



Coaching for staff professional Development in education

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Coaching in schools and companies

Desk research

Secondary analysis of interviews

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Abstract

The Desk Research is one of the outputs of the Erasmus+ project 2019-1-LV01-KA201-060345 titled Coaching for Staff Professional Development in Education (CoDe). The aim of this desk research was to describe the arrangement, opportunities and limitations of coaching in selected schools and companies and to identify the specifics and challenges/limitations of the implementation of coaching in selected schools. For the research, we opted for qualitative approach, interviews with 27 coaches (mentors, supervisors) working in schools, NGO or business companies and 12 people receiving the support – clients. We present the obtained and interpreted data in the framework: main topics of and expectations from coaching, impacts of coaching, how coaching is organized, effective ways to coach, limitations related to coaching, major differences between coaching in schools and companies, and main challenges for the future.

Introduction

Teaching is often referred to as ‘impossible profession’ that requires intuition, a variety of specific knowledge and skills as well as reflected experience. As a consequence of rapidly changing work conditions and increasing diversity of groups a teacher has to work with, various forms of teacher support such as coaching, mentoring and supervision have been focused on in recent years. The potential of these types of support for professional development, indisputable as it is, has been used in varied forms and intensity in various European countries and schools. Coaching has had a much longer tradition in business corporations and the possible transfer of experience from companies to schools has not been clearly described. This may be because schools are organizations with specific culture, interpersonal links and time structures. The aim of this desk research was:

1. to describe the arrangement, opportunities and limitations of coaching in selected schools and companies
2. to identify the specifics and challenges/limitations of the implementation of coaching in selected schools

Therefore, we were interested in the experience of coaches, educators and other people involved; how they perceive the specifics of coaching in schools and which processes can help to implement these forms of professional cooperation.

Methodology

In our desk research we opted for a qualitative approach. During January and February 2020 we conducted in-depth interviews with selected coaches and coachees (in other words those who provide and receive support) in each partner country according to a previously arranged structure. The respondents were:

1. Coaches who had at least two years of continuous coaching experience in business organizations and/or schools
2. Teachers and other employees of schools/organizations in which coaching takes place (coachees)

We agreed to conduct at least 4 interviews (2 with coaches and 2 with coachees) in each partner country according to the framework of the structure of questions (semi-structured interviews). As for the **interviews with coaches**, the structure of questions was as follows:

- 1. What is the target group of your coaching?** (Who is the ‘client’? Who asks for coaching?)
- 2. How is the coaching process organized in the institutions you are involved in?** (Who is responsible for coaching in the institution? Who controls/evaluates the process? Who creates suitable conditions? Which conditions are suitable for coaching? Who are the stakeholders? What kind of contracts do you use?)

3. **What are the main coaching topics?** (What do the clients mostly ask for? What is the most difficult topic? Which topics are not acceptable for you?)
4. **What is the impact of coaching?** (What do you opine about the efficiency of coaching? What do you believe in? How do you evaluate your work? What do you know about the impact on the work of your clients? What do you know about the impact on the institution as a whole?)
5. **Where do you find major limitations?** (What do you like in your work? What is most difficult when working in institutions? What hindrances can you see? What are the main challenges for coaching in institutions/schools?)

As to semi-structured **interviews with coachees**, the structure of questions was as follows:

1. **Which expectations are related to coaching?** (What do you expect from coaching? What are your institutions' expectations? What do others in your institution expect? What can you hear about coaching in your institution?)
2. **How is coaching organized in your institution/school?** (Who comes with the request? How does it go? Who evaluates it? Who documents it? What is the role of the leaders?)
3. **What is the benefit/impact of coaching?** (What is the benefit of coaching for employees? What is the benefit for the institution? How do you evaluate the impacts?)
4. **Where do you find the limitations of coaching?** (What works? What does not? What, in your opinion, is the future of coaching in your institution? What is specific about your institution in terms of coaching? What are the challenges?)

Data processing

The interviews were conducted in the languages of partner countries, then recorded and transcribed. Members of national teams then categorized the data with open coding and arranged them into an interpretation framework designed beforehand:

- Target groups for coaching in institutions
- Expectations from coaching and the main topics
- Impact on individuals/institutions
- How coaching is organized
- Effective ways of coaching as seen from the perspective of coaches/coachees
- Limitations related to coaching
- Main differences between coaching in schools and companies; specifics of school coaching
- Main challenges for future

In order to strengthen the validity of data, the authors/researchers evidenced these categories with respondents' direct quotations. Based on data provided for this report in the above structure, the analyses obtained from all participating countries were processed by authors at Masaryk University.

Results

1. Context of the desk research

In all participating countries, the expression 'coaching' is related to businesses and sports, but schools have had a rather short experience with these forms of work so far, if any. It was not always easy to find respondents who pursue coaching in schools. Mentoring and supervision takes precedence in some schools and non-profit organizations. Also, some respondents could not distinguish clearly between the forms of support they provide, for many are devoted to both coaching and mentoring or supervision and consider their main principles similar.

This study does not deal with coaching alone but takes into consideration all these forms of professional support. It is impossible to distinguish rigorously among particular forms of support and types of respondents, as data from various respondent groups mingle and complement each other. In line with the focus of this project, we will predominantly use the term 'coaching' although it is evident that the 'mentoring' or 'supervision' might be used as well.

Likewise, it was not possible to distinguish unambiguously between data valid for coaching in companies and those in schools; they agree with, or shade into, each other in many a respect and we do not have data on identical types of respondents from all countries. The criteria for a strict selection of respondents could not be adjusted because some coaches are involved in multiple forms of support and engaged in a variety of organizations. Identifiable differences in coaching in businesses, NGOs, schools and other institutions, as well as those among countries, are pointed out as we go along.

2. The context of school coaching in partner countries

Croatia

The terms 'supervision' and 'coaching' indicate the forms of counselling used for the professional development of individuals, teams and organizations (<http://www.anse.at/ecvision/about.html>). The key values underpinning supervision and coaching are voluntariness and confidentiality. Coaching as a method of professional development in business has been present in Croatia for about 15 years. Coaching is mostly used and paid for by big companies and corporations. It is done individually, one-on-one, and in most cases, by people trained and authorized for coaching.

Integrated supervision has been systematically present in education for about 10 years as a result of training of 15 ETTA senior advisers. It is available as a method of professional development to teachers and non-teaching school staff on demand and free of charge. Also, supervision has been present for several years in social welfare. In both sectors, supervision is

provided by authorized supervisors who comply with formal requirements for their work such as an adequate university degree.

Cyprus

In the Cypriot educational system, coaching may not be encountered in schools in the way it is in other countries, since Cyprus is new to coaching and its practices. One may say that it shares characteristics with the concept of the inspector, school subject councillor or coordinator and mentor, which are widely acknowledged in the system in question. It may share some characteristics with the concept of the critical friend that, although acknowledged in terms of its role and significance, it is not widely used in schools nor beyond. Instead, coaching in the Cypriot context is widely encountered in the domain of sports and, in recent years, in the context of life-coaching.

Mentoring issues can be touched upon with short or long courses offered by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of Cyprus, which are bodies offering accredited CPD courses in education. Additionally, mentoring issues may be encountered in short courses, seminars, projects or conference sessions organized by public institutions (to a lesser extent), private authorities (to a larger extent) and other bodies (NGOs, youth clubs, associations and societies, volunteers, and so on).

It goes without saying that, provided the beneficial role of coaching in educational systems as reported in contemporary bibliography, research and practice, there is an existing gap in coaching in the Cypriot context, with education in Cyprus being in need of coaching and good practice. The CODE project and similar initiatives will create avenues to start up coaching in the best possible and most effective way.

Czech Republic

The topic of coaching is not completely new in the Czech Republic. Coaching started to appear after 1989, mainly under the influence of foreign capital and know-how entering Czech businesses. As to Czech schools, coaching and mentoring (and supervision too) was first discussed some ten or fifteen years later, but it was only during the last decade that coaching and mentoring began to be developed as efficient and legitimate forms of professional development. We will deliberately speak about both 'coaching' and 'mentoring' because the circumstances of their entry in schools are analogous. Nevertheless, it seems that mentoring receives most attention because of it being focused on the development of specific teacher competences and related to starting teachers and teacher students, therefore it has a wider (and safer) target group. Traditionally, coaching is more readily related to school leaders.

So, in recent years, a variety of institutions providing in-service training have offered courses of mentoring and, to a slightly lesser extent, coaching for teachers. With some lag, events in schools and education institutions are answered by Czech school policy. Mentoring, coaching and even supervision thus became strong themes in calls for European and other projects. European projects that support mentoring, coaching and supervision in schools are carried out at the levels of schools, districts, regions as well as on that of the Ministry of Education. Through of small European projects, schools can ask for mentor support for teachers. In-service training providers receive support for mentoring courses; institutions managed directly by the Ministry of Education

carry out large projects that support coaching in schools and provide methodologies for other ways of professional support (SRP, APIV B and others).

Nonetheless, unified education and certification for coaches, mentors and supervisors in education still does not exist. This subject is not anchored in schooling legislation; therefore the projects define the requirements for their education in varied ways. High quality education for coaches and supervisors is usually in the hands of their associations. The schooling sector has not come with clearly defined requirements yet, so teacher coaches are educated in quite different ways by different subjects; their training differs in both composition and extent of lessons.

