THE MODEL OF MOTIVATION STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAM

Guidelines for the realisation of disadvantage compensation programs with the involvement of university students

József Balázs Fejes, Valéria Kelemen, Norbert Szűcs

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INTRODUCTION

In Hungary, three system-wise desegregation programs were launched in three cities with county's rights: in Hódmezővásárhely, Nyíregyháza and Szeged in 2007. In Nyíregyháza, the program was not successful, we could observe a complete re-segregation process, and this rearrangement ran its course with the agreement of the local decision makers. However, in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely, two major cities of the South Great Plain, the pursuit of desegregation was successful. Segregation in the primary education system has been eliminated. The disadvantage compensation program discussed in this book was primarily organised with the intention of supporting these desegregation measures.

In Szeged, a 'ghetto school' was closed down as part of the desegregation process. The school had been attended mostly by Roma and disadvantaged pupils and provided an extremely low quality of education. Children were integrated into eleven different primary schools in Szeged. The highest number of integrated children per school was 23, the lowest was 7 and each class had no more than 3 children placed there. Most of the teachers from the closed establishment were employed in the receiving institutions: altogether 16.5 mentor and developmental teacher jobs were created for them (*Szűcs* and *Kelemen*, 2013).

In Hódmezővásárhely, the desegregation program was generated by the rationalisation of the public education system. The significant differences in the number of pupils and the available places at schools did not only create over-financing but also facilitated the segregation of children from various social groups at school. Having recognised this tendency, the decision-makers of the program in Hódmezővásárhely considered the integration of multiple disadvantaged pupils on the local level just as important a task as the efficient financing of the establishments. Within the framework of a complex strategy, all primary schools were closed at the end of the 2006/2007 academic year and instead of 10 institutions, 5 were re-opened in the new academic year. All of the re-opened schools were assigned the obligation to accept all pupils from their district. The place of residence of multiple disadvantaged families was taken into consideration when creating the new school districts (*Szűcs*, 2013).

At the beginning of the 2007/2008 academic year, the University of Szeged, Institute of Education with the support of the Roma Education Fund and in cooperation with NGOs organised a mentor network constituting of university students, mainly teacher trainees, in order to support the desegregation measures in Szeged. Within the framework of this Program, multiple disadvantaged and Roma pupils, who were transferred to new schools, received help from mentors at the school. In the 2008/2009 academic year, the schools affected by the desegregation measures in Hódmezővásárhely also joined the Program. The primary aim of the Student Mentoring Program (known as Motivation Student Mentoring Program as of 2011) was to support the academic development and social integration of multiple disadvantaged children who were transferred to new schools due to the desegregation process.

In addition, the facilitation of the professional development and social sensitivity of teacher trainees was an indirect objective of the Mentor Program.

In the 2013/2014 academic year, the Motivation Student Mentoring Program was materialised as part of the EDUCOOP Project (Educational Cooperation for Disadvantaged Children and Adults) within the framework of the Hungary-Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program, as a cooperation between the University of Szeged, Institute of Adult Education and the University of Novi Sad, Teachers' Training Faculty in Hungarian with contribution from the experts of the Motivation Educational Association. During the 2013/2014 academic year in Szeged and Subotica, 45-45 disadvantaged primary school pupils were mentored by 15 university students. The project operated in three primary schools in Hungary, Szeged and in one primary school in Serbia, Horgos.

The EDUCOOP project was aimed at helping disadvantaged children and adults. One of the pillars of this project was organising the mentoring work of future teachers as well as sharing the Hungarian experiences with a partner institution in Subotica. In addition, five complex educational program packages were developed and tested, which prepare students of the teacher training program to teach disadvantaged and Roma children and adults alike. The third pillar of the project was effect analysis, which served both as quality assurance and the means of future development of the mentor program and the courses.

This book describes the Student Mentoring Program in detail and shares the experiences gained during the seven years of the Program. We hope that these experiences will be useful for future disadvantage compensation initiatives. For this purpose, we summarized the realisation of the Program and our observations with a focus on practical matters. In addition, we included our self-reflexive, subjective opinion and observations in text boxes. Firstly, the organisational background of the Student Mentoring Program is introduced, followed by the manifestation of the Program, and the activities carried out by student mentors. Finally, our observations on the results and functioning of the Program are shared.

The Student Mentoring Program is built on cooperation. Realisation of the Program was helped by the contribution of mentees, teachers, local government employees, university teachers, NGO members and volunteers, and this help is highly appreciated. We would like to say special thanks to our most active colleagues from the Motivation Group (Motivation Educational Association, Pontus Public Benefit Association, SHERO Public Benefit Association of the Young Roma in the South Great Plain), who have been playing a crucial role in developing the mentoring work for years. We are grateful for their support to Ákos Balázs, Péter Csempesz, Noémi Erdődi, Veronika Kiss, Balázs Makádi, Gábor Márton, Gábor Németh and Katalin Németh. Special thanks to all our student mentors for their work and enthusiasm.

ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND

The cooperating organisations and institutions

The Student Mentoring Program was realised through the cooperation of non-governmental and higher education spheres. For five years, the Roma Education Fund acted as the 'donor' organisation of the Program, supervising and orientating it professionally and financially through regular monitoring. In the sixth year, the Motivation Educational Association self-financed the Program, and in the 2013/2014 academic year mentoring was realised with the financial help of the Hungary-Serbia IPA Cross-border Cooperation Program.

The participating Roma NGOs (L.I.F.E. Association, Association of the Roma in Hódmezővásárhely, SHERO Public Benefit Association of the Young Roma in the South Great Plain) were responsible for liaising with the members of the local Roma community and pressing for the viewpoint of equal rights. The implementing organisations (Dartke Association, Agora Foundation, Motivation Educational Association, SHERO Public Benefit Association of the Young Roma in the South Great Plain, Pontus Public Benefit Association) were liable for the professional and financial coordination of the project. In 2013/2014, this task was undertaken by the Adult Education Institute of the Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty. The professional background was provided by the University of Szeged, Faculty of Arts, Institute of Education and the Institute of Adult Education of the Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty by recruiting and training student mentors as well as by providing the necessary infrastructure for the training. Apart from these higher education institutions, it is also important to emphasise the professional supporting role of the Motivation Group in the 2013/2014 academic year. Participation of the organisations and institutions per year as well as the program locations in each town are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Cooperating organisations and institutions in the Student Mentoring Program

Academic year	Location	Organisations and institutions
2007/2008	Szeged	Dartke Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged L.I.F.E. Association
2008/2009	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely	Dartke Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged L.I.F.E. Association Agora Foundation
2009/2010	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely Algyő	Dartke Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged Association of the Roma in Hódmezővásárhely Agora Foundation
2010/2011	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely	Dartke Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged Institute of Adult Education, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, University of Szeged Agora Foundation
2011/2012 Term 1	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely	Dartke Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged Institute of Adult Education, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, University of Szeged Agora Foundation
2011/2012 Term 2	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely	SHERO Association Motivation Educational Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged Institute of Adult Education, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, University of Szeged
2012/2013	Szeged Hódmezővásárhely	Motivation Educational Association SHERO Association Pontus Association Institute of Education, University of Szeged Institute of Adult Education, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, University of Szeged
2013/2014	Szeged Subotica	Institute of Adult Education, Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty, University of Szeged Teachers' Training Faculty in Hungarian, University of Novi Sad Motivation Group (Motivation Educational Association, SHERO Association, Pontus Association) Institute of Education, University of Szeged

Note: In every case, the project coordinating body is the first on the list.

