, the building of a European network of mentoring programmes represents the main goal of the initial eument-net project phase. During this project phase, the consortium has been striving to map the mentoring landscape in Europe, finding out about expectations towards a European network of mentoring programmes and elaborating legal structures for the eument-net network, uniting mentoring programmes in Europe around common goals and a set of joint activities.

In order to assess the landscape of mentoring programmes and evaluate the expectations towards and interest in a European network, the eument-net consortium has conducted an extensive survey. The results of the survey indicate important differences with regard to the availability of mentoring programmes. They also highlight the interest in them, and clearly show the need for a European network of mentoring programmes.

## Results of the eument-net survey: mapping differences and expectations

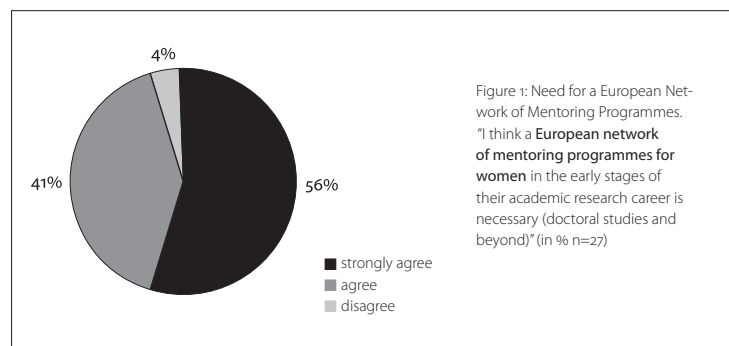
The survey was carried out in spring 2007. Two questionnaires were designed. One (Q1) was disseminated among potential stakeholders of mentoring programmes. The second questionnaire (Q2) was disseminated among mentoring experts and was more specific in its questions about mentoring and mentoring programmes.

The first questionnaire (Q1) was distributed among such stakeholders as gender equality officers, government institutions involved in science policy and/or gender equality, and centres for gender studies. Its database contained 770 valid contacts, which yielded a rate of return of 23%. For evaluation, participating countries were grouped according to their geographic location: northern European countries (Scandinavia, Iceland), middle European countries (Ireland, UK, Benelux, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, France), southern European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Malta, Cyprus, Israel), and eastern European countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia).

The results reveal big differences between these regions. In northern Europe, 100% of respondents know about gender equality programmes in their countries. In eastern Europe, the figure is less than 60%. Generally, there is a feeling among respondents that gender equality is an issue that needs to be addressed in their countries. In middle European countries, 90% of respondents "strongly agreed" that gender equality is an issue to be addressed in their countries, and 10% "agreed". In northern European countries, 50% each "strongly agreed" and "agreed". In eastern European countries, 40% "strongly agreed" and 45% "agreed". The similarity of figures in northern and eastern European countries merits further exploration. A hypothesis developed by partners in the eument-net consortium is that the reasons for these answers are different in the two regions. The result from eastern European countries may point to a lack of gender awareness, whereas results from northern European countries may translate a perception that a fair degree of gender equality has already been realized in their countries, which would make the issue less urgent.

Knowledge of mentoring programmes is also unevenly distributed among the regions. In northern European countries, 100% of respondents know about such programmes, but only about 38% know in countries of eastern Europe. The absence of mentoring programmes is not, however, due to a lack of interest, or need for mentoring. The reasons most frequently given to explain this lack of mentoring programmes are shortage of funding and institutional structures. Respondents in eastern Europe state an interest in mentoring: 48% “strongly agreed” that there is a need for more mentoring programmes in their countries, and 39% “agreed”. Interest in a network such as eument-net is also high: 39% “strongly agreed” to the necessity for such a network, and 50% “agreed”.

As was to be expected, interest in a network such as eument-net is even greater among the respondents of the second questionnaire (Q2), which was distributed to mentoring experts. This part of the survey had a database of 109 valid contacts and yielded a rate of return of 27.5%. Its purpose was among other things to gauge interest in eument-net and find potential future members. Results of this questionnaire show that interest exists, even among respondents from countries with the highest density of programmes. In particular, there is a desire for more information, exchange, and networking. When asked about the need for a network, 56% of respondents “strongly agreed”, 41% “agreed”, and 83.33% would like to join. One noteworthy finding is that financial support is not rated among the most important aspects of such a network. Instead, a stronger impact in academia and the setting of guidelines and standards are given as the most important aspects.