Latvia

In Latvia, coaching is common in business settings, while in education it is being introduced, albeit not systematically. Various initiatives are provided by the International Coach Federation of Latvia (www.icf.lv) and a local company named *Radošuma pils* [Palace of Creativity]. Both organizations have prepared professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers. These programmes help pedagogical staff to understand what coaching is and how it can be applied in schools. However, practical and regular use of coaching in everyday school life is still rare. The participants of coaching programmes have pointed out that coaching should be introduced in the whole system of education. To make this happen, a systemic approach should be introduced, including training and a regular working position of a coach. If we argue that coaching is new and unknown to our education system, we can talk about one more way of support for school leadership and teachers: supervision. Qualified supervisors have been trained in three local authorities (including the city of Riga) so far. There are two typical tasks for supervisors: 1) support for school leaders so that they can develop strategies for the improvement of particular quality aspects, and 2) support for teachers in terms of classroom observation as a tool. Supervisors do not work in their own schools but visit other schools upon the request of their leaders.

Romania

In Romania, coaching is not organized formally and only a few professionals have pursued training in this field. However, coaching-like activities occur within community projects organized by schools (e.g. Lascăr Rosetti High School, Răducăneni, Iași County). A short time ago, school leaders started to participate in formal training courses in order to enhance their leadership and management skills. The coaching component of these courses is explicitly laid out as a component of these programmes. To this end, school managers are assigned a professional coach who guides them throughout the training process and sees that the theoretical framework is reflected in improved leadership and management practice.

United Kingdom

Currently there is no clearly defined central government policy relating to coaching within educational settings. There is, however, an active and growing community of interest amongst a growing number of academic institutions, but these are currently seen as good examples within an effective workforce development policy. This has led to a reality which is characterized by a mixed picture. Examples of good embryonic practice take place in particular settings but there are limited

opportunities for the sharing of this good practice. There is no mandated policy for the development of coaching in educational settings.

This means that there is no bespoke or identified funding available for coaching in schools. Varying levels of autonomous financial control remain within each school setting and the recognition is still that schools have a great deal of control over limited resources. They can then choose how to deploy those resources; coaching would be one of the issues which they may want to focus on but there are no mandated financial actions required in this area.

Coach education ultimately remains the responsibility of the individual. Life and educational coaching is not regulated in the UK and, although a regulatory system is in place for sports coaches, this has not been more widely adopted and adapted.

3. Respondents

Table 1: Respondents per countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Focus/sector of coaching</i>
Croatia	Coach, leader	Business
	Coach, headteacher	Schooling
	Supervisor, leader	Social work
	Supervisee, specialized educator	Schooling
	Supervisee, clown-doctor	Medicine
Cyprus	Coach, psychologist	Mental health
	Coach, trainer	Youth organization
	Coachee, football player	Sport
	Coachee, teacher	Life coaching
Czech Republic	Coach, mentor, headteacher	Schooling, headteacher coaching
	Coach, trainer	Schooling, business sector
	Coachee (educated in coaching), teacher	Schooling, partly business sector and NGO
	Mentee, coachee, teacher	Schooling
Latvia	Coach, supervisor	Schooling
	Coach, trainer	Business sector
	Coach, trainer	Business sector
	Coachee, teacher	Schooling
	Coachee, leader	Business sector

Romania	Coach, teacher	Medical-social sector, life coaching
	Coach, school counsellor	Schooling, NGO
	Coach, lecturer	Schooling
	Coachee, headteacher	Schooling
	Coachee, headteacher	Schooling
UK	Coach, headteacher	Schooling
	Coach, year group leader	Schooling
	Coach, head of learning	Business sector
	Coach, head of product development	Business sector

Data was obtained through 27 interviews with men and women of various ages, specifically:

- 15 coaches (mentors, supervisors) active in various sectors (schools of various levels, NGOs, business companies) as headteachers, business managers, trainers, lecturers and consultants
- 12 coachees (mentees, supervisees) active as teachers and headteachers, educators, clown-doctors, athletes and leaders in various sectors such as schools, business companies and NGOs

Data in this report is categorized per country but analyzed as a whole in order to create an integrated image of coaching in schools and businesses. It would not make sense to describe each country separately because the content would be identical or similar to each other. If differences occur, we refer to them and evidence the results with selected quotations. The abbreviations in brackets after some statements indicate the country they come from, but this does not mean that an identical or similar statement cannot be valid for the situation in another country.

4. Target groups: Who are the clients of our respondents?

We loosely defined the selection criteria on purpose, in order to get information from coaches and coachees in various professions and branches. Our respondents (coaches, mentors and supervisors) thus represent a wide scale of clients from business companies, non-governmental and non-profit organizations, schools, sport and youth organizations, the social sector and other fields (see Table 1). The respondents said they had experience with the following types of clients:

- headteachers, leaders, managers, company owners (CZ, HR, LV, RO, UK)
- teachers, special educators, school consultants, lecturers (CZ, HR, LV, RO)
- young people and adults (performance improvement, CY)
- social workers and workers in assistance professions (HR)
- students, volunteers, NGO members (RO)

- diseased persons and their immediate background (life coaching, CY)
- athletes (CY)
- other coaches and mentors (CZ)

In general, however, they stated that anyone in need of coaching could become their client. Some were also experienced in team coaching (CZ, LV, UK).

5. Main topics of and expectations from coaching

The respondents pointed out that coaching and the other types of support should be available to all employees, in other words, not only those who ‘have the problem’ and lag behind or lack in some necessary skills or experience. **Coaching is connected with the continuous development of competences and personal potential. It is free of ambitions to externally evaluate the state of things or the errors committed.**

Some 7-8 year ago, the perception of coaching was like ‘fixing the problem’... there were negative reactions from the employees... if they offer me coaching, it means I am problematic. Today, it is seen as ‘top talent development’ and the company wishes to retain these people and invest in them. The positive perception is: you are valuable, therefore we give you a coach. (HR)

So most expectations are considered positive; they are related to development and learning, not problem-solving. In spite of that, it is education where error is largely worked on, coaching is rare and the positive idea is promoted rather reluctantly and with difficulties. According to our data, the main topics of and expectations from coaching were grouped in a few categories:

Development of personal potential

Usually, coaching in both schools and businesses is aimed at the **development of personal competences** or personal potential of people. Both the coaches and those coached say that coaching should be focused on the development of generally applicable abilities such as **communication skills, creativity, independence and ability to take decisions** and **responsibility**. It was mainly (though not only) the schooling sector where coaches commented on the need to develop teachers’ **well-being** and stressed that coaching should support their **self-recognition** and **positive view** of themselves, **self-confidence** and **work satisfaction**.

The expectation of coaching is that it supports a process of positive self-regard. Participants are clear that everyone has the ability to solve problems but perhaps not the time. The role of the school is to ensure that you are creating that time and space for that success to take place. (UK)

What is also considered an expectation is support to those striving to **change themselves and their objectives and paths, adopt other perspectives, do things in different ways** or even **solve problems**. Coaching approached like this is a tool for the personal development of individuals.

Sometimes they need to adopt a feeling of self-confidence, but in the beginning they don't tell you, of course... Sometimes it's weird to see how insecure teachers are, it's just horrible self-exploration, they are stuck in bitter doubts... It's a part of their insecure profession. (CZ)

Nevertheless, responses from coaches indicate that teachers perceive their profession as full of stress and insecurity. They consider positive support as one of the most important objectives of coaching and other forms of support. This is similar for coaching in social institutions (e.g. volunteers in youth organizations) where work insecurity is faced and a feeling of working 'properly' is needed.

In the field of mental health, self-development is more at stake; boosting self-confidence and being supported and empowered are considered key important. In life coaching, facilitation and empowerment that will lead to new pathways and targets is what is mostly expected. (CY)

Enhancing self-confidence, enhancing motivation in the school staff, and so on... (RO)

Also, the respondents remarked on personal subjects related to self-confidence strengthening, stress management, complicated relations and preparation for 'bad scenarios' as affiliated to **psychotherapy** (CZ, LV). In particular, coaching in mental health is regarded close to healing (CY). Yet, the boundary is hard to decipher and coaches are not opposed to these topics (sometimes they emerge only later) but they are careful not to go too far beyond the framework of coaching and their competence and mission.

Sometimes those work topics deteriorate into personal or familial; then it's on the edge of psychotherapy... which I don't really like. I don't reject it but I'm careful. (CZ)

For athletes and, often, in businesses, the main expectation is improvement of easily measurable **personal performance** (CY). Nevertheless, even these relations, seemingly simple in their targeting, involve a wide range of expectations and objectives.

I go to see my coach for systemic reasons. He sees me when he has studied the other teams and is ready to practice various techniques and face another team more effectively. (CY)

Development of professional skills

Coachees and, in particular, their employers want professional skills to develop. Such an expectation makes coaching similar to **mentoring** and **supervision** as intending to adopt specific professional skills or work objectives and solve relational and other problems within case work. However, none of these forms of professional development are meant to provide ready-made instructions/advice but **develop one's own potential** and give **inspiration for one's own activity**.

The company wants to unlock their employee's creativity and ability to positively impact. A 'coaching' approach is, they believe, best to allow individuals to see that they have the answers within them. (UK)

In schools, specifically, the objective is support for **quality of teaching, innovations in teaching, testing of new methods** and the **quest for options of support for school success, class management** and so forth (CZ, LV, RO). Coaching makes it possible for teachers (but not only them) to realize that a problem is not their failure, and helps them **discover and use hidden skills and knowledge**. Teachers sometime use coaching in order to confirm they are good teachers, who work/act correctly. Sometimes the goal may be the realization of some details of one's acting, in other words the 'tacit knowledge' (UK, CZ).

School coaching, as well as mentoring and supervision, is often linked to **class observation** (LV, CZ). Also, schools look for **support to sharing, teacher cooperation** and **shared ownership**.