Developing the professional framework of the project and identifying the pedagogical and ethical principles was done by the founders and supporters of the project on a voluntary basis.[1] Operational management was carried out by a project manager, first as a part-time role and then from year 3 as a full-time job. Year 3 saw another change: a Roma assistant joined as a part-time employee, she was responsible for liaising with parents. In the 2013/2014 academic year a project team was responsible for realising the complex tasks of the EDUCOOP project. Among others, former leaders of the Student Mentoring Program were the members of this team.

Student mentors

The program was built on the work of higher education students, primarily teacher trainees and other students preparing for a future supporting role (further referred to as student mentors). Their number was different every year depending on the number of pupils in need of mentoring, the number of the cooperating schools as well as on the financial background. In the third year, volunteer (unpaid) positions were introduced and became a new differentiating factor. In the first year, there were 35 paid mentors, their number increased to 40 in the second year (Table 2).

From the third academic year, 25 paid university students took part in the Program, plus this year saw the introduction of the volunteer student mentoring position. For the purpose of raising the number of student mentors as well as enhancing a more efficient coordination of volunteers, the need arose for a new 'supervisor' position, that of the school coordinator's. The position was welcomed by the student mentors as it meant recognition of the work done by the more motivated participants who invested a lot of effort into the Program. In academic year 6, most of the student mentors were volunteers – we could only provide grants for 1-2 students per school. In the 2013/2014 academic year, 15 students signed an agreement with the Juhász Gyula Teacher Training Faculty of the University of Szeged. They were supported by 10 volunteers, not only at the schools, but also in the Motivation Extracurricular Programs in Szeged and Tiszasziget. Right from the beginning of the Program, the intention was to involve Roma university students, however, only 11 of them joined as student mentors.

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[1] The Program was founded by József Balázs Fejes and Norbert Szűcs. In the first 2 years, József Balázs Fejes was the Project Manager of the Program, later this position was covered by Valéria Kelemen and Katalin Németh acted as Assistant from the third academic year to the fifth.

Table 2. The number of schools, pupils and student mentors participating in the Program

Academic year	Number of schools	Mentored pupils	Student mentors	
			Paid students	Volunteers
2007/2008.	12	129	35	-
2008/2009.	15	176	40	-
2009/2010.	11	167	25	11
2010/2011.	9	201	25	27
2011/2012.	9	209	25	25
2012/2013.	4	56	8	23
2013/2014.	3	45	15	10

There can be several reasons why a student mentor takes a voluntary role. On the one hand, some of them could not commit to 8 hours mentoring work a week due to an increase in their workload relating to their university studies (for example, teacher training apprenticeship or writing their MA thesis) or due to personal reasons. However, if they wanted to stay involved in the Program despite their increased commitments, the voluntary position was a good alternative for them. On the other hand, many of the new applicants applied for a voluntary position right from the beginning, as they wouldn't have had enough time to take a full, eight-hour per week position, they were not confident enough to do the mentoring work, or they wanted to be more informed before they committed to more responsibilities. Later on, the volunteer position served as a first step towards the paid student mentor position and most of the applicants could prove their skills and learn about the mentoring role first as volunteers. Then, when paid positions became available, volunteers who proved their suitability could fill these positions.

Observations about the involvement of volunteers

Voluntary work is not so prevalent in Hungary and this statement was even truer at the beginning of the Program. We became open towards this possibility as per the suggestion of the Roma Education Fund, our donor organisation. It was the work of volunteering students that made us realise how paradoxical our thinking was at the launch of the Program: even though we (the founders of the Program) took it for granted that it will require dedicated voluntary work from us, we didn't assume our students would do the same. After realising this, we felt embarrassed and puzzled about our previous approach.

However, we had some very important experiences about how different people may conceive the concept of voluntary work, which is due to the low cultural embededness of voluntary work in Hungary. Some volunteers felt that the requirements – for example, attendance at trainings or regular work – set for paid mentors did not apply to them since they work for free. When leaving the Program, one of our volunteers, for instance, pointed it out that as a volunteer, he would prefer not going to weekly meetings and compulsory trainings but simply work with the children. Our approach, on the other hand, is straightforward and consistent: these elements are necessary for building the mentoring community as well as for professionalising the mentoring activity, thus there is no purpose in differentiating in this respect. We are convinced that if a volunteer is less prepared or their attitude is not acceptable for us, it may compromise the reception of the other student mentors as well (see later: *The importance of theoretical training*). In addition to all this, we hope that every student mentor walks a certain path of professional and personal development in this Program, thus they need the chance to make mistakes and gradually change their attitude.

We are aware of the fact that due to the favourable condition that our Program is embedded in a university context, we may recruit volunteers relatively easily compared to an average non-governmental disadvantage compensation program. At the same time, in our opinion, the paid program coordinator position and a few paid student mentor positions have significantly contributed to the stability and professionalism of our Program, as well as to the successful handling of the more or less cyclically occurring downturns.

Schools and teachers

Apart from the 11 receiving schools involved in the desegregation process, another primary school joined the Program in Szeged at the very beginning, in the 2007/2008 academic year. Even though this particular school had not received pupils from the closed primary school, they requested support from our student mentors due to the high number of disadvantaged and Roma pupils in their institution.

The Student Mentoring Program was fuelled by the desegregation program in Szeged; however, primary schools in Hódmezővásárhely also joined the list of supported institutions from the 2008/2009 academic year. In Hódmezővásárhely, which is only 20 kilometres from Szeged, local educational leaders and headmasters requested the launch of the Program in order to strengthen the local educational reform targeting desegregation. In the 2009/2010 academic year, primarily for the sake of assessing the effectiveness of the Program, the primary school of Algyő (10 kilometres from Szeged) also accepted student mentors.

The composition of participating schools changed a few times in Szeged (see Table 2.) There were three typical reasons for a school to leave the Program. The reasons were: the pupils changing school or finishing it to enter into further education, the number of mentees decreasing to a minimum and the institution had no intention of delegating more disadvantaged pupils to the Program. An additional reason was the low level of cooperation on the side of the school, thus we decided to terminate the cooperation. It also happened that we had no choice but to stop working in some schools because of the drastic decrease in available funds.

In order to prevent the latter from happening again, from year 7, the Program has been running in cooperation with the Motivation Extracurricular Programs in Tiszasziget (10 kilometres from Szeged) and Szeged. These extracurricular programs are maintained by the Motivation Educational Association for the purpose of supporting disadvantaged, particularly Roma pupils in their education and personal development. Most of the staff of the extracurricular programs have participated in the Student Mentoring Program previously, thus they can support student mentors effectively because of their relevant and specific work experience as well as their involvement and open-mindedness.

Leaving schools due to a lack of cooperation

It was a difficult decision to terminate the cooperation with schools as it meant that we failed in these institutions. Our most important ethical concern was caused by the fact that due to the low level of cooperation from the headmasters and the staff, we had to abandon the mentored pupils, too. In our interpretation, we let these pupils down. It was very clear in many cases in Szeged, however, that mentoring work becomes impossible without a cooperative attitude from the institution as well as if the theory and practice of integrated education is rejected by the institution. Staying in these schools would have resulted in demotivated students and complete failure in the next academic year – while we could use the funds effectively in other institutions. Of course, before terminating the cooperation with a school, we tried to solve the problems by organising forums with the participation of the program organisers, the student mentors, the headmaster and the mentor teachers as well as other guests (for example representatives of the local educational office, other NGO members, IPR experts).