The results of the survey among stakeholders and coordinators of mentoring programmes alike underline that the activities conducted by the eument-net consortium are of interest. They are also consistent with the aims set forth in the eument-net project for the network. Respondents to Q2 identify strongly with these aims, as 100% rated “exchange of best practice” as either an “important” or even a “very important” aspect of such a network. Almost all respondents felt the same about “putting mentoring on science policy agendas”, and still over 80% about the “facilitation of cooperation between members”.

### Beyond the project phase: Structure and activities of eument-net

The survey results strongly corroborate the direction taken by the eument-net project: supporting the dissemination and exchange of experience, the development of quality standards, and international cooperation among mentoring programmes.

To develop these activities further, and to integrate additional mentoring programmes and stakeholders into the network, at the term of the project phase, the eument-net consortium will give way to the eument-net network and take the form of a legal association.

In line with the aims of the eument-net project, the stated aims of the association are to enhance women’s position in academia and research and promote gender equality through the dissemination of knowledge and expertise on mentoring, and through supporting cooperation among its members on an international and European level. In doing so, the association can further develop activities and services initiated during the project phase of eument-net.

The workshops and conferences that have been organized by the eument-net consortium provide examples to draw upon for the exchange of experience and the discussion of best practice and quality standards. In addition, the development of a scheme of international mentoring exchange among partner programmes has been an important aim of the eument-net project. This will be developed by the association.



The eument-net homepage ([www-eument-net.eu](http://www-eument-net.eu)) with its database and electronic platform represents the virtual home of the eument-net network. Through the database, interested women academics and researchers can find out about existing mentoring programmes adapted to their needs, and in the field and country in which they want to pursue their careers. The database thus can foster mobility among women academics and researchers.

Mentoring programmes contained in the database fulfil a defined set of quality standards. A declaration about these quality standards is part of the registration procedure for integration into the database and access to the electronic platform.

The access-protected platform is the realm of registered programmes. There they can exchange and get access to information and examples on good practice, and cooperate on projects such as international mentoring exchange. Specific access to the electronic platform is also available for stakeholders who plan to set up mentoring programmes.

Activities in the eument-net network will also contribute to putting mentoring for women in academia and research on national and European science policy agendas. To this end, eument-net cooperates with organizations and agents pursuing similar aims. At the European level, eument-net is a member of the European Platform of Women Scientists (epws).<sup>1</sup> At national levels, eument-net cooperates with national networks of mentoring programmes and also supports the development of such networks.

Mentoring has considerable potential to play a prominent role in the promotion of women and gender equality in higher education and research in Europe. The experiences of cooperation and exchange during the eument-net project phase and the careful assessment of needs and expectations towards a European network provide a sound basis for the coming eument-net association to further support this role.

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1 [www.epws.org](http://www.epws.org) (Access: 07-01-2008).

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## Appendix

## The eument-net platform and its quality standards

### Beyond the project phase: Structure and activities of eument-net

The eument-net electronic platform is the virtual home of the eument-net network. Mentoring programmes which fulfil eument-net quality standards and support its aims are invited to become members of the network and to register on the platform.

The platform is an access protected working space, where registered programmes can:

- find out about and get into contact with other mentoring programmes;
- exchange examples of best practice for the implementation of mentoring programmes (programme and evaluation designs, training and workshop examples, etc.);
- share references and publications on mentoring;
- cooperate on projects (such as international mentoring schemes, training seminars, and conferences);
- announce events in a common agenda and through a mailing list;
- initiate and contribute to discussion forums;
- etc.

Information on registered programmes will also appear in the publicly accessible eument-net database. This database is designed to allow interested women researchers to find out about mentoring programmes in various countries and institutions. For stakeholders in gender equality, the platform will provide examples and information on high-quality mentoring programmes and access to expertise.

To register, coordinators of mentoring programmes will find the relevant information and form on the eument-net website ([www.eument-net.eu](http://www.eument-net.eu)).