Some teachers are good and do well, but they in fact don't know why they are successful. So I help them look into it. It's a kind of becoming aware of something... and to support them; there's nobody who would appreciate what they do... (CZ)

Similar expectations are related to supervision: **improvement of professional competences, coping with individual cases** (of pupils and their parents) in the setting of diversity (LV), **development of reflective skills** (CY) and, outside schools, communication with clients and supervision in individual cases (HR).

In the process of coaching, teachers and school leaders often have to solve **problems of work relations** on any level: between leaders and teachers, between teachers, between teachers and pupils, between teachers and parents, between leaders and the establishing entities, and so on (RO). In many of these cases, there is an ethical problem and coaching gets closer to supervision. Data show that supervision in schools is more related to specific cases, classrooms and lessons, and is based on more direct professional feedback (LV). Another approach (HR) does not draw a line between expectations from supervision and those from coaching (organizational climate, communication, interpersonal relations). Leaders expect that coaching will clarify their leadership roles, improve their **competences in staff leadership** and, as a consequence, increase the quality of work IN their organizations. Some leaders ask coaches for help if they get into trouble with a particular task or situation (CZ, RO).

Coaching (and mentoring/supervision in particular) is frequently focused on starting staff members who need help to master unforeseen situation in their new profession.

For new volunteers, the expectation from coaching is that they'll learn how to cope with various situations they encounter while working with the elderly. (RO)

As to specific topics of coaching in business companies, coaches mainly mention **time management, change management** (LV), **problem solving** (LV, RO), **human relation management** (HR), **capacity building, innovations in the company, entrepreneurship, communication with the public** (RO, CY), **better use of resources and opportunities, clarification of values, sales increase, conflict solving** (LV), **determination of priorities** (LV) and other specific competences. Manager coaching in businesses is considered commonplace.

Good coaching was identified as the number one attribute of great leaders. (UK)

The development of professional and other competences of individual employees is closely related to that of the organization as a whole.

...helps me discover what is good for me and the institution... The requirements we have to meet are more feasible then. (RO)

Development of organizations: soft and hard expectations

It is evident that expectations are not only related to the development of individuals or teams, but to whole organizations as well. Like the expectations of individuals, those of organizations (represented by managers, headteachers, etc.) can be divided into two thematic groups, albeit interconnected and influencing each other: (1) development of measurable/hard organizational aspects such as **productivity, quality and performance**, and (2) development of soft organizational aspects that can be summarized as **change of culture**.

It is mainly schools where coaching appears in relation to the need (expectation) to **change school culture** (LV, CZ). School culture is traditionally regarded as individualistic and lacking in adequate openness, cooperation and sharing, therefore schools are more resistant to coaching and similar forms of collegial support than businesses. In more specific terms, schools are particularly referred to in relation to **change of the organizational climate and interpersonal relations** and **support for communication** and team cooperation (HR, LV, RO). Group form such as supervision are also supposed to make it easier for the staff to **get to know better one's colleagues** (HR). It is expected that after a coaching experience teachers will be more outright with each other, provide support to each other and acquire interest in education and coaching.

I'm speaking as headteacher now: I've had mentoring and coaching here for years, and first of all I expected it would change school culture. I thought teachers would start talking to each other and learn to support each other. (CZ)

My expectation from supervision was to get to know better the colleagues I work with. Our meetings are always formal and related to student issues. We don't really talk about ourselves, our wishes, needs and expectations. (HR)

According to some respondents, coaching can also help people realize and share **values** and **visions** within organizations (UK), accomplish project objectives (RO) and contribute to the **overall development of organizations**.

In most cases, it's managers of corporations and directors of some smaller companies who contact me. I mostly do business executive coaching in English, both individual and group coaching, and online coaching as well. The Croatian manager and I, we usually discuss the development needs of the company and agree on the approach and outcome expected. (HR)

It is widely expected – as is traditional for businesses but increasingly typical for schools as well – that everybody would express a willingness to be coached, and it is an obvious form of support that has to take place continuously in order to generate effects (UK, CZ).

What do expectations result from?

It is typical for coaching and other forms of support that specific expectations, objectives and topics **are determined by the client** based on his/her needs. Coaching reflects the humanistic ‘people-centred approach’ and ‘tailored support’ (UK, RO, CZ) that respect the needs and wishes of the coachee.

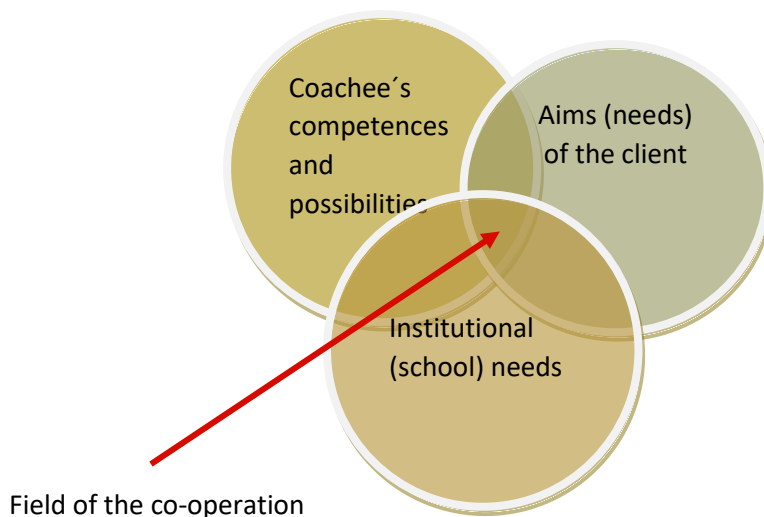
I don't know what the school or headteacher expect. Me and the coach, we just talk to each other. The headteacher offered me coaching so I accepted. What the school or my colleagues expect, I actually don't know. The expectations and objectives are mine. (CZ)

If coaching is sponsored by an organization or project, there can be a more or less specific **topic in which the organization is interested** (e.g. improvement of relations), especially in the case of group coaching or supervision. However, objectives and expectations should be the client's own or, at least, agreed on by a group of clients.

The sponsor tells the coachee: These are your main qualities and strengths and these are the prospective areas for your development, so my expectations from the process are the following... When the organization orders coaching, first a contract is signed with the sponsor. The sponsor defines what the coach should achieve during the process... (HR)

The structure of various expectations can be depicted as follows:

Figure 1: Expectations from coaching



Expectations are **sometimes not clarified**, especially if the coaching is introduced to schools by means of projects and the organization is not prepared adequately. Then nobody in the organization

knows what to expect from coaching and people's ideas are biased. For instance, a school receives finance through a project, because coaching is fashionable or encouraged by documents of school policy, but people there do not know how to employ such an opportunity. Sometimes they do not even have motivation and they cannot see a purpose. Some teachers then become involuntary clients hardly able to express their expectations and needs.

Sometimes the headteachers hire me within a project saying I should offer this service to teachers but they forget to tell me what it should bring about to the school... (CZ)

The biggest problem comes when a company hires a coach for an employee who's not interested in personal development. That's coaching as punishment, with managers not knowing what to do with the employee but having unrealistic expectations that coaching can change the person... (HR).

It is substantially easier to involve **starting teachers** as well as NGO workers in coaching (as well as mentoring), for they believe that support can help them in the beginning and they are more adaptable and less resistant.

Luckily, young people have arrived and they know more and wish to help themselves. They don't want to burn out but ask for help and seek prevention. (HR)

The coaches consider these misunderstandings and the **involuntary clients who do not expect anything** a cardinal limitation for the development of these supportive processes. Generally, they point out that coaching can be a long-term affair and people only learn to be coached, open and expressive about their needs and reflect their own needs.

6. Impacts of coaching

The impacts and evaluation of the benefits of coaching are directly connected with expectations. Therefore, it is assumed that successful coaching fulfils all expectations, both personal and professional. The impacts of coaching are often discussed but most of them cannot be seen promptly and are hardly measurable (particularly in schools and for soft expectations). On the other hand, some coaches observe teachers in classes, therefore they can **observe the changes directly**. Some impacts are discussed/evaluated by the coachees immediately with their coaches while others are communicated indirectly, after some time, so coaches have to rely on **their own feeling**.

I feel there's an impact on the school. If this observation is a positive example, teachers won't be afraid when someone comes to observe their lessons next time. Introducing the culture of observation can change school culture as such and help the school to open up. (LV)

I don't get much feedback form headteachers when I work with teachers... Sometimes I can see that teachers are happy; sometimes I'm happy about it myself... At the end of the year, in

case I work on a long-term basis in the school, I ask them what the benefit was... It's kind of difficult; I can't see impacts on the school but on myself. (CZ)

The respondents comment on the impacts of coaching in three possible domains:

Change in thinking, attitudes and working behaviour

Some coachees said they had changed their attitude to and perception of how they work (LV), for instance:

He learned he should be more direct with his staff... he shouldn't pay too much attention to what others think... he should have more rest... he delegates work to colleagues. (LV)

It is regarded as important that under the influence of coaching, teachers and other employees learn to think and talk like coaches and realize that things can be viewed from various perspectives.

Teachers should use the 'coaching way' of thinking, which is geared towards changes, daring and support for each other... Any teacher can play the role of a coach in the school. This role can be best suitable for the class teacher, who knows all the students in the class, but if it's about the whole school it could be the psychologist or one of the leaders. (LV)

Also, coaching has positive effects on efficient communication, decision-making, accomplishment of goals and the quest for one's 'new myself' (CY). A change in one's working behaviour results in improved performance.