In most cases in Szeged, not only pupils but also some teachers from the closed school (further referred to as mentor teachers) were placed in other institutions. The headmasters of the receiving schools had autonomy in forming the roles and duties of the mentor teachers. The roles mostly comprised of facilitating the integration of the new pupils, supporting them in catching up with their studies, liaising with parents and addressing individual issues. In most schools, the task of coordinating student mentors was assigned to mentor teachers and developmental teachers, however, throughout the years, besides or instead of the assigned helpers, the focus shifted to the more efficient informal relationships of teachers and student mentors. The role of teachers who taught more than one mentee or taught some of them in more hours got more significant.

THE OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM IN DETAIL

Recruiting and selecting student mentors

We recruited student mentors with the help of posters in university buildings and student hostels of the University of Szeged, through the ETR (electronic study support system) noticeboards as well as with the help of ads in university newspapers and magazines. This was supported by informative lectures in student hostels. However, the majority of the applicants joined as a result of informal relationships: student mentors attracted their fellow students, friends with stories about their experiences. In addition, in the last few years, we relied more and more on the use of social networks. We posted our fliers on these forums, too, and created so-called memes as well as short recruiting videos to share on the Program's message board, which have been 'liked' by more than 450 people so far. We could also rely on the current and previous student mentors in spreading the word about us. Since we have experienced a significant increase in the number of applications due to our representation on Facebook, and this forum has proven to be an effective tool for introducing the Program to the wider community, we have been focusing on this particular communication channel in the last few years. We also noticed that when we used more informal recruiting means (for example memes); the communication style of the applicants was also more informal.

Use of social networks

We created a closed group on Facebook for former and currently involved student mentors. At the time of publication of this book, there were almost 140 members of this group. We provided information related to the Student Mentoring Program as well as to other disadvantage compensation programs of the hosting body, Motivation Group. We shared professional and tender-related news and publications here. Sometimes it even served as a forum for finding a new flat or a job for student mentors as communication was interactive and worked in both ways, meaning that mentors also took an active role. Logistics and operation-related information was shared in e-mails rather than in the Facebook forum, or occasionally in a secret group created only for current mentors so that former mentors could feel that the group was still functional for them, too.

The selection of student mentors was a two-stage process. First, applicants handed in a CV and a motivation letter. The CV template created in accordance with the program requirements focused on the theoretical and practical knowledge as well as on any experience that might be useful for the mentoring work. After handing in the documents, applicants were interviewed so that the program coordinators could explore

their suitability, previous experience as well as their attitude towards the Roma ethnic group and towards disadvantaged groups. Even though it was an advantage if the applicant had experience in teaching or working with primary school children, being motivated and having the appropriate attitude were just as important in the selection process.

In summary, most of the student mentors were university students who had already completed their first year; they were studying to be teachers, psychologists, special education teachers or other experts helping pupils. The majority of them had experience in tutoring, organising leisure, craft or sports activities for primary school children, or in teaching foreign languages to them.

Mapping attitudes towards the roma minority

We tried to map the applicant's attitudes towards the Roma minority; however, it is quite difficult to do so with direct questions. The easiest solution was to initiate a conversation about the ethnic composition of the hometown or former schools of the applicants themselves.

The CVs and motivation letters submitted helped to develop the theme of the interviews, this way the organisers could ask well-targeted questions. Prior to the interviews, applicants were given information in groups, when they could learn about the Program and the requirements in a 15-20-minute presentation. Apart from being time-efficient, this method made it possible to discuss matters relevant to more than one applicant.

Interviews were conducted with the participation of at least three of the organisers who evaluated the applicants based on their attitudes and previous experiences. Typical topics covered were as follows: (1) stages of school career and success; (2) social problems and the educational system at the applicant's hometown; (3) personal experiences related to the Roma minority as well as to people living in extreme poverty; (4) preliminary information about the Program, reasons for applying to the Program; (5) leisure time activities, fields of interests and hobbies; (6) educational experiences (e.g. tutoring, camps, teaching practice); (7) career goals, professional vision (e.g. Did the applicant want to be a teacher?). Additionally, we also asked the applicants about their schedules, spare time, residential location in Szeged and any relevant network of contacts they might have (e.g. any acquaintance in any of the partner schools) in order to consider the logistics as well when assigning students to schools and defining their responsibilities.

Selection criteria

When selecting mentors, we were not only looking for students who were suitable for the task, but also students who could be taught to be suitable for the task with our help. This learning process may be perceived from the perspective of becoming a student mentor, a teacher or an expert in the field of disadvantage compensation. In our opinion, we could provide effective support for students to acquire the competence they were lacking, but only if their attitude was appropriate. Our experience shows, those mentors turned out to be best who excelled in their commitment, proactive attitude as well as in their desire to develop themselves, so pedagogical excellence was of secondary importance.

In the last years, publications about the Program were also shared with applicants during the preliminary information stage, these were sent to them in emails. The organisers consciously planned the sessions and interviews to be formal so that the applicants would realise that admittance to the Program was not granted to everyone applying and there were high standards in order to create a sense of importance about belonging to the group (see *Aronson*, 1995). The last step of the application process was signing either the volunteer or the paid student contract as well as the Code of Conduct of the Program (see Annex). We reviewed these documents with the newly joined student mentors at a separate meeting. Reading the Code of Conduct was in fact part of the preparation process, since analysing each point and providing examples created a great opportunity for sharing information with the student mentor.

Preference for roma student mentors

From the very beginning of the Program, it was our top priority to find Roma university students to work with, as there are obvious advantages of their involvement not only for the mentees but also for the student mentors and the schools (for example, a role model, communication with parents, shaping attitudes). However, in a few cases Roma student mentors had a tendency to do less mentoring work, invest less energy and they left the program relatively quickly. This was most probably due to the fact that we almost talked these Roma students into participating in the Program. This way the effort they had to invest to be admitted to the Program was less than for other students. Moreover, we might have invited less motivated Roma students as well to apply. We probably tried to persuade them too much to stay in the Program, which was in some cases counterproductive. Thus positive discrimination was not effective in this case.

Assigning student mentors to schools

Student mentors were assigned to a particular school after a process of considering various factors. One aspect was the schools' needs and characteristics (e.g. foreign languages taught, emphasised subjects, leisure activities). Another similarly important aspect was the composition of the group of mentees – particularly their age, learning problems, gender ratios and interests. We needed to consider the strengths of the other student mentors working at the institution, their university majors, their personality and level of experience as a mentor. The aim was to create a cooperative group of student mentors in each school. Thus, it was necessary to find leadership figures in order to avoid potential conflicts and secure continuity. An additional factor was whether the students had any informal relationship with the school staff as we found that this had a very positive effect on the mentoring work. The mentors' locality was also important to consider when choosing a school for them. Although students of the University of Szeged were entitled to free use of public transport within Szeged during the academic year, the proximity of the school to the mentor's home was a significant aspect: mentor students who lived closer to the school tended to spend more time on their mentoring work. If the school was outside of Szeged, the Program financed the public transport pass for the students; in these cases the proximity of the bus station and the route were relevant factors.

Filling the paid positions and assigning students to schools were concieved as complex decision situations (for example, we needed to consider issues like previous experiences and characteristics of mentors; age, gender distribution, temperament and problems of mentees; gender distribution of mentors as well as their university majors, special requests and expectations of the headmasters), therefore applicants were advised that besides their perceived suitability, their assigned positions depended on many other factors as well.

