

What is Mentoring and How does It Work? Eument-Net: a New Mentoring Initiative

Helene Fügler
Coordinator eument-net
Head of equal opportunities, University of Fribourg



Plan of presentation

- Mentoring and gender equality: what is mentoring?
- Mentoring in specific contexts
- The eument-net initiative
 - △ Partners and Aims
- Activities and Results
 - △ Exchange of Experience: manual and platform
 - △ Future structure
 - △ Debate and Discussion
- The future of eument-net

Mentoring and gender equality

- gender *in*-equality in higher education and research careers : The leaky pipeline.
- Some reasons (with varying importance in different countries)
 - △ (diminishing) direct discrimination
 - △ Male biased notions of excellence
 - △ Lack of female role models
 - △ Lesser access to and integration in networks
 - △ Inadequate structures and work-conditions

What is mentoring?

- Difference between **informal** mentoring and **formal** mentoring
- Informal mentoring
 - △ “spontaneous” support, based on (unreflected) preferences of mentors
 - △ tends to reproduce existing structures
- Formal mentoring programmes
 - △ organised forms of support, based on (reflected) needs of mentees
 - △ favours change of institutional culture

Definition of eument-net

- Mentoring is
- a supporting relationship
 - beyond institutional hierarchies
 - established in the frame of a formal mentoring programme
 - between a researcher (a mentee) who wishes to engage and gain experience in a specific field, and a senior academic or researcher (a mentor) who is ready to share his or her specific experience and knowledge related to the mentee's needs, or between peers
 - with the aim of fostering the mentee's or the peer's personal and career development in academia and research.

Specific contexts: the case of Switzerland

- Federal programme for gender equality in higher education (2000/03; 04/07; 08/11)
- Aim
 - △ 7% (1999) to 14% women professors by 2006
 - △ 25% women professors by 2012
- Modules
 - △ **Support for gender equality infrastructures**
 - △ Incentives for hiring women professors
 - △ **Support for mentoring programmes**
 - △ Child care facilities
- Great variety of mentoring programmes

Is mentoring effective?

- Effective investment for professors
- Effective experience for mentees
 - △ identity and autonomy as researcher
 - △ integration in scientific community
 - △ managing career and career-steps
 - △ acquire and train career-relevant competences
- Knowledge and expertise for institutions

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The eument-net initiative

- eument-net
 - △ Building a European Network of Mentoring Programmes for Women in Academia and Research
 - △ FP6 : January 2007 – September 2008
- Partners
 - △ Réseau romand de mentoring pour femmes, Univ. Fribourg, CH
 - △ BAS – Inst. for Philosophical Research, BG
 - △ muv – mentoring uni vienna, Univ. Vienna, A
 - △ Mentoring Deutschschweiz, Univ. Berne, CH
 - △ MuT– Mentoring und Training, Univ. Mannheim, D

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Aim of eument-net

- Promote women's careers and access to decision making positions in academia and research through mentoring.
- Project phase:
 - △ Exchange experience and define standards
 - △ Transfer knowledge
 - △ Define means and long-lasting structures of cooperation
 - △ Network programmes and initiate discussion with stakeholders

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Work Packages and Products I

- WP1 Compare experience, assess best practice, define standards
 - △ Work-package leader : muv-univie
 - △ Two 2day –Workshops (Mai 2007; December 2007)
 - △ Focus group interviews & questionnaire in Bulgaria
 - △ eument-net guideline manual with best practice examples, conditions and contexts, standards for programmes
- WP2 Define structures of cooperation
 - △ Work-package leader : MuT-LaKoG
 - △ Two 2-day workshops (July 2007; July 2008)
 - △ Electronic survey (June/July 2007)
 - △ Network, organised as a legal entity, reuniting mentoring programmes around shared goals and activities

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Work Packages and Products II

- WP3: strengthening women's position in science policy by promoting (standards in) mentoring
 - △ Work-package lead: Bulg-Acadsc
 - △ Presentation of eument-net at 5th GEHE-conference
 - △ 2 international conferences in Berne and Sofia (Mai 08)
- WP4: Create eument-net platform and database to exchange experience and disseminate knowledge
 - △ Work-package lead: Rrm-UniFr
 - △ eument-net Homepage with database and electronic platform for programmes and stakeholders

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Standards for mentoring programmes

- △ promotion of women central element
- △ part of gender equality policy
- △ focus on personal and career development
- △ outside hierarchical relationships
- △ professional coordination
- △ transparent admission criteria and procedure
- △ clear role and requirements of mentee and mentor
- △ confidentiality policy
- △ monitoring and regular evaluation.
- △ training activities and coaching

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Structures of cooperation: Aims

- Support from results of eument-net survey
- Aims of the eument-net network (association)
 - △ foster exchange of experience and best practice
 - △ facilitate cooperation activities
 - △ reflect and highlight role of mentoring
 - △ transfer of knowledge and expertise
 - △ increase the visibility of programmes
 - △ put mentoring on science policy agendas
 - △ support debate on career development in academia and research

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Membership categories

- Full members (mentoring programmes)
- Associate members (stakeholders)
- Supportive members
- A network of mentoring programmes, not of networks - interested in the creation of networks on national levels

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Cooperation activities

- Pilot project : International short-term mentoring exchange (start end of april 08)
 - △ Women researchers accepted by partner programme
 - △ Enhance participants' international networks
 - △ Contact with mentors/ professors
- Planned developments:
 - △ Mentoring exchange with peers
 - △ Contacts for mentors
 - △ Support for international matching
 - △ International training seminars

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The eument-net platform

- Homepage
 - △ Information on eument-net and its activities
 - △ Guideline manual and other electronic publications
- Database
 - △ Search by country, discipline and target group
- Platform
 - △ Exchange good practice examples
 - △ Contribute to lists
 - △ Cooperate on sub-sites
 - △ Contribute to agenda, mailing list and discussion

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Outlook

- Participate in FP7 projects
- Cooperate with European and national networks
- Explore sponsoring and support through international foundations

Thank you for your attention

- www.eument-net.eu



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