Better performance

If performance is difficult to evaluate in schools, so is the effect of coaching on **pupils' learning**. Most impacts cannot be seen immediately; some coaches say it takes half a year at least (LV). The respondents opine that positive effects are faster and more important if the coachee has been coached before.

If the coachees don't have any previous experience with coaching, they need at least 10 coaching sessions to reach some change and results. The minimum is 5 sessions and the optimum is around 8 to 10. (LV)

Me as a supervisor, I can give teachers flour but it's them who make their cake. (LV)

Some of those questioned describe visible change in the behaviour of teachers as well, resulting in **improved work performance**. This applies mostly to increased activity after coaching. Teachers gain self-confidence and willingness to innovate; they feel like doing things in different ways.

A clear impact for individuals working at the school was that there was a self-esteem 'boost' for the participants... This underlining of trust in the individual means that they are confident in moving the process forward... People are more inclined to reform rather than repeat unsuccessful behaviours. (UK)

Unlike schools, businesses and production companies generate **results** that are **more clearly measurable**, for both the whole organization and individual employees. Therefore, coaching must have a clear and evaluable effect on the performance of teams as well as individuals.

Although coaching is often focused on soft skills, companies have tools available to measure the change and performance so that the efficiency of their acting can be followed. (CZ)

A manager told us that his team's productivity had increased by 26 % (the client was a manager himself), the profitability of the department had increased by 15 % and the number of staff performing effectively had risen from 3 to 9 in a team of 10. The team conveyed more energy, positivism and better relationships and the micro-climate improved when working with just one person. (LV)

Coaching in companies is thus more clearly linked to the **measurement of efficiency**. Coaches report that coaching in businesses is more deeply anchored in the system, therefore considered as an integral part of its operation. Coaching often represents a considerable amount of investment and businesses carefully check the effects (CZ).

Coaching has been used as a key tool for workforce development throughout the time that the company has been in existence. (UK)

It can be said that the impacts on athletes are monitored in a similar way, as their performance is measurable and evaluable in certain time, both with coaching and without. However, it is obvious that an increase in performance can have a variety of reasons and synergic effects.

Calming and awareness

Nevertheless, coaching does not have directly visible and measurable impacts on working performance only. According to the respondents, teachers and other coachees can calm down, adopt more self-confidence and self-assurance and become aware of their weaknesses and strengths. People feel better about themselves (UK). Coaching enables people to **find time for themselves and think about their work and themselves** in safe, understanding and uncritical settings. They have the opportunity to reflect on their goals, current reality and sources, both their own and external.

The headteacher also confirmed to me that the teacher was calmer... She really did calm down for some time; you can recognize that. Teachers usually regain some self-confidence and distance from things after coaching, they use different phrases and techniques, they withstand manipulation... Energy is loosened. I managed to unlock them. (CZ)

Most teachers are stressed before a supervisor comes. But they are calmer and more self-confident if the observation and feedback are positive. They become aware of things and ask the supervisor to observe lessons again. (LV)

The main benefit of coaching resides in more efficient activities, enhanced well-being and self-trust among clients. It's satisfaction from being listened to while realizing that one's work matters... Another impact of coaching on teachers is that they enhance self-trust and become more optimistic, communicate better with their students and, ultimately, cultivate a sense of job satisfaction. (RO)

Frequently, intuition indicates that teachers work well, but they do not realize how they do it. Also, the coachees can sometimes realize, by means of coaching, that they do not want to pursue the profession (LV) anymore, which does not necessarily have to be a bad decision.

School culture

Coaching and other forms of professional development, particularly those in which large group of employees are involved, have a variety of effects. Some headteachers expect that coaching will change school culture and teachers will **start communicating in a more open way and help each other**. Nevertheless, it is evident that school culture needs time to change and such an impact is not visible immediately. A transparent system of coaching across the school/organization is an important precondition.

Teachers tell each other it's a good thing and there are more and more of them involved. The reputation of coaching is disseminated, and people react... if you arrange it for the whole school, coaching becomes constructive and systematic. People start behaving and talking differently; even the children can feel it. School culture is changing. Some teachers even arrange courses such as of critical thinking. (CZ)

The main indicators of changes occurring in school culture are modifications in teachers' openness and increased courage to cooperate, express doubts and test new things.

7. How coaching is organized

The arrangement of coaching in organizations depends on the existence/non-existence of a system, and how it is financed. There are several ways in which coaching in organizations is planned, provided, carried out and evaluated. The reports from partner countries indicate very diverse systems with varied numbers of lessons per month. Elaborate systems usually provide clear financing, persons appointed, certain volume of lessons and formal framework. Coaching in some other organizations can be rather a matter of informal structures.

Coaching can be related directly to working or sporting performance or other activities of a teacher or athlete and may be **carried out before, during or even after** the event (CY). On the other hand, it is not always related directly to the needs of coachees. The offer of coaching is presented in various ways.

Leaders' requirement for external coaching

This type of the initiation of coaching is found in schools as well as businesses. Leaders of institutions either offer coaching to certain groups of people or individuals as an option (a benefit that is financed by the school or company) or they recommend coaching for a person who is considered difficult. The latter can be risky as those for whom coaching is intended can feel endangered and lacking in motivation. A system in which **external coaching (or external supervision)** is proposed **for failing teachers** by school leaders (a need as perceived by the leaders) and financed by local authorities was presented by Latvian colleagues.

The leaders of the school write an application to the Education Centre, specifying the subject and professional problem of a teacher. At the Centre they choose one of their 13 supervisors whose task it is to observe four lessons, give the teacher feedback after each and, in the end, give both the teacher and the leaders a written report. (LV)

A similar system is being implemented in the Czech Republic, following an extensive European project under coordination by a nation-wide schooling institution directly governed by the Ministry of Education (National Pedagogical Institute) and the Czech School Inspectorate. Based on this project, if the Inspectorate identifies deficiencies in a school, its leaders are offered support in the form of ‘voluntary’ coaching, mentoring or supervision financed from European resources for a certain period to a certain extent.

Also, school leaders act as initiators of coaching/mentoring/supervision if it is **financed from projects** (short-term events habitually) or **by donators** (CZ, RO). A similar experience is reported by supervisors from Croatia. Again, there may be the risk that the employee is not internally motivated, not feeling the need for support, and gets involved only on the ground of ‘satisfying the demand of the leader’, ‘doing what others do because it is supposed to be done’ or ‘having to do it in order to fulfil the objectives of the project’.

The projects prescribe the duration of coaching and mentoring, which is contradictory at times. Then you’ve got involuntary clients there to whom someone says ‘this can help you, you’ve got a problem’... In our school, coaching was provided within a project. We registered for it as a school, but as teachers we didn’t know much about it. (CZ)

The first time I’ve heard about supervision for schools was during a European project. I presented it during our staff meeting, and about 50 % were interested. We sent a written request to ETTA. An ETTA senior adviser came to the school and gave an introductory presentation. We knew that the cycle consisted of ten 3 to 4 hour sessions. A group of 12 participants was formed and we all stayed till the end. (HR)

The headteacher wanted to implement a project named ‘My school, differently’ which comprised a coaching process she was going to carry out. Personal and professional exploration sessions were organized, during which positive attitudes towards objectives and change were cultivated. (RO)

Coaches play a difficult role in these cases. It seems that it is of key importance for successful coaching to know how much directive the ‘offer’ for coaching is and whether coaching is

considered really as a **benefit** or rather a **punishment** in the school/company. Some respondents offered specific procedures to solve such a dilemma:

I invited them [teachers] to a meeting, explained what I can offer to them and which forms coaching can have, and it was up to them to decide whether they want to use it. I always leave them a message on the notice board saying when I'm going to be in the school and they put down their names if interested... But the teachers because of whom the headteacher invited the coach don't show up... (CZ)

In order to increase the feeling of safety, some schools and businesses that are not experienced in coaching and suspect a connotation of control use the term 'coaching' cautiously.

When I started working in the company it was not mentioned that I am a coach; I was rather introduced as a staff development manager. (LV)

It can be concluded that coaching/mentoring/supervision in schools and other public or state organizations is financed either **directly by local authorities** or **from projects**. It is rare for schools to pay for external coaching themselves, and very few teachers pay for coaching from their own resources. If they do, it is rather an informal courtesy support from colleagues as evidenced by an example from the Czech Republic:

I've got a few friends who are headteachers and they know I give coaching so when they call me I try to help them. (CZ)

External coaching in businesses is usually **financed directly by the companies** sometimes investing considerable resources in these forms of support. Much clearer expectations from coaching are usually defined. If an employee pays for coaching him/herself, a feeling of more safety in setting the goals can be a consequence. Like in business companies, coaching in sports is subordinated to specific needs and has a certain periodicity (CY).

Internal coaching as a form of collegial support

Regular internal coaching or employment of coaches is more typical for **businesses**, usually as a process for which managers are responsible for or even entrusted with (UK, CZ). In most cases, the objectives of coaching result from an agreement among managers, employees and coaches and **coaching is more or less anchored in the system** with generally shared rules, plans, scheduling, number of sessions, evaluation, and so on.

The first session is attended by the client, the line manager and the coach. Specific aims are agreed on. (LV)

In larger corporations, coaching is organized by human resource departments, which are in charge of professional development, and becomes an integral and traditional part of staff care (HR, CZ,

UK). Coaching applies to managers at all levels as well as ordinary employees and, frequently, is an obligatory part of the **adaptation stage** or **career advancement**.