The ethical dilemmas of selection

We found it a serious ethical and professional question to decide whom to use our limited funds for which were available to help. When selecting the mentees, we tried to choose "difficult to love", problematic children, or those with the most serious academic and/or social disadvantages. We were looking for the ones who were considered by the teacher as "not worthy" of being involved in the Program. We received the criticism that it would be more efficient to choose pupils who are lagging behind a bit less, who weren't struggling so much and were more well-behaved or cooperative, which is a valid claim. However, we prioritised the ethical aspects and the professional challenges, although, based on our experiences, a cooperative attitude – at least either from the parent or the child – became a condition as we went along. We are very grateful for the help of the donor organisations in defining the principles of selection, since they made it possible for us to make professional decisions instead of setting indicators aiming at improving the pupils' grades at school etc. (see later in insert *Mislead by marks*). In our opinion, we would have insisted on following our principles even then, but we are aware that many disadvantage compensation programs do not dare to involve the most problematic children in fear of not being able to live up to the unrealistic indicators.

Selecting mentees

At the beginning of the Student Mentoring Program, mentees were selected from the transferred pupils of the closed Móra Ferenc Primary School in Szeged, while in Hódmezővásárhely; they were selected from the classes most affected by the educational reorganisation. Over the years, a lot of our pupils who had finished primary school and other schools not affected by the desegregation measures, joined us. Thus the question arose: how and on what basis should new pupils be selected to participate in the Program?

Selecting the mentees usually involved the teachers, the program organisers and the student mentors but it also happened that a specific request came from the school. In some institutions mentors were requested for whole classes, in others for particular pupils.

If a new school or a new pupil from an already involved school was suggested, it was primarily the task of the student mentors to gather information from the headmaster and formteachers and other teachers about the children either in need of mentoring or falling into the disadvantaged/multiple disadvantaged category. Pupils were selected on the basis of the teachers' opinion, the disadvantages and needs of the child and the time the student mentor could dedicate to mentoring but the priority was to focus on the most disadvantaged, most problematic children. In some schools home-educated children were given a special priority among student mentors.

The nature and extent of the disadvantages faced by mentees can vary hugely, thus it is possible that student mentors would rather work with less problematic children in order to avoid difficulties or achieve success. This is why it is crucial to explain to new student mentors who the main focus groups of the Program are and to create a protocol to follow in case of a low level of cooperation on the mentees' side or their absence.

Defining the ratio of roma pupils in the program

We decided not to select the mentees on an ethnic basis because, in our opinion, excluding non-Roma pupils would have indirectly created stronger antipathy against the Roma. At the same time, Roma pupils were a clear target group of the Program, and they were in majority in the Program as a result of the aims of the desegregation program in Szeged. Moreover, the Roma ethnic origin was difficult to define exactly. When asking the children, the parents, the teachers or the mentors about this sensitive subject, we got different answers. A typical example of the complexity of defining one's Roma ethnic origin is shown in the situation where one out of two siblings calls themselves Roma, while the other one doesn't.

Training student mentors and increasing the efficiency of mentoring

The theoretical preparation of student mentors was supported by a university course looking at the relationship between difficulties arising from the disadvantaged and minority position and failures at school, as well as discussing actual research data in the field and possible practical solutions, with special focus on desegregation and mentoring. This course was further improved within the framework of the EDUCOOP project by the 2013/2014 academic year, based on teaching experiences from previous years as well as on new scientific research results and publications.

Another weekly course, the *mentor meeting* created the ground for discussing administrative tasks, operational tasks, other questions, problems and experiences arising from the mentoring work. The theoretical course was compulsory for every student mentor in the semester when they joined the Program, and attendance of the mentor meetings was expected from all student mentors.

The significance of theoretical training

The compulsory theoretical training was aimed at understanding the relationship between difficulties arising from the disadvantaged and minority position, which is transpierced by prejudices and failures at school, as well as learning about the actual research data in the field and the possible practical solutions. These areas would be important on their own anyway, for the professional development in the case of teacher trainees, and for social sensitivity in the case of students preparing for a different career; however, it is particularly significant for strengthening the communication about the Program. In many instances, local or national media became interested in the Program, and our student mentors were interviewed. Preparation can be very reassuring in these cases, inappropriate communication is very easy to misunderstand, especially in relation to Roma pupils.

Apart from the above, there was a very clear request from student mentors for continuous consultation and advice regarding practical work, sharing experiences and support in their professional development. An element of this was financing *methodology trainings* that students could attend from year 2 onwards (*Activity-centred pedagogies, Learning methodology and memory techniques, Effective ways of learning about the learner, Basics in drama pedagogy*).

From year 3, *in-house lesson observation weeks* became a regular activity. This meant that student mentors could take part in each other's activities. In-house lesson observations provided good opportunities for students to gather experience, collect new ideas, while also contributing to better cooperation and communication between students. We organised in-house observation weeks at the beginning of every semester, after student mentors developed their weekly routine and created timetables for their activities. This way in-house lesson observation was also a great opportunity for new student mentors to learn about the mentoring work.

Initiated by the student mentors, in some years voluntary, self-organised *development workshops* took place. These forums were occasional, with the objective to share experiences, discuss conflict situations and possible answers to arising problems. The significance of this, among other elements supporting school work, was that student mentors could get help and advice concerning their individual problems in this context, and the different cases could be discussed here in detail.

Mentor conferences, where student mentors from each school could present an outline of their work at the end of each semester were another forum for sharing experiences. These conferences were crucial also in mapping the potential future improvements of the Program. Most of them – especially the closing conferences at the end of the academic year – were open events, where (apart from the operators of the Program) the management of participating schools, teachers, and representatives of the city council and the NGOs as well as local journalists were invited, too. Some of these conferences were closed for the public, only student mentors and applicants

for the coming year were invited. The former ones were significant not only from the point of view of professional work but also making connections and disseminating the Program. The closed conferences, however, were problem-focused, they were more critical and self-critical and thus concentrated on improving the Program. Open events had an important function of recruiting and informing applicants. Students interested in the mentoring work were also invited to these conferences.

The *library*, consisting of almost 300 books mostly in the field of innovative pedagogical methods served as another means of supporting not only efficient mentoring work but also the above mentioned areas. From the second year, 1-2-day *teambuilding trainings* became an organic part of the Program. Run by outside trainers, these events focused on community building, enhancing active communication, processing experiences from the mentoring work, thus informing newly joined student mentors.

Can't do it alone – conscious teambuilding

Assessing the results of the first year of the Program made it clear that conscious teambuilding is essential. At this time, small groups were formed on the school level, but cohesion was optional and depended more on the charismatic coordination of a particular student since student mentors often wouldn't even have met at the school due to their different timetables. We were mistaken in thinking that weekly courses are enough for the students to form professional and personal relationships with each other. The lack of such relationships was obviously disadvantageous for their motivation and problem-solving at the schools (see *Reality shock* insert).

In our experience, professional teambuilding trainings – which were often run by our previous mentors, who had competence in training – provided a solid basis for the community of student mentors in that academic year and supported the program organisers to form optimal groups in every institution. We intended to sustain these effects through ongoing community building events (e.g. carnival, Santa Claus for student mentors[2], cultural activities together).

Offsetting participation in the Program

In our experience, the primary motivation for joining the Student Mentoring Program was the opportunity to put the theory learnt at the university into practice as well as professional development (*Fejes* and *Szűcs*, 2013). The 'exploitation' of this at the workforce market was made possible by a certificate students received for participating in the Program, as well as certificates from professional trainings they attended within the framework of the Program.

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[2] Events independent from the ones organised for mentees.