### Quality standards for mentoring programmes within eument-net

The aim of eument-net is to promote high-quality mentoring programmes for the promotion of women in academia and research in Europe. To assure common standards among participants in the network, programmes are required to commit to the following quality statement:

- The programme features the promotion of women in academia and research explicitly as a central aim.
- The programme is part of a wider and explicit gender equality policy of the host institution(s).
- The programme is explicitly designed to support the mentee's personal and career development.
- The programme provides mentoring which takes place outside hierarchical relationships and is based on voluntary participation and a transparent selection procedure.
- The programme has a professional coordinator (position allocated specifically to this task) and transparent programme management structures.
- The aim of the programme, the target group, and the criteria and procedure for admission are transparent and clearly stated from the outset.
- The scope of the programme (such as duration and elements of the programme, including the matching process) are defined and clearly stated from the outset.
- The role and mutual requirements of mentee and mentor are clearly stated from the outset and can be specified in a written "mentoring agreement".
- The programme follows a confidentiality policy that is communicated to mentees and mentors.
- The programme includes monitoring measures and conducts regular evaluation.
- The programme includes training activities (related to the mentoring process), and provides the opportunity for mentees and mentors to exchange on their mentoring experience and to benefit from coaching or mediation in the case of conflicts.

These standards are one of the results of the activities of the initial eument-net project phase. They also provide a basis for further discussion and comparison of experiences among mentoring programmes concerned with the promotion of women's position in academia and research.

**Future prospects** At the term of the project phase, eument-net will continue its activities as a legal association under Swiss law. It is expected that mentoring programmes that register for the eument-net platform and database will become members of the association, and thus fully contribute to the debate on and promotion of mentoring as an instrument to enhance women's position and impact in academia and research in Europe.

## Recommended books on academic mentoring

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- National Academy of Sciences et al. (1997). *Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend. On Being a Mentor to Students in Science and Engineering*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press.
- Nienhaus, Doris/Pannatier, Gaël/Töngi, Claudia (Eds) (2005). *Akademische Seilschaften. Mentoring für Frauen im Spannungsfeld von individueller Förderung und Strukturveränderung*. Wettingen: eFeF-Verlag.
- Nöbauer, Herta/Genetti, Evi/Schlögl, Waltraud (Eds) (2005). *Mentoring für Wissenschaftlerinnen. Im Spannungsfeld universitärer Kultur- und Strukturveränderung. Mentoring for Women Academics and Scientists: Questioning Structural and Cultural Change in Academia*. Materialien zur Förderung von Frauen in der Wissenschaft, Band 20. Vienna: Verlag Österreich.

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**Herta Nöbauer** holds an MA (Magistra) in Social Anthropology and Gender Studies. She is lecturer at the University of Vienna and researcher on academic cultures and histories and she has been completing her dissertation on “globalized cultures in academia”. At the Center for Gender Equality, since 2000, she has developed and coordinated muv, the first mentoring programme for women academics at the University of Vienna and has been coordinator in the local team of eument-net from 2007 until 2008.

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## Glossary

### Accompanying measures

Accompanying measures are additional measures such as workshops for mentees, providing, for example, information on academic career planning and on strategies for networking and career advancement. Accompanying measures complement the mentoring relationship.

### Career counselling

Career counselling is exclusively provided for the mentees by mentors working in the same research field. As master practitioners in the field, the mentors give the mentees concrete and realistic advice concerning career developments, but also concerning unspoken rules and mechanisms.

### Coaching

Coaching is a method of directing, instructing, and training a person, helping that person to achieve a specific goal or develop specific skills. A mentor may move into a coaching role, for example, in anticipation of an event, about which the mentee has expressed some concern. Coordinators of mentoring programmes may coach mentees and mentors with regard to their roles. The coaching process includes the identification of the "gap" or problem and the modelling of the "best" action, practice, evaluation, and feedback.

### Cross-disciplinary mentoring

(as compared to (same-) disciplinary mentoring)

When a mentee and a mentor do not share the same academic discipline but instead have different disciplinary backgrounds, this is called

cross-disciplinary mentoring. Within the context of group or peer mentoring, there may also be different disciplinary backgrounds among the mentees.

### Cross-gender mentoring relationship (as compared to same-gender mentoring relationship)

A cross-gender mentoring relationship is one in which a mentee and a mentor do not share the same gender.

### Disciplinary mentoring

(or same-disciplinary mentoring, as compared to cross-disciplinary mentoring)  
"Disciplinary mentoring" denotes that the mentee and the mentor are working in the same scientific field, and have overlapping interests in similar or related areas of research.

### Early career researcher/ Early stage researcher

According to EU higher education policies, early stage researchers are defined as those in the first four years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers, starting from the date at which they obtained the degree that formally entitled them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the research training was provided, irrespective of whether or not a doctorate is envisaged.