Some have progressed through the business hierarchy and coaching has been seen as a key part of their success. (UK)

There will be leadership interviews for people who take on new roles. The company has people who are leaders but never went through a formal selection process. There's a large cohort of people who have failed the formal interview but they want to see them as leaders in that team. Some have never led before so coaching is seen as ideal technique for those people. (UK)

Also, in **schools**, more and more teachers are trained in mentoring and coaching and provide support for their colleagues in schools, or even beyond, either free of charge or as a paid service (CZ). Free forms of internal coaching in schools have various degrees of formality, from completely informal collegial meetings to institutionalized forms such as planned and evaluated peer observation in lessons with feedback (CZ). These forms of coaching require and, simultaneously, strengthen the open and collaborative climate, but they are rather rare. While in Latvian and Croatian schools coaching/supervision enters from the outside, it seems that Czech and British schools rely more on **informal development** of internal mentoring.

Currently nobody requests a coaching experience; instead it's more along the lines of 'do you mind if we have a go?' The process is led by the individual requesting the coaching. It's viewed as an interesting starting point and the coached person hopes to build on this starting point. (UK)

8. Effective ways to coaching

Coaching is successful if it meets the requirements of both the coachee and the organization, but an important role is also played by the conditions the organization creates for the process.

All the respondents point out the fact that the coaching programme is personalized in order to comply with their interests and needs. (RO)

Nevertheless, it cannot be forgotten that successful coaching exists mainly in the personality and competences of the coach and the procedures and techniques he/she is able to use efficiently.

An effective coach loves working with people, one-on-one, has experience with personal development, business experience... is trained in coaching... Life experience and personal development are essential for good coaching. (HR)

Creation of conditions in the company/school

If the leaders of schools or companies want their employees to be coached and if school leaders intend to incorporate coaching in the life of the school, they have to create adequate conditions. The structure of working time in schools is different from that in businesses. So **teachers can be let off lessons (UK, CZ), timetable can be adapted, travel expenses can be reimbursed, coaches are paid in various ways**, and so on. Again, the decisive point is the form of financing and the amount of resources available, but it is also the willingness and **dedication of school leaders** to these types of professional development.

In the nursery school the headteacher lets us off every Tuesday for coaching. (CZ)

The school is not a cultured setting. Headteachers tell teachers to fulfil what is necessary... Do you want mentoring? Then you can have mentoring. But see to it yourself. The headteacher makes something easier for you but wouldn't care anymore. They don't evaluate. (CZ)

It is therefore an uneasy task for school leaders to create the necessary resources, both material and human. An important factor is the very first experience with coaching in schools. Leaders and teachers do not always know what coaching is: **they do not know how to understand coaching** and how to help people and the organization (LV). It is regarded useful for teachers to get introduced to coaching informally, gain information on the objectives of a course of coaching, choose the coach and decide freely whether they want to enter these relations or not. Suitable conditions are created by school/company leaders as well as the coaches, because they create a **safe environment** for both, the client and themselves. Coaching is a path to reflection, deepening the reflectivity of coachees and, thus, requiring time and tranquillity.

Coaching sessions usually take place in the company's premises (a well isolated room with a notification on the door) or in my own office. (HR)

According to coaches, it is sometimes difficult to find a calm room. Teachers usually do not have a room for their own use, interviews are disturbed periodically by the bell and teachers can hardly find **time** in their working schedule.

It happens often that coaching is cancelled because the teacher comes after classes at six in the evening, is tired and says: Whew, so let's get started... This doesn't make sense. The client and the coach mustn't be tired. A good thing to do is a seminar day in the school, a day off devoted to professional development. (CZ)

All need to feel as though they have time to undertake coaching which frees up time to think. The participants state that an individual can be busy in any job, but coaching has made them stop and think more and so make better decisions rather than jumping in... Coaching is allowing us time to consider. That freedom to think outside the box; having a two-way conversation doesn't allow an individual to solve things on their own. (UK)

It is very similar for the coaches. It is also difficult for them to adapt to the operation of the school and possibilities of the teacher. Another condition often mentioned is the requirement **not to exert pressure**. Some headteachers or teachers accentuate development too intensely, constantly urging new things and expecting rapid changes (CZ).

You can't always make pressure on development; you need to go slow and better lay emphasis on calming down. You just can't insist on one change after another. (CZ)

It is also considered useful to maintain **regular contacts** between the coach and the coachee, take the necessary time and build trust (CY). Trust is paramount to the coaching process (UK). Some coaches point out that it is important to **be able to choose** one's coach. It is not always possible, but such a practice reduces the risk of resistance.

The HR manager gets a list of coaches available with their CVs and photos, and the coach they believe is the best is chosen. Following this, a meeting of the coach and the coachees is organized, and so is a sponsor meeting. Before the contract is signed we have a two-hour session with the client to check for convenience. A three-corner or four-corner meeting follows (coach, client, his/her superior, HR manager) follows. Only then I sign the internal contract with the coach as well as a contract with the company sponsoring the development of the employee. (HR)

Another useful aid is a written **'agreement'** between the coach and the coachee containing the objectives and duration of coaching and the rights, duties and conditions. Nevertheless, the most essential condition of efficient coaching is trust and confidentiality.

The highlight is on confidentiality. All parties are informed that there won't be any reports by the coach to the superiors of the coachee on the content of sessions. At the end of the process, I send a report to the company mentioning only the general topics that were dealt with. The process is highly confidential, and the company has no insight into details so that the client's privacy and integrity is protected. (HR)

Coaching techniques

There are a variety of coaching methods and **not one exclusive or correct way** to coach. It depends on the situation and topic, character and motivation of the client, and so forth. Each coach has a time-proven way he/she relies on. It is important to be **flexible and creative**, adapt work to current situation and **listen** to what the client requires. It is important to know what the coachee needs and how his/her thinking and reflecting can be supported (CY). On the other hand, there are some rules for the procedure, which cannot be briefly described in this report but make part of the education and training of coaches. Linked to the process are some of their techniques such as GROW, active listening, open questions, increase in sensitivity to change (CZ, UK) while others concentrate on **objective setting, creation of safety, relation sustaining, evaluation of usefulness**, etc.

It all starts with brainstorming: Where you are now, where you want to go, and how. At the beginning it feels like guiding... But in the end, you arrive where you want to. (CY)

Body language, distance from an individual, set-up of the room and tone of the voice are all important determinants of a successful coaching conversation. (UK)

It is also possible to work with documents such as profession competence model, professional standards or plans of pedagogical development if these are available (CZ). Sometimes feedback in the form of **video** is used for coaching/mentoring/supervision in teaching, sports and any work with the client (CY). Coaches say that especially **companies** where coaching has had a longer tradition use a wide range of techniques and tools, both diagnostic and for evaluation.

For instance, businesses quite often work with competence models. There you know what a specific leader in a specific place has to look like, what success is, what the expected performance is and what good leadership is. Do we know what a good teacher or headteacher is? What to expect from him or her? (CZ)

A good coach is thus open and willing to ‘do things in different ways’, knowing in every moment whom and with what to help and how to use a variety of techniques (LV). For this, experience and a relatively long training under supervision is needed (though not always explicitly required).

Evaluation of the impacts of coaching

Evaluation of the impacts of coaching can be done at various levels: by the **coaches**, the **coachees**, their **superiors** and the **donators** (e.g. by means of a project). It is related to checking the objectives that were fixed beforehand, but sometimes it is only a subjective assessment of satisfaction and the feeling the coachees and others involved have. Business companies usually pay a lot of attention to the evaluation of these impacts.

Coaching is evaluated after six months in a discussion with the client, his or her superior and the HR manager. (HR)

Although fast impacts are **hardly evaluable** in schools, some coaches, supervisors and mentors say that certain change in teachers’ behaviour and habits can be seen soon (LV). It is typical for Czech schools that the **coach is responsible to the project** mainly and the donators, time-limited projects as well as more elaborated systems usually fix the number of hours and forms of evaluation. Reports are written and time sheets must be submitted. In some other projects, in order to maintain the confidentiality and safety of coachees, responsible persons are not interested in the content or topics of coaching and rely that their money is properly invested in the development of employees.

We always fill in the report that has to be produced within the project. That’s technicality. The coach always asks whether and how this is useful, but the headteacher doesn’t care, she just asks from time to time how things are going. (CZ)

There is a different experience from Latvian schools:

In schools the supervisor's task is to observe four lessons, give the teacher feedback after each (oral and written) and, in the end, written feedback is given to the teacher and the leaders. The final feedback is submitted to the Education Centre as well. (LV)

The respondents say that some school leaders are interested in the evaluation, but most of them do not evaluate (or not even follow) coaching. (CZ)

If the demand for coaching comes directly from the school, it's up to both parties to agree on things. If we don't agree on evaluation and I get a contract for a year and a certain number of hours, I'll hardly talk to the headteacher about the impact... But sometimes I ask her this or that. (CZ)

Evaluation often remains **on the coach-coachee level**. It is a part of the coaching process, therefore their common work. Teachers who are not involved often do not know what goes on in the school in this respect. Activities that are disorganized and unevaluated like this can be intransparent as they do not involve the whole school.

If the project is not intended for teachers or specialists in schools, the coach doesn't even see the headteacher, so coaching remains at the level of coach-to-coachee. It's after all safer not to communicate with the leaders... Actually, I don't really know what the whole school does. Everything remains between the two of us while the school pays for it... (CZ)

9. Limitations related to coaching

Some limitations have already been indicated above in various categories. In this chapter, those that affect coaching in schools are summarized and pointed out. According to our respondents, relevant limitations are related to the **organization** of coaching, the **coachees** and **coaches**. Coaches and those coached remark that there is a lack of infrastructure, facilities and funding in other settings too (CY).