Some of the student mentors received grants as an offset for their work in the Program. Considering the time invested, the grant[3] was a minimal amount: even the lowest hourly rates offered for any student work were higher than the grant. At the same time, for some students the grant did play an important role in deciding whether to take paid, student jobs or mentoring in their free time. The project budget did not make it possible for us to give a raised allowance to school coordinators for their extra work, but their certificate included reference to coordination work as well as student mentoring. Students' attitudes could be traced in several instances when many of the student mentors spent a significant amount of their grant on leisure activities organised for their mentees.

Student mentors also had the advantage of receiving university credit points for the university courses they participated in as part of the Program. For many of them another attractive feature was that they could receive professional support and they found their research area for their papers and MA theses in the field of equal opportunities in education.[4]

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[3] The grant was HUF 15 000, later HUF 17 000 per month.
[4] In the past years, almost 20 student mentors wrote their MA theses, research papers or other publications in the field of equal opportunities in education, often specifically on the topic of the Student Mentoring Program, its operation and experiences.

STUDENT MENTORS' ACTIVITIES

The student in receipt of the grant, that is, a student mentor who spent at least 8 hours a week at their assigned school had the following tasks and duties: regular meetings with mentees, following up their situation, tutoring work, liaising with parents, organising joint programs with majority pupils, cooperative thinking with mentees and teachers in order to find solutions to school-related problems, development work based on the mentees' individual needs and requests, solving individual cases, supporting channelling information between the school and the parents, mediation work, data collection with regards to the Program, administration. In addition, school coordinators also had to perform further coordination-related tasks.

School coordinators were usually in receipt of grants, and their roles entailed the following responsibilities (mostly based on the suggestions of student mentors): coordinating student mentoring work in the given school, keeping in touch with the coordinator teacher, generating discussions on particular cases if there was a problem at school, communication with the project manager and the school management, managing communication on the institutional level.

Most of the volunteers spent an average of 3 hours at the school every week, thus their level of task involvement was different from that of the student mentors'. Some of them carried out specific tasks just like paid mentors but they worked only with 1-2 mentees. Another group of volunteers supported the work of the student mentors, for example, in organising social programs and leisure activities. Some of them performed tasks not related to any particular institution: for example, editing a magazine, making videos, doing speech developmental exercises with the children. Apart from the above and independently from their position, student mentors were expected to attend the weekly mentor meetings, some trainings, in-house lesson observations, teambuilding sessions at the beginning of semesters, conferences at the end of semesters and closing conferences at the end of the academic year.

Learning support

The majority of the time spent with mentees consisted of learning together. Many combinations of learning support were formed within the Program. They can be categorized as follows:

1. after school, as day-care or learning activity, in the form of individual or group learning,
2. during school time, i.e. teacher trainees could take the children out of the lessons (similarly to the practice of mentor teachers, special educators, developmental teachers), in the form of individual or group learning – mostly in the case of skill-related subjects, but sometimes main subjects, too; depending on the decision of the teacher and the topic of the lesson

3. the teacher trainee would sit next to the mentee during a lesson, usually supporting one mentee for the whole of the lesson
4. dual teaching: the teacher trainee took part in the lesson and carried out the same or similar tasks to those of the teachers'.

In most of the sessions, learning support was a group activity that mostly took place after school, where student mentors could support their mentees in completing their homework and preparing for lessons. They could also help school work by giving skill-related developmental tasks and activities to the children.

Mentoring program 2.0

Student mentors often noted that their tutoring/mentoring work could not be exploited because the basic skills of mentees necessary for independent learning (e.g. reading and learning methodology) were less developed, but most schools and even parents would measure the success of mentoring by looking at the grades awarded at school. As a result of this, student mentors had to focus on improving the mentees' lexical knowledge. However, since there were only a few mentees per student mentor, mentors could choose shorter, more interesting texts and exercises that corresponded to their age and interests (e.g. about the mentees' hobbies, their favourite singers, current celebrities). This solution was shown to improve the pupils' motivation (see *Fejes*, 2013).

Based on these experiences, we launched another disadvantage compensation initiative, one which focused specifically on improving reading skills. Within the framework of Motivation Scholarship Program, the primary objective of student mentors was to improve reading performance and reading motivation by using specific texts in accordance with the interests of the mentees. 75 multiple disadvantaged pupils were mentored for 2 years in this program. Apart from the mentoring work, their motivation was encouraged in many other ways, for example with grants and community programs.[5]

In many schools mentoring took place during the lessons, too – student mentors were allowed to take the children out of their lessons and worked with them individually or in small groups, or they participated in the lessons themselves. There are both pros and cons for taking pupils out of school lessons.

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[5] The project was co-funded by the Swiss-Hungarian Cooperation Programme, within the cooperation framework of Szeged Educational District of Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre and Pontus Public Benefit Association.

Disadvantaged pupils would often find it quite difficult to follow the lessons due to their weaknesses or lack of basic skills and lexical knowledge, thus it could be justified to take them out of the classroom environment.

In the desegregation process, children were suddenly faced with much higher requirements, which made them tired from the beginning. They could hardly concentrate by the end of the school day and the learning process wasn't effective in the afternoon hours. Another argument on the pro side was that pupils with the biggest disadvantages or the ones struggling most with their social connections and relationships wouldn't stay at school after the compulsory hours. Many pupils were very supportive of the idea of skipping lessons as this way they could escape from a lesson full of failures.

When children were taken out of their classroom environment, mostly skill-related subjects were improved, which was not beneficial from the point of view of acclimatisation to the new environment – this way the pupils missed classes where they could have experienced a sense of success and could have formed relationships with their peers. Some teachers used the opportunity to 'get rid of' the more problematic children this way, since those pupils were lagging behind the others and/or often showed difficult behaviour. Another barrier to the morning mentoring sessions was the lack of available rooms, which in some schools was a problem even in the afternoon hours.

Taking children out of the classroom could not be a long-term objective, and we thought it suitable only in exceptional cases, where the children were lagging behind their peers academically so much that they could not follow the lesson or if no other learning support was available for the child. From year 2, we made a conscious effort to reduce the practice of taking pupils out of the lessons and increase student mentor participation in lessons. However, in some schools the teachers clearly preferred the former practice, there was great resistance to changing it and the process was very slow – after all, we tried to apply a less well-known method instead of one widely used by special educators and developmental teachers. From the 5th year of the Program, taking pupils out of the classroom environment was not allowed for student mentors, the practice was eliminated from the Program. In the first few academic years, student mentor participation during the lessons depended mostly on the teachers' openness and the relationship between the student and the teacher, but later it became a widely used and accepted practice.

Activities in support of teaching and other leisure activities

With the majority of the pupils, the most visible sign of difficulties was the significant lagging behind in their studies. At the same time, it was essential to involve the children in activities that could indirectly influence learning support, for example building a positive attitude towards school and learning. Besides, influencing social relationships was also one of the important objectives with regards to peers, teachers and student mentors alike. Shifting mentor-mentee relationship towards a positive ex-

perience was crucial because pupils were often mentored in their free time, meaning they could decide whether they want to participate in the afternoon activities or not.

Free time activities together with classmates and peers were the most common ways of supporting the position of mentees in the community. Student mentors organised activities in accordance with their own abilities and previous knowledge, the financial possibilities of the Program, and the circumstances given in the particular school (Table 3). Besides the objective conditions, the needs, ideas and interests of pupils as well as their feedback played an important role in designing these activities (e.g. on the basis of satisfaction questionnaires filled out by pupils).