### Equal opportunities office/r

(see also gender equality office/r)

"Equal opportunities office/r" describes a unit or position within an institution that promotes

change towards equal access for women and men to positions and resources in the institution (university). The mission and competences ascribed to the equal opportunities office/r vary according to prevailing legal obligations, management policies, and resources.

#### **Formal mentoring (relationship)**

A formal mentoring relationship is organized and established by a person who is assigned by an official mentoring programme.

#### **Gender equality office/r**

(see equal opportunities office/r)

“Gender equality office/r” describes a unit or position within an institution in charge of promoting equal access for women and men to positions and resources in said institution (university). The concrete actions undertaken by the gender equality office/r vary according to prevailing legal obligations, management policies, and resources.

#### **Group mentoring**

“Group mentoring” denotes a mentoring relationship in which one mentor works with a (usually small) group of mentees (unlike other forms such as one-to-one mentoring).

#### **Habilitation**

Highest academic qualification in German-speaking countries, obtained after a doctorate by defending a second thesis and writing a “second book”. In these respective countries, a Habilitation is required for the “*venia legendi*”, the “right to teach”, that is required in order to obtain a full professorship.

#### **High potentials**

Early career researchers who have shown both excellent performance in the past and great promise for future performance. In this context, the term applies especially to advanced PhD and post-doctoral candidates, junior professors, and researchers during or after their Habilitation.

#### **Horizontal promotional relationship**

(see also vertical promotional relationship)

The promotion of mentees is described as horizontal or non-hierarchical when mentees in a group mentoring setting receive support from equals with the same or a similar status (peers).

#### **Implementation of mentoring programmes**

The term “implementation” describes the process of realizing a project in practice, according to an agreed work plan and in a given context. It also describes the act of making a change or measure that has first been tested in a pilot phase into a permanent element of an organization.

#### **Informal mentoring (relationship)**

Informal mentoring is grounded in personal, individual activity.

#### **Institutional recognition system**

Those mentoring programmes committed to bringing about structural and cultural change by means of mentoring schemes consider the institutional recognition of mentors’ activities as critical to the establishment and implementation of a mentoring programme. It is seen as being fundamental to the development and

extension of an academic culture of promotion and support. Such a recognition system may take symbolic and/or material forms (see the specific example of *muV* at the University of Vienna below under “tutorial staff”) by which the university management acknowledges the normally unpaid time and work mentors invest within a formal mentoring scheme. At the same time, a recognition system also leads to a strengthening of and a better institutional position for mentoring programmes. In the particular case of *muV*, institutional recognition is given by offering additional tutorial staff to all mentors. In addition to giving recognition to the mentors, this specific measure also benefits the tutorial staff by giving them university employment and promotion by the mentors in the course of their tutorial activities.

#### **Matching process**

A matching process comprises four steps: 1) definition of mentee’s objectives and needs by the mentee assisted by the programme coordinator, 2) finding a potential mentor who fits these needs and objectives, 3) initiation of contact between the potential mentor and mentee by the coordinator, 4) after a successful meeting between mentee and mentor, the mentoring relationship is defined in a mentoring agreement.

#### **Mentee**

An academic or researcher who participates in a mentoring relationship in order to engage and gain experience in a specific field, explore their potential and develop their profile so as to succeed in academia and research. In the context of *eument-net*, mentoring applies exclusively to women (see mentoring).

#### **Mentor**

Senior academic or researcher, male or female, who is ready to share their specific experience within the framework of a mentoring relationship (see mentoring).

#### **Mentoring**

In the context of *eument-net*, “mentoring” describes a supportive relationship outside of institutional hierarchies. This relationship is established within the framework of a formal mentoring programme. The parties to this relationship are a woman academic or researcher who wishes to engage and gain experience in a specific field (a mentee), and a senior academic or researcher who is ready to share his or her specific experience and knowledge related to the mentee’s needs (a mentor), or between peers. The aim of the relationship is to foster the mentee’s or the peer’s personal and career development in academia and research.

#### **Mentoring cycle**

(see also programme cycle)

“Mentoring cycle” refers to the duration of a specifically defined period in which a certain number of mentees may participate before the next cycle begins with a new batch of mentees.

#### **Mentoring programme**

(see also mentoring scheme)

“Mentoring programme” describes an organized offer of formal mentoring, which takes place within a specific timeframe and is addressed to a particular target group, according to predefined plans and processes. Mentoring programmes should meet specific quality standards.