(Non-)existent systems

It is evident from the opening chapter, in which the national contexts are described, that coaching is traditional in businesses, sports and perhaps as individual life support, but not in education systems. These have witnessed coaching in the last years and decades only, adopting different forms: it is rather mentoring in the Czech Republic and Cyprus while coaching is reserved for school leaders, whereas supervision is intended for schools in Croatia. In the Czech Republic, the system is mainly built on **European projects** while **specific communities** promote coaching in British schools, generating islands of good practice. Where the system is missing, the requirements for education of coaches who should provide support for schools are usually defined in an unclear way. A different system is offered in Croatia where supervision is provided centrally. Some institutions with a closed organizational culture can face a variety of burdens, which naturally happens in and beyond the domain of schools.

Mistrustful individuals create mistrustful systems. Some systems believe to be self-sufficient. There's also prejudice that helpers, due to their profession, are good at helping themselves, which isn't true. When I know, as a helper, that I need help, it's a sign of being mature in terms of my profession. (HR)

Several questions emerge in some of the countries involved: Who are in fact the coaches in education? What should their training consist of? Who should finance coaching in schools? Who should have access to coaching in schools?

You hear it on the grapevine, it's all connections, they ask whom you know... People know each other from trainings and through various projects and they arrange jobs for each other. (CZ)

Financing through projects is a limiting factor, for it does not **guarantee sustainability**. Once the project finance support is over, coaching does not survive long (CZ). Moreover, coaching adjusted through a project can result in formal discharge of the duties and an increased administrative load. On very few occasions headteachers do struggle for their own **internal system of coaching/mentoring**, intending to train most teachers in coaching/mentoring. These can provide support to each other then (CZ). Particular attention is paid to the option of coaching **by superiors**, which is considered limiting by the coaches themselves.

As headteacher I avoid coaching and mentoring in my own school. Although the double role of a headteacher coach would be immensely useful for me. I can disseminate a specific form of communication in the school, using the principles of coaching, but I don't do it. (CZ)

However, every system requires a clear distribution of roles, tasks and responsibilities and **has to be transparent** (LV). It must be clear who the coach is, what his/her roles are, what the remuneration is and what his/her rights and duties are. In education, local coaches and mentors usually do not work full-time but have to pursue their main job (as teachers, consultants, lecturers, and so on). As for **external coaches**, they have to be flexible and search for work (LV, CZ, RO).

All the individuals involved in coaching need to organize their personal time and plan their activities efficiently; sometimes it's hard for a coach or coachee to agree on an interval that suits both. (RO)

Involuntary and ill clients

The more coaching is enforced top-down (by school leaders, education policy, etc.) the more it will be formalized. Also, the more it is perceived as reaction to errors, the bigger the probability is that **coaching will not be accepted positively by all people in the school**. This, of course, is true beyond schools as well: coaches in all domains sometimes work with involuntary clients, which makes their work frustrating for both sides.

The biggest problem comes when a company hires a coach for someone who's not interested in personal development, when coaching is used as punishment and managers don't know what to do with an employee, having unrealistic expectations that coaching can change the guy. I find it unacceptable, and I have an agreement with the companies I work for: coaching is for those who are successful and want more. (HR)

It is the problem clients, in particular those **involuntary** or **at the threshold in terms of their personality**, or even mentally ill, whom the respondents consider one of the most important limitations for their work. Also, the group of problem clients involves those who have unrealistic expectations or are not prepared for accepting support. These clients are not able to be open in an adequate way, express feelings, reflect, be authentic and have confidence (RO). In this regard, some coaches speak about uncoachable people, with whom success is hard to achieve. Some of these client types are summarized by Latvian respondents:

These are situations in which the coached persons have deep psychological issues they would like to solve, but not within the boundaries of coaching... situations when they think they don't need coaching... or situations in which the coached person becomes addicted to coaching... It's sometimes difficult to coach young people, for they don't have the experience necessary in order to follow coaching... and situations in which the coached persons expect that coaching provides solutions, acting as a medicine rather than involvement in the quest for solutions. (LV)

Emotional barriers, empathy and willingness to speak openly with another individual are paramount factors for the effectiveness of the coaching process. So is authentic involvement of both parties in the process, clear goals, relevant and complete information, mutual trust and respect. (RO)

Based on their own experience, coaches create **procedures applicable when working with such clients**. They report that it is necessary to put the involuntary clients in good mood, win their trust, not press them but start with minor subjects and enjoy small steps forward (CZ).

Involuntariness can be solved by at least trying it out, be it involuntarily, and then it depends on the skills of the coach... If it's involuntary, the client doesn't know how to formulate the order, doesn't want anything, doesn't have an idea what it could be good for... Sometimes I even told myself, what do I do so damn wrong! (CZ)

I was also reluctant and didn't know what it would be good for... But the coach helped me look for topics. In the end we found what we would work on, and it went quite well. But in the beginning, it wasn't that pleasant. (CZ)

This does not mean that work with a problem client always ends successfully. In failed cases, coaches are helped by supervision and observance of **work psychohygiene**. In any case, all clients are steered to **taking over responsibility** for the results of coaching, their own development and the

change they find the resolve to do. The coach is mainly responsible for the process and his/her professional approach and readiness.

The main responsibility for the process is with the coach, and the main responsibility for the change is with the coachee. The coachee defines what's needed to do in a process that's conducted by the coach. (HR)

You can't take a coaching role to every situation. (UK)

Some coaches can see another limitation in the fact that the coachees or the leaders of the organization do not understand the mission of coaching and **fear** it (LV). Teachers can be afraid of being watched by someone who would discover their mistakes; they are afraid of criticism. In organizations inexperienced in coaching, mentoring or supervision, it is already these terms that can evoke negative feelings.

One of the big misunderstandings is what coaching is. People often mix up the terms coach, trainer and consultant. The coach is seen as someone who gives advice and offers solutions, which is not the case... Supervision sounds to people as some sort of control. Someone will check how good or not good I am, and my superior may find out. (HR)

Coaching is associated with scepticism, because its mechanisms aren't yet properly understood. People are reserved, conservative and too self-sufficient. (RO)

It again confirms again that misapprehension the concept of coaching or a bad initial experience can affect the attitude of teachers and the whole school for a long time. Therefore, the selection of really good coaches is essential for successful coaching.

Coaching or something else?

We mentioned in the beginning that many of our respondents worked as both coaches and mentors, without many distinguishing features between these two forms of work. Though they are able to distinguish among coaching, mentoring and supervision in theory, the ways of work merge into each other in practice. Also, they use similar work procedures and techniques (CZ, LV) and do not really rack their brains over whether it is coaching or mentoring. They do not consider it important to distinguish between coaching and mentoring 'here and now'. They usually stick to how the process is called by the client and often feel as either a coach, a mentor or a supervisor according to the training that they have had and, perhaps, the professional background (HR).

It's also therapists and psychiatrists who set about corporate coaching, for financial reasons. Naturally they slide into therapy, and that's not what it should be. They should keep within the boundaries of coaching. Coaching is not therapy. (HR)

I simply can't differentiate whether I do coaching or supervision. If it digresses somewhere I can't say this is supervision, which is what I don't do, so let's call it a day. That's why I don't differentiate sometimes. (CZ)

As already remarked, coaches with unclear professional identity and those frustrated by difficult communication with problem clients or even organizations are supported by supervision and psycho-hygiene.

Coaches' identity and psycho-hygiene

Special attention was paid by respondent coaches to **their own possibilities and limits**. They mentioned conditions under which coaching cannot be carried out properly. Not only does this refer to the type of clients discussed above, lack of time or remuneration, but also one's own mood. The coaches say they must not have the feeling of **being overloaded, manipulated and acting as if they were a victim**.

I assign to myself what I'm able to manage. I'd like to do more but it's not my everyday job and I have to be in the school. In education you can't live on this. I do coaching in order to stay in shape. I've invested a lot in it and it may pay off when I'm old... Sometimes a headteacher, a friend of mine, addresses me and I don't charge anything for that. But you can't do it this way all the time. I take up orders if it's from someone close to me or if it's an interesting challenge. On other occasions it's only about money. (CZ)

This can't be done in a rush. I've got to get in the mood, prepare myself, sometimes I first read what we did last time so that I get started more easily. Then I feel I'm not absent-minded. Once I took my notebook with me and prepared for lessons on the train, but it was strange then... I've got to take my time for self-reflection... calm down and slow down. I miss this in my hasty life. I've got to start coolheaded, have a coffee, put me in the mood in the car. I have to concentrate. (CZ)

Although money is not always an essential condition, it plays its role and coaching in schools must be appreciated and remunerated. Also, coaches say that sometimes they can feel pressure from clients or organizations on expressing certain opinions or attitudes. It is a true test of professionalism to maintain neutrality and keep distance, a detached view and impartiality. It is not always easy to sideline one's feelings, beliefs and opinions on a certain situation and withhold them in front of the client and the ordering organization.

It's quite difficult to stay objective if personal interests are involved and the coach has negative opinions on the company or client or has bad experience with them. (LV)

In these situations, supervision of coaches plays an irreplaceable role.

10. Major differences between coaching in schools and companies

Some differences between coaching in schools and companies have already been mentioned. If we want to transfer some of the good experience and traditions of coaching from businesses to schools,

it is necessary, first of all, to take into consideration and respect the specifics of schools as organizations as well as the specifics of teaching.