Generally, more than one of the listed objectives – indirect learning support, useful leisure activities and forming of social relationships – were fulfilled at the same time. Aiding teachers' work, thus winning their trust and establishing cooperation were underlying objectives connected to these activities. Student mentors could accomplish many tasks that teachers normally did not have a chance to do, or tasks that the mentees' parents could not support due to their social disadvantages (e.g. regular family visits, attending high school open days, help with choosing further education institutions, accompanying the child to speech therapy, managing conflicts between the parent and the child).

The school is a crucial scene of supporting the child in decreasing their academic disadvantage and in improving their social relationships. This is why we aimed to concentrate mentoring work in the institutions. For any out-of-school program the parents' written approval was needed, which meant a lot of organising and created unclear situations regarding responsibility, which was another reason, apart from promoting integration, to prefer the school environment. However, there were a few occasions where mentors and mentees could meet outside the school: the yearly Christmas celebration and the costume party, where all mentees from the same town could participate. There were also end-of-school-year events and summer camps for all mentees at the same location. Many other cross-school programs were informally organised by a group of student mentors. These programs were organised on the basis of the similar interests of pupils, such as bird-watching, horse-riding, football championships between schools. Classmates of mentees could also participate in limited numbers, and children from junior school were often accompanied by their parents.

Table 3. Student mentor activities besides learning support

Activity categories	Tasks, examples
Activities supporting social integration	• Organising regular creative activities with the inclusion of non-mentees (e.g. crafts, photo club, film club) • Organising self-recognition and teambuilding activities with the inclusion of non-mentees • Organising competitions with the inclusion of non-mentees • Skill-related developmental activities with the inclusion of non-mentees (e.g. learning methods) • Preparing for school celebrations with the inclusion of non-mentees (e.g. Advent wreath, Easter egg painting, Mothers' day performance) • Editing a 'mentor magazine' with the inclusion of non-mentees
Activities supporting the mentor-mentee relationship and activities for spending mentees' leisure time in a useful manner	• Sport activities (e.g. horse-riding, basketball, football, archery, aerobics) • Going to the cinema, theatre, exhibitions • Preparing children for programs such as talent shows • Visiting the mentees' family, liaising with parents • Sightseeing, trips, playground activities (e.g. the Zoo, or Botanical Gardens • Events organised by the mentoring program (Santa Claus day, Carnival, end-of-year party)
Teaching activities supporting school work	• Dual lessons (two-teacher model) • Teaching assistant's role (e.g. preparing the environment, supporting group work during the lesson) • Participation in teaching home-educated pupils • Managing 'project days' (e.g. recycling project, multicultural project, health day, eco day) • Preparing children for and accompanying them on academic competitions (in groups, with the inclusion of mentees and non-mentees alike) • After-school talent support, catch-up and developmental activities (e.g. with the help of crosswords, self-made toys, games, board games, computer games, developmental software) • Correcting tests and papers • Practicing reading on appropriately chosen texts and exercises in accordance with the subject and the pupils' interests • Day-care activities, learning room support • Participation in skill-evaluation assessment in order to work out a personal development strategy • Supporting the 'digestion' of the study material (e.g. compulsory reads) with the help of short films

Leisure activities supporting school work	• Participation in school events, celebrations, competitions (e.g. as a member of the jury) • Organising and managing competitions (e.g. children's day competition, chess championships) • Participation in sports activities as well as organising and managing them (e.g. at training sessions or as a referee in the competitions) • Participation in school trips, and other programs organised by the school as supporting staff • Preparation for school events (e.g. teaching a ballroom dance choreography for the school leaving celebration) • Library visits • Participation in the editing of the school magazine
Other activities supporting school work	• Participation in school staff meetings, parents' evenings, office hours • Participation in meetings concerning the operation of the Teaching Methods of Integrated Education (e.g. 3-month evaluation of pupils) • Support in career choice • Accompanying children (e.g. to town events, speech therapy examination, pedagogical counsellor, high school open days) • Cooperation with school partners (e.g. participation in organising extracurricular events, recruiting pupils) • Lunch/corridor/playground supervision

Summer camp and preparing for re-examinations

Keeping in touch with mentees during summer holidays not only meant spending their leisure time in a useful way but also preparing them for the re-examinations. The one-week summer camp and preparation for the re-examinations were part of regular activities, and student mentors could make use of connecting the two. In addition, mentees could take part in other occasional activities during the summer, depending on the number of student mentors available.

The day-boarding summer camp was organised to involve the most disadvantaged pupils but special emphasis was placed on reaching and engaging children who needed to take re-examinations, forming a special combination of free time activities and learning support. Our experiences show that the concept – also referred to as "reward camp for those who failed" in a self-reflexive way – is useful. Partly because it influenced the mentor-mentee relationships in a very positive way: they could share experiences, which was significant also because often a different mentor prepared the child for the re-exam from the one who worked with them during the year, since in these cases student mentors with the right subject knowledge needed to be chosen. On the other hand, the program of the summer camp meant regularity in the unstructured days of the summer holiday and served as a warm-up period for preparing to take the exams.

According to our most recent observations, accompanying the pupils to the re-exam was a crucial part of the mentoring work. This way the students could make sure that the child's appearance is appropriate and they provided moral support, moreover they could also advocate the pupils' interests to the teachers.

Keeping in touch with teachers

It was an essential part of the mentoring work to keep in touch with teachers: although to a different extent and in different ways but one or more teachers were involved in coordinating the student mentors' work in every school. Besides, teachers were the source of information for student mentors about the academic performance and issues of mentees at school.

There were several channels through which the Program could support the relationship between teachers and student mentors: individual consultation with headmasters, introduction of student mentors at school staff meetings, information leaflets about the Program, bulletin about tenders and professional information, introduction of new student mentors by previous ones, considering the informal relationships when assigning student mentors to schools. This was also partly the reason for new student mentors to start their work by lesson observation where they could also make contact with the teachers, besides getting to know their mentees.

Dual teaching, the two-teacher model

Even though 'dual teaching' or 'the two-teacher model' are frequently used expressions in our communications with teachers, it is difficult to define them and the Hungarian literature does not provide much information either. In practice, these terms are mostly used in connection with the work of developmental teachers or special educators in schools. In the Program, we also used these terms when referring to some activities of the student mentors, since in some cases the cooperation of student mentors and teachers made this applicable.

In our understanding, dual teaching has various levels. At one end of the scale is when the mentor supports the mentee during the lesson, while on the other end the mentor teaches in the class, with or without the teacher. Dual teaching is an opportunity for the student mentor to gain experience, get to know the teacher and establish a professional cooperation. In dual teaching the methodology applied, the mentees' activity level in the class, their position in the community and their relationship with the teachers all become visible. If there is a conflict or problem, it is easier for the student mentor to take the role of the mediator. Naturally, this form of professional cooperation is beneficial not only for the mentee but also for the student mentor and the teacher.

From the perspective of the student mentor it is professional development, while from the perspective of the teacher, lifting some of the burdens and making the teaching process more varied and efficient is the most significant benefit.

The mentioned end points are the starting and ending points of a process (in an ideal case), where the cooperation between the student mentor and the teacher becomes gradually stronger and stronger. We found that the starting point is the most difficult part of this process as many teachers have no experience in how and what role another person can fulfil in the classroom during the lesson. In order to create a two-teacher model, these steps are worth following: (1) asking permission from the manager of the institution, (2) informing teachers about the possibility, (3) finding the right teachers who are open to cooperation, (4) lesson observation and mentoring, then (5) consultation about how to be involved in the lesson.