### **Mentoring relationship**

“Mentoring relationship” refers to a professional relationship between, usually, an elder and more experienced person with high status (mentor) and a less experienced, younger person (mentee) in which the mentor provides support, advice, introductions, and networks for the mentee and an understanding of the mechanisms and unspoken rules of a specific organization or field.

### **Mentoring rules**

Mentoring rules are the principles that mentees and mentors must follow for a mentoring relationship to be successful. These principles are communicated to mentees and mentors through documents and training provided by the mentoring programme.

### **Mentoring scheme**

(see also **mentoring programme**)

“Scheme” denotes an elaborate and systematic plan of action. The expression “mentoring scheme” can be used as a synonym for “mentoring programme”.

### **Mentoring skills**

Mentoring skills include specific knowledge, aptitudes, and abilities that individuals should possess in order to be good mentors. Mentoring skills can be developed and enhanced through training, coaching, and exchange among peers. Elementary mentoring skills comprise: an understanding of the functionality and basic processes behind mentoring; familiarity with tools and knowledge supporting a successful mentoring exchange; and an understanding of roles and key behaviours in mentoring.

### **Multi-personal mentoring relationships**

In multi-personal mentoring relationships, an individual is mentored by more than one person (mentor or supervisor) at the same time. Considering the personal dependency often accompanying relationships within the hierarchically structured academic field, support and promotion by more than one person are particularly significant in order to minimize the danger of and to “deconstruct” ongoing personal dependency of early stage researchers on single, established and powerful persons.

### **One-to-one mentoring**

An individual mentoring relationship between one mentee and one mentor (unlike other forms of mentoring such as group mentoring).

### **Peer mentoring**

A group of peers, that is, people of a similar level of academic qualification and status, simultaneously take the roles of mentees and mentors, exchange their experience, counsel, and guide each other.

### **Programme coordinator**

Similar to a programme manager. Her/his tasks include: selecting mentees; recruiting mentors; matching mentees and mentors; monitoring mentoring relationships and mediating in cases of conflict; counselling and coaching; organizing accompanying measures.

### **Programme cycle**

(see also **mentoring cycle**)

“Programme cycle” describes the duration of a programme, which is fixed. It starts with preparatory work such as organization, funding, an-

nouncement, application, selection of the mentees, recruiting mentors. Then the programme begins with the mentoring relationships and the accompanying measures, and ends with a programme evaluation.

Same-gender mentoring relationship (as compared to cross-gender mentoring relationship) A same-gender mentoring relationship is one in which a mentee and a mentor share the same gender.

### **Structural-strategic mentoring approach**

A structural-strategic mentoring approach is based on a conceptual understanding of social relationships within academia as being of a structural nature and as including power relations rather than being merely of an individual and interpersonal character. From this perspective, academic social relationships (including the often implied issue of competition) need to be constantly and critically reflected upon.

### **Supervisor**

A supervisor is a person in charge of a workplace or who has the responsibility of overseeing, guiding, and evaluating the activity of others. In an academic context, a supervisor coaches and assists a student with senior project-based courses or with a graduate thesis/project. In formal mentoring, the roles of supervisor and mentor must be clearly distinguished.

### **Training courses**

Training courses are organized as accompanying measures to formal mentoring relationships. Training courses allow participants to develop practical skills under the specialized

supervision and input of experts. Training courses in mentoring programmes can be dedicated to mentoring skills or the development of abilities that are relevant for the career goal defined by the mentoring process.

### **Tutorial staff**

“Tutorial staff”, as understood in the German-speaking academic realm, normally denotes advanced students and graduates who support professors in their teaching courses and hold extra tutorials for students on those courses.

Specifically within the framework of the mentoring programme *muv*, the employment of tutorial staff is connected with the issue of the institutional recognition of mentors’ activities. *muv* offers additional tutorial staff to all its mentors and thus the university management acknowledges the normally unpaid time and work mentors invest within the mentoring scheme. Within this system of institutional recognition, the tutorial staff benefit by being employed by the university and promoted by the mentors during their tutorial activities.

### **Vertical promotional relationship**

(see also **horizontal promotional relationship**)

Within a group mentoring setting, promoting the mentees is described as vertical or hierarchical when mentees of a group receive support from someone (a mentor) with higher status and more institutional power.



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