With current gaps in education, it's very difficult to introduce coaching in the Cypriot education system, no matter how innovative and important it is. On the contrary, it's not a difficult practice to implement in non-educational settings, as shown by the interviews. (CY)

Specifics of teaching and the school as organization

Coaching of teachers in schools is specific because of the target group: teachers are used to 'transferring the truth' and working individually. They **do not like to reveal their work**, they **protect their know-how** and use a certain **time structure** in which there is no scope left for collegial discussions. Therefore, teachers who have no experience with coaching look at these processes distrustfully, considering them as revealing errors rather than a development activity and learning process.

A teacher is an authority, living the whole life as an authority, and all of a sudden there's the need to dismount from the throne and admit that not everything is managed perfectly. This arouses fear. Teachers are afraid they don't manage things and they don't want to be exposed in a vulnerable shape... They often just go and have a suspicious look at coaching, saying they'll see whether it makes sense or not... I'd like all headteachers to have a coach like those in companies so that they can see how you can think about people and talk to them. You've got to be careful about teachers, but feedback is necessary, just like in companies. (CZ)

Teachers are tired, they do coaching in their leisure time, tired after lessons. This is different in companies where you've got all the time before noon for coaching, easily. (CZ)

As already mentioned, the character of the work of teachers is related to the specifics of **school culture**, different from the culture of businesses. It is also a matter of employer-employee relations, interpersonal relations, **ways of communication** and **evaluation of work**.

Headteachers handle teachers with a lot of care; they're afraid of giving them feedback. People in companies are changing, they come and go. In schools, they stay the whole life. If an old biddy read the telephone directory to children, nobody would fire her. Then the biddy founds trade unions and nobody can do anything about it. The employees of the state are protected by the state. (CZ)

Coaching as related to career growth

Teaching is said to have a flat career. In one's own school there are not many grades for a teacher to ascend, and outside school they do not usually engage. Coaching in businesses is more closely related to career growth and people are more often reminded that it is up to them to decide how they will grow (CZ). Employees in companies know that responsibility and career growth is in their hands, so they are more motivated for being responsible for themselves.

In companies it's sometimes involuntary coaching, typically top-down, and they also grouch about not having time. But they are used to receiving feedback and they know it's useful for them, they're often used to it from school and from abroad... They like it because they know it contributes to professional growth and their career development. Teachers often don't know they've got careers... They don't think about it, don't know about opportunities. In companies, coaching means developing your career. (CZ)

According to some data, people in companies receive **more feedback** on their work and their managers evaluate their performance more profoundly, suggesting topics for coaching of individuals and teams. Instead, **in schools and NGOs, more accent is put on employees' current needs.**

An interesting difference between executive coaching in businesses and supervision in the non-profit sector is the lack of clearly defined goals to be achieved by the coachee in the latter. (HR)

Systems and financing

The above data show that coaching systems in businesses are transparently anchored, particularly in big companies, as part of employees' professional development. The responsibility for these processes is usually carried by HR departments. It is an integral component in big companies whose leaders plan, organize and evaluate coaching. Data from some countries (LV, HR) refer to established systems in schools as well, supported and **financed 'from the outside'**. In schools where coaching is financed through projects and a transparent/sustainable system is missing, or in NGOs where **supervision is ordered** (and provided 'free'), people can miss **motivation** for coaching and supervision.

Accordingly, staffs in schools and other institutions where supervision is voluntary are motivated to participate, while some NGO workers and project team members, for whom supervision is mandatory, are reluctant or resistant and rarely come to sessions organized for them. (HR)

When I do a seminar for teachers and finish an hour earlier, they're glad. When I do a seminar in a company, they try to persuade me to stay an hour longer and don't mind at all. They appreciate it and are used to accepting support... They don't perceive it as checking. (CZ)

On the other hand, an externally supported system of coaching in schools is missing in some countries (CZ, UK).

These activities aren't systemized in schools, they're not anchored, there's no support. Someone says 'do this' and that's it... Coaching in companies is linked to a system, HR hires coaches and consults thing with them. Coaching programmes are bought, and a lot of finance is invested. (CZ)

Also, there are **applied forms of coaching** in companies, such as in-placement, out-placement, and so on. The demand for mentors and coaches in education is on the rise, but it is usually not their only focus and full-time job. Exclusive orientation on professional coaching in schools is usually not sufficient for living. In businesses, coaching is **financed** from internal resources and it is evident that heavy demands are placed on business coaches.

Professionalism of business coaches

Businesses use a variety of tools (e.g. questionnaires) for diagnosing and evaluating the effects. They mention tools originated in the 1970s such as MBTI, Belbin's questionnaire, competence frameworks etc. (CZ). Some of these tools make up part of the know-how of coaches, therefore they are not easy to access.

The companies want it to be efficient. Increased performance must be ascertained. Sometimes it's about soft competences as well, but companies have tools to measure them... coaching in companies is evidence-based, shift in performance is measured and shadowing is done. The efficiency of the coach is monitored. On the contrary, school coaching is not focused on data and performance. Businesses use tools such as the competence framework, which is not always faultless, but every position has a clearly defined expectation. They work actively with it. (CZ)

According to some respondents, schools and NGOs use **group coaching**, supervision and Balint groups¹ more than businesses do (HR, UK) and, generally, techniques used are different from those in companies. If available, observation in classes (also using video), competence models and work standards are mentioned. Although the demand for training of coaches in schools is on the increase, there is still difference visible between the professionalism and experience of school and business coaches, especially in certain national contexts. It is usual that school coaches are expert. According to some data experienced teachers, i.e. people specialized in schooling, who do coaching as part-time job for a substantially lower pay, often from casual resources (CZ, UK).

11. Main challenges for the future

The following challenges for the future of coaching represent a brief summary of the above-mentioned data.

Systems, time and sustainability of coaching

While coaching in large business companies is continuous, anchored in a system and having its own internal order, education institutions feature either various systems of coaching/supervision provided from the outside and guaranteed by local authorities (RO, HR) or non-systemic episodic

¹ The Balint group is one of the earliest methods of clinical supervision spread from the clinical area to a large variety of working areas – social work, school etc. The method is named after its author Michael Balint. Available at: <https://balint.co.uk/about/the-balint-method/>

support. The setting and conditions are thus largely intransparent (CZ, UK). Although various donators and European projects can launch coaching in schools, they will not guarantee sustainability. Therefore, education systems face challenges such as **how to arrange for accessible coaching** adequate to the needs of schools and **how to continuously finance it**. Another question is how to adjust transparent conditions in schools so that all teachers interested can profit from coaching (CZ, LV). According to Cypriot respondents, coaching needs space, time, devotion, trust, openness and energy, whereas in Romania they see the main challenges for schools in **evidencing the efficiency of coaching, increase of confidence in coaching and willingness of teachers to be coached, be it by younger colleagues**.

Internal mentoring across the school

External mentoring can launch efficient processes of collegial support, but the development of internal coaching is another challenge. Internal coaching, perceived as mutual collegial support, has a very **positive impact on school climate and culture**. There are examples of good practice in the Czech Republic where external mentoring, financed from a long-term project, helped to start internal processes of sustainable collegial support. Teachers began to be open, invite colleagues to classes, offer their know-how and ask colleagues for support. It seems that coaching, mentoring and supervision arranged through experienced external workers can be safer in the beginning.

There's a trend towards internal mentoring, but external forms can be safer while the internal are less expensive and more flexible and disseminate culture. (CZ)

A big challenge for schools which have not started coaching yet is the arrangement of the first coaching experience: it is important to choose really good coaches and build confidence in coaching. The leaders must be devoted to coaching and act as a model. Coachees will trust more in coaching if they know that the same service is used by the leaders and perhaps the coaches themselves as well.

It's nice if leaders serve as a model. The agreement for next week is that I'll coach the headteacher... They ask me whether I also have a coach. I say such a person doesn't really have to be labelled a mentor or coach. I simply address someone, no matter how they call the guy. (CZ)

There are some more advantages of internal mentoring: it is **less expensive**, and teachers become interested in it so that they can provide support to each other. We know that, as a consequence, coaching and mentoring **alters people's thinking** and their ways of communication and evaluation. These new competences are then applied throughout the school: to colleagues, leaders, parents as well as pupils. Their impact on the relationship with parents is evident.

Teachers should use the 'coaching thinking' that is focused on change, courage and support for each other. (LV)

I believe I'm also a better manager now. In my primary work, as headteacher, I'm a better listener and have better interpersonal relations with my associates. The same goes for my family and friends. (HR)

Another challenge is to **build up a transparent system** of 'safe' coaching in the school, follow and clearly evidence its positive effects and create durable conditions for its development.

Professionalization of coaches

A big challenge for education systems is to arrange **transparent training** of coaches, mentors and supervisors. There are still questions rising in many education systems as to who can actually do coaching and what kind of education is required for it. While supervisors and mentors are supposed to have experience in teaching, coaches are specialists who focus 'on the process' and are usually **not** required to be teachers.

...pseudo-specialists in the field... (RO)

After all, when they provide support in schools, they rather focus on headteachers. It seems that there is a place for coaches, who are more universal and deal with rather general issues of management (in schools and classrooms) and personal development, as well as for mentors and supervisors as experienced teachers, who can provide feedback and, if necessary, professional perspective.

There is no specialized education for school coaching, but at least two local authorities provide education for supervisors through in-service training programmes. (LV)

It is necessary to specify the education of coaches, define the requirements for their training within projects and unify these requirements. It's not transparent, there are huge differences... School coaching mustn't start with a bad coach, otherwise teachers say 'no more coaching' (CZ)

While coach education, being rather general, usually takes place outside the schooling system, the training of experienced teacher mentors and supervisors, who can offer their services in and beyond schools, remains a challenge for these systems. In this respect, it is necessary to define the requirements for the competences of 'school mentors' and 'school supervisors' and specify them in terms of education and experience. If these specialists are anchored in legislation, the requirements are usually specified and guaranteed by local authorities. If coaching is not anchored in legislation, their education is rather spontaneous, provided by various subjects in varied quality (CZ, UK).