Suggestions from the student mentor can contribute to the cooperation (e.g. preparing games based on the study material). Positive feedback about the lessons and asking for advice regarding one's professional development can be additional catalysts of cooperation.

The central question of dual teaching is most probably the role of the student mentor. It is important to avoid becoming a "little teacher" – the student needs to remain a mentor who knows and supports his or her mentees and advocates their interests. This is why it is essential that the mentor does not only meet with mentees in lessons at school but also in more informal situations after school or outside the school during leisure activities.

Keeping in touch with parents

Contacting and keeping in touch with the parents of mentees is advisable for student mentors, but it is not compulsory. In some cases, there was no need for this anyway, either because the mentoring work was smooth or because the circumstances were fortunate: e.g. the parents would visit the school regularly and meet the student mentors in the afternoons or at parents evenings and office hours. Another reason why meetings with parents weren't compulsory was that the limited time student mentors had needed to be used in the most efficient way as students had to spare time for their studies as well as other program-related activities, too. At the same time, some student mentors formed a particularly good relationship with their mentees' parents and met them regularly.

Academic year schedule

We started to recruit student mentors in the May preceding the actual academic year, raising awareness through posters in university buildings, recruiting programs in student hostels, magazine and newspaper ads and social network posts. Applicants were asked to submit their CV and a motivation letter. Interviews took place in June.

In August, we contacted the participating schools. If a new school was involved, we initiated a personal meeting with the management in order to give a full overview of the Program, its objectives and the student mentors' activities. If the school was open to participation, we discussed the potential list of pupils to be involved and the teacher who could be the contact person for student mentors. The academic year opening staff meeting was a very important opportunity for us to introduce the Program to all teachers and to share some information about the potential activities student mentors would carry out.

In September, student mentors were assigned to various schools. The group of student mentors assigned to a particular school contacted the institution, they introduced themselves to the management and the contact persons. Pupils were chosen for each student mentor and if possible, lesson observation times were agreed on. During the lesson observation period, the student mentor approached the pupils and their teachers. The student mentors could also observe their mentees within the community of the class and in lessons, which provided the mentors with valuable information about the child's position in the community and their relationship with the teachers. The first few weeks of mentoring were about getting to know each other, including the observations, thus actual teaching and tutoring work was best to reduce to the minimum at this stage. We encouraged our student mentors to start mentoring with informal chats, games, finding out about the child's interests. This contributed to an informal, trusting relationship which could later provide the foundation for learning together. The training for student mentors also started in September. Teambuilding was due at this time and theoretical courses as well as weekly mentor meetings were held, too.

Academic year mismatch

In many cases, the different timetable of the public education and the higher education made it difficult to properly establish our schedule. University students could plan only for a few months in advance, the schedule and workload to be expected in the upcoming semester was different for each major. The rhythm of the semester and the exam period caused further instability in the mentors' lives. Some of the mentors were too busy with their own studies when their mentees needed their help the most: during the period of finalising half-term and end-of-term results at school.

This uncertainty made it difficult for us to establish the schedule of each mentor. It often happened that some of the student mentors managed to finalise their timetable by only the second or third week of a particular semester, so we had to wait two or three weeks to see if the mentor could attend the mentor meeting, which was a fundamental requirement set to mentors joining the Program.

September and October was the time to schedule mentoring times and stabilise them. The first joint event usually happened at the end of October, which was an out-of-school Halloween program for all mentees. By November all student mentors had their mentoring schedule set up and the regular mentoring appointments and activity types were in place. This month was usually suitable to start the in-house observations, where student mentors had the opportunity to visit their peers' activities and mentoring appointments, which supported the communication and the exchange of experiences among student mentors. Another children's program was organised in December: we celebrated Christmas together.

In order to manage student mentor fluctuation, the new recruiting process was launched in January. Interviews were also held this month so that new student mentors could start their work in the coming semester. New school teams were set up in February, new student mentors introduced themselves at the schools with the help of their fellow students or the project coordinator, pupils and student mentors were assigned to each other. Teambuilding also took place in February for the new student mentor team and the theoretical course was organised for the newly joined students. The next children's program, Carnival was organised in February, too. At the end of the first half of the academic year, mentees end-of-term grades were recorded.

New in-house observations took place in March. This supported the acclimatisation and professional preparation of the new student mentors. In the warmer spring months of April and May outdoors activities were organised (trips to the Zoo or the Botanical Garden).

At the end of the academic year the final grades were recorded. Student mentors had to discuss re-examination requirements with the teachers, if applicable. The closing event was organised in June. This was a whole-day children's program, in which all student mentors and mentees participated. Usually it was an outdoor program, with craft and sport activities, competitions and performances. The closing conference of the mentoring program was also held in June. Occasionally as an open event, in other cases as an in-house workshop, the conference took place with the participation of the student mentors, the school teachers as well as the representatives of the local council and the NGOs involved. Student mentors gave an account of their work in the year/half a year, we discussed experiences and observations and student mentors received their diplomas within an official ceremony.

The most important task during the summer months was to prepare children for the re-exams and to organise the day-boarding camp. It was best to schedule the camp for July, before or at the beginning of the re-exam preparation since it was a good opportunity for mentees and student mentors to establish a good relationship that could later make cooperation a lot easier. The last but very significant part of preparation work was to accompany the children to the re-exams.

Table 4. Summary of the academic year schedule in relation to the Student Mentoring Program

Time	Event	Documents prepared and activities carried out by program organisers
May	Recruiting student mentors	Posters, wording of advertisements, CV template
June	Interviewing student mentors	Introductory presentation
July		
August	Getting in touch with student mentors Contacting schools	Confirming participation on the phone and in person at the opening meeting (choosing pupils)
September	Team-building Student mentors introduce themselves at the schools (to teachers and pupils) Lesson observations Start of theoretical course Mentor meetings	Sorting student mentors, assigning them to pupils Preparing contracts Start of theoretical course Start of mentor meetings (fortnightly in exam period)
October	Halloween (children's program)	
November	In-house observations	
December	Christmas (children's program)	
January	Recruiting student mentors and interviewing them, managing fluctuation	
February	Team-building Student mentors introduce themselves at the schools (to teachers and pupils) Lesson observations Start of theoretical course Carnival (children's program)	Recording end-of-term grades
March	In-house lesson observations	
April		
May	Trips (zoo, botanical garden)	
June	Closing event (children's program) Closing conference	Recording final grades (agreeing on re-exam requirements) Preparing diplomas
July	Day-boarding camp, preparation for re-exams	
August	Preparation for re-exams	

REFLECTIONS

The impact of the Program on mentees

It is hard to provide estimations about the results of mentoring work, partly because a mentoring relationship has preventive impacts. The advantages of mentoring have been shown in research, among others, in relation to preventing or decreasing school dropout, absence and antisocial behaviour, as well as an improvement in the attitude towards school, learning, learning motivation and positive changes to the relationships with parents and peers (*Fejes*, *Kasik* and *Kinyó*, 2013). That is, in areas which affect the learning success in the long run. Besides, it is difficult to choose the right success indicators as one of the key advantages of mentoring is that it builds on the individual needs of the pupil. These can vary incredibly with every child, although improving the basic skills (necessary to support the learning process) is emphasized in almost each case. The lack of reference points presents another difficulty: the changes can hardly be assessed in the case of the primary target group of the Program, that is, the pupils transferred into new schools as a result of the desegregation process. For example, the grades they were awarded in their old and new schools cannot be compared as we know that grading practices can vary among teachers even in schools with a similar pupil composition. Mentoring can be viewed as an aid that, we are convinced, can support the teachers' work significantly, but cannot replace it. Children spend only a fraction of their school time with their mentor, thus it was a rare occasion when success or failure was clearly related to the mentoring work. In other words, it wouldn't be fair for the mentor to claim all the credit for the children's success.

An additional difficulty in exploring the results of mentoring is that the desegregation process and the mentoring activity were launched at the same time. Thus it would be impossible to tell which one of the two and to what extent each can explain any change in the pupils' development, even though pre- and post-assessments were carried out. We did assess the children's reading skills and some non-cognitive areas before the change of school and at the end of their first year in the new schools within a control group survey (*Fejes*, 2009). However, there were only a few children whose progress could be followed as the data is incomplete. This is down to the pupils' absence from school in the last few weeks of the academic year before desegregation and the lack of cooperation from the receiving schools.

Hard-to-define criteria for success

There might be a better way to describe the difficulties of judging success than by listing the above mentioned problems and that is placing the aforementioned in the context of desegregation and asking a few questions. *Is it success if a pupil in their 8th grade who misses so much of school at the segregated institution that he's basically "home-schooled", is still absent a lot but not enough to have to repeat the same year? Is it an achievement if a child in grade 7 is categorized as functionally illiterate finally manages to pass the re-exam? What are the conditions of success of being placed in a majority class in the case of a Roma teenager with significant educational disadvantage? If they fail to pass the year, is it the teacher's fault or the student mentor's or both?* This paper isn't suitable to discuss these questions in detail but it is important to mention these issues regarding the success of the changes in relation to most educational programs targeting disadvantage compensation in Hungary.

Apart from the feedback from those involved, we have a few cases we may rely on to show how mentoring significantly contributed to success. Let's see some examples. In the first year, teachers all agreed that a child in grade 3, who was placed in a new school and behaved in a very introvert manner, has slight learning disabilities and needs to go into special education. However, the student mentor had a different opinion and finally managed to convince the teachers that the pupil would improve. By the end of the year, the child was categorized as 'average' on the basis of their results at school. The teachers all put this down to the mentoring work.

Preparing a child for a re-exam was also an opportunity to judge the effects of mentoring independently from the work of the teachers. One pupil in grade 8 needed the student mentors' help in re-sitting 8 subject exams. Although he had to repeat year 8, he passed 4 out of 8 exams successfully, one with an 'average' (3 out of 5) score. This might not look like a success story at first glance, but it shows that through mentoring, this child who had spent hardly any time on learning, managed to study 4-5 hours a day throughout almost two summer months.

Even though mentoring work had a positive impact on the pupils academic achievements – as most children, parents and teachers agreed in their feedbacks –, it still looked impossible for many of the target group children to catch up with their peers in the receiving schools. For some of the pupils, the only objective was to avoid having to repeat the year and receive a primary school certificate. However, some children (mostly in junior school) managed to acclimatise in their first year into the new school and they were successful both in their studies and in their personal relationships. Some pupils achieved average or above average results and didn't need a mentor's help after all.

Mislead by grades

A central problem of disadvantage compensation initiatives is that improving grades (for example, with the aim to avoid having to repeat the year, or to increase the chances of further education, or because of the expectations of parents or sponsors) is a short-term objective, even though improving basic skills like reading, which are necessary for independent learning, would be a more important task in the long run. But since time is limited and better grades are supposed to indicate success, it is usually filling in the gaps in lexical knowledge that the emphasis is placed on, instead of concentrating on functional knowledge. Lack of functional knowledge hinders efficient learning and is most probably one of the main sources of motivational problems. Lexical knowledge which is not in use will naturally be forgotten and pupils won't know how to gather information independently in the future. In addition, reading problems turn any kind of learning activity into a struggle and destroy motivation. Since the complexity of the learning material is ever-growing and failures occur more and more often, motivational problems will become more and more serious, too.

Besides improvements in performance, student mentors achieved progress in various other areas, too – which clearly had an indirect impact on the children's success at school. The results of surveys carried out with the involvement of mentees not affected by the desegregation process show that mentoring had an obvious positive impact on the children's attitude towards learning and reading (*Fejes*, 2013). In addition, student mentors drew the teachers' attention to the issues of the mentees simply by being present at the school and often became active partakers in solving or alleviating these problems. In some cases mentors supported the work at school by initiating methodological innovations (e.g. a dual lesson).

Despite all efforts, student mentors were unsuccessful in studying together with a small group of mentees involved in the Program. On the other hand, even most of these children were involved in social activities eventually. It is important to note here a specific group of children – who were probably most in need of help – who were absent from school a lot, which made the mentoring work occasional and irregular.

The impact of the Program on teacher trainees

Not only the pupils benefited from the Student Mentoring Program but also teacher trainees involved as they could enhance their professional development through their mentoring work (*Fejes* and *Szűcs*, 2013). Working with the target group provided them with practical experience and made these future teachers change their viewpoints on certain issues so that they will be able to give more adequate answers to issues related to disadvantaged children as practising teachers.

Student mentors often found themselves in situations where they had to take an active role at schools in adapting new activities or finding new ways to support certain issues. Such a role can surely support the teachers-to-be to take an innovative and active approach in their career.

For the sake of the expected improvement in their professional development, it was an important objective for teacher trainees to gain experience in supporting disadvantaged pupils. At the same time, the presence of experienced student mentors, who had been participating in the Program for a few semesters and could pass on their observations, was also of significant importance since these mentors brought stability to the operation of the Program. There was a great variety in how long student mentors would take part in the Program. Some of them would come for a single semester only, the majority of the students did two-three semesters of mentoring work, but some of them completed four or six semesters. Thus about half of the student mentors were new each semester. In our opinion, this ratio was optimal in relation to the stability and dynamics of the Program as well as in relation to link between quality and quantity. In the first 7 years of the Student Mentoring Program, altogether 200 university students were given the opportunity to gain experience in supporting disadvantaged and Roma pupils.

Reality shock

Reality shock or the first critical year(s) refer(s) to the phenomenon that after the sterile, theory-oriented teacher training, beginner teachers are caught unprepared by most of the tasks teaching at schools entails. This was especially true for student mentors since they worked with the most problematic students, they experienced success relatively rarely, and, quite often, their relationship with the teachers was not without conflicts. Managing the reality shock should be a priority for the organisers of disadvantage compensation programs, especially if they involve university students. Besides specific training, regular exchange of experiences, discussion forums and team building may play an important role in this process.

The experiences gained by student mentors were valued by the labour market as well. We received feedback that in several cases, when our mentors applied for teaching positions or for positions dealing with equal opportunities in education, or when they applied for further studies abroad or for au pair jobs, the reference letter proving their participation in our Program brought them clear advantages. Moreover, the schools we cooperated with also benefited from the Program since they had the opportunity to get to know the student mentors and satisfy their needs for human resources with employees who were already integrated members of the teaching staff. Several of our student mentors were hired on a full-time or part-time basis by the school they used to work at as mentors.

Besides student mentors, another group of teacher trainees may benefit from the Program. Due to the relationships established through the mentoring program, some primary schools and the University of Szeged, Institute of Education, built a teacher training cooperation, which meant that teacher trainees had the opportunity to spend a certain time of their practice in institutions committed to integrated education.

Participating in the Student Mentoring Program not only supported the professional development of teacher trainees but it also had a significant influence on their attitudes towards the Roma minority. Although we were not faced with extreme views during the recruiting