The data shows that follow-up 'care' for coaches, mentors and supervisors, in other words their professional growth, is also an issue to work on. Where can they look for their own supervision? For instance, growth and quality can be supported by **professional associations** that would see to their education and work ethics and create lists of certified coaches, mentors and supervisors that would be ready to do coaching in schools (CZ). Another challenge is to anchor **their role** and requirements for education and financing in **adequate legislation**. Nevertheless,

there are voices against overloading administration, binding legislation and links to associations that assume the right to represent others and decide what is correct. As on one hand:

A major threat is coaching done by people without adequate education and license. (HR)

While on the other hand:

I believe that in five or six years, if you wished to work as a coach in the corporate world of Croatia, you'd be required to have a certificate, and the certifying body will ask you to prove the CPD. I'm strongly against over-regulation by the state, which leads to particular interests defended by associations such as the chambers of psychologists, and bureaucratization. Countries experienced in it show that it's a disaster. It's not something to regulate. Coaches work with sane people who strive for personal growth and want someone to talk to. The market and international coaching organizations such as ICF will see to sufficient self-regulation. (HR)

Headteacher education in coaching is another challenge, for two reasons: first, in order for headteachers to promote and develop coaching professionally, as a model example in their schools (LV), and second, to be able to offer the same support to fellow headteachers.

Conclusion

Differences between coaching in companies and schools reflect the distinct forms of financing and internal adjustments of culture and accountability. Commercial businesses can invest large amounts in coaching and require clear evidence of efficiency. Coaching in them is more professionalized and part of the human resource development helping the career advancement of employees. The system and frequently the objectives of coaching are set by the company itself.

As for schooling, it seems that there is generally a lack of experience and high-quality tools that could facilitate the diagnostic and evaluative work of coaches. On the other hand, in spite of the shift to evidence-based interventions, it is questionable whether we measure the efficiency of coaching in schools.

Schools, which are accountable to their establishing entities, have to abide by relevant legislation; coaching has to face a variety of limitations. Most of them are related to financing and coach education. Some countries have adjusted supervision systems in schools according to legislation, whilst others feature coaching in schools as rather an informal or semi-formalized process. It also seems that the term 'coaching' is mostly related to support for school leaders whereas teachers' professional development tends to use the terms 'mentoring' or 'supervision'. These forms of support are usually carried out by experienced and authorized teachers, often alongside their role as teachers.

The data shows that an important introductory step is to increase the awareness of schools/teachers about coaching and similar forms of professional support. At the same time, it is necessary to present these processes as helping, not penalizing or disclosing errors. Teachers' trust

in these forms of collegial support can be increased by a good starting experience with expert coaches. On the contrary, a bad first coaching experience, lack of transparency and unclear systems can cause more harm than good.

Summary

The Desk Research is one of the outputs of the Erasmus+ project 2019-1-LV01-KA201-060345 titled Coaching for Staff Professional Development in Education (CoDe). The aim of this desk research was: *(1) to describe the arrangement, opportunities and limitations of coaching in selected schools and companies and (2) to identify the specifics and challenges/limitations of the implementation of coaching in selected schools.* For the research, we opted for qualitative approach.

During January and February 2020, we conducted in-depth interviews with selected coaches and coachees in each partner country according to a previously arranged structure. We didn't differ kinds of support because our respondents in some cases worked as coaches, mentors or supervisors, in the same time. Data was obtained through 27 interviews with men and women of various age, specifically: 15 coaches (mentors, supervisors) active in various sectors (schools of various levels, NGOs, business companies) as headteachers, business managers, trainers, lecturers and consultants; 12 coachees (mentees, supervisees) active as teachers and headteachers, educators, clown-doctors, athletes and leaders in various sectors such as schools, business companies and NGOs. Our respondents (coaches, mentors and supervisors) represented a wide scale of clients. For data description and interpretation, we used the framework: *Main topics of and expectations from coaching, impacts of coaching, how coaching is organized, effective ways to coaching, limitations related to coaching, major differences between coaching in schools and companies, and main challenges for the future.*

Usually, coaching in both schools and businesses is aimed at the **development of personal competences** or **personal potential** of people. What is also considered an expectation is support to those striving to change themselves and their objectives and paths, adopt other perspectives, do things in different ways or even solve problems. Also, the respondents remarked on personal subjects related to self-confidence strengthening, stress management, complicated relations and preparation for 'bad scenarios' as affiliated to psychotherapy. Coachees and, in particular, their employers want **professional skills to develop**. Such an expectation makes coaching similar to mentoring as intending to adopt specific professional skills or work objectives and solve relational and other problems within **case work**. In schools, specifically, the objective is support for quality of teaching, innovations in teaching, testing of new methods and quest for options of support for school success, class management and so forth. Coaching helps teachers discover and use hidden skills and knowledge. In the process of coaching, teachers and school leaders often have to **solve problems of work relations** on any level.

The **expectation of organizations** can be divided into two thematic groups, albeit interconnected and influencing each other: (1) development of measurable/hard organizational aspects such as productivity, quality and performance, and (2) development of soft organizational aspects that can be summarized as change of culture. It is typical for coaching and other forms of support that specific expectations, objectives and topics are **determined by the client** based on his/her needs.

The impacts of coaching are often discussed but most of them cannot be seen promptly and are hardly measurable (particularly in schools and for soft expectations). The coaches and coaches mentioned change in thinking, attitudes and working behaviour, or performance improvement. It seems, that coaching in companies is more clearly linked to the measurement of efficiency. The data showed that teachers and other coaches using coaching can calm down, adopt more self-confidence and self-assurance and become aware of their weaknesses and strengths. Also, coaching can change school culture when teachers start communicating in a more open way and help each other.

The arrangement of coaching in organizations depends on the existence/non-existence of a system. Elaborated systems usually provide clear financing, persons appointed, certain volume of lessons and formal framework. Coaching (mentoring, supervision) in schools and other public or state organizations is financed either directly by local authorities or from projects. It is rare for schools to pay for external coaching themselves. In some countries, more and more teachers are trained in mentoring and coaching and provide support for their colleagues in schools (internal mentoring, coaching), or even beyond, either free of charge or as a paid service. In opposition to schools, it seems that coaching systems in businesses are more transparently anchored, particularly in big companies, as part of employees' professional development. Although, data from some countries (LV, HR) refer to established systems in schools as well, supported and financed 'from the outside'.

Coaching is successful if it meets the requirements of both the coachee and the organization, but an important role is also played by the **conditions the organization** creates for the process. Teachers can be let off lessons, timetable can be adapted, travel expenses can be reimbursed. An important factor is the very first experience with coaching in schools.

There are a variety of **coaching methods** and not one exclusive or correct way to coach. It depends on the situation and topic, character and motivation of the client, and so forth. It is important to be flexible and creative, adapt work to current situation and listen to what the client requires. Schools and NGOs use group coaching, supervision and Balint groups, observation in classes (also using video), competence models and work standards. Businesses use rather the tools for diagnosing and evaluating the effects.

Evaluation of the impacts of coaching can be done at various levels: by the coaches, the coachees, their superiors and the donators. Business companies usually pay more attention to the evaluation of these impacts. Coaching in businesses is regular, more closely related to career growth. People in companies receive more feedback on their work and their managers evaluate their performance and coaching impacts more profoundly. Although fast impacts are hardly evaluable in schools, some coaches, supervisors and mentors say that certain change in teachers' behaviour and habits can be seen soon.

The main organizational **limits** are related with the missing systems. Where the system is missing, the requirements for education of coaches who should provide support for schools are usually defined in an unclear way, the financing is not clear. Financing through projects is a limiting factor, for it does not guarantee sustainability. The main risk is the involuntary coaching and when the coaching is not accepted positively by the people in the school. Some coaches can see another limitation in the fact that the coachees or the leaders of the organization do not understand the mission of coaching and fear it. Special attention was paid by respondent coaches to their own possibilities and limits. Coaching of teachers in schools is specific because of the target group:

teachers are used to ‘transferring the truth’ and working individually. They do not like to reveal their work, they protect their know-how and use a certain time structure in which there is no scope left for collegial discussions.

What are the **challenges** for the school caching/mentoring/supervision? While coaching in large business companies is continuous, anchored in a system and having its own internal order, education institutions feature either various systems of coaching/supervision provided from the outside and guaranteed by local authorities or non-systemic episodic support. Education systems face challenges such as how to arrange for accessible coaching adequate to the needs of schools and how to continuously finance it. Another question is how to adjust transparent conditions in schools so that all teachers interested can profit from coaching and how to build a safe a collaborative school culture. On very few occasions headteachers do struggle for their own internal system of coaching/mentoring, intending to train most teachers in coaching/mentoring. Internal coaching, perceived as mutual collegial support, has a very positive impact on school climate and culture. There is an advantage, when the headteacher is educated in coaching or mentoring to be able better understand the issue of teacher support and spread the idea across the school.

A big challenge for education systems is to arrange transparent training of coaches, mentors and supervisors. In this respect, it is necessary to define the requirements for the competences of school mentors, coaches and supervisors and specify them in terms of education and experience. Follow-up ‘care’ for coaches, mentors and supervisors, in other words their professional growth, is also an issue to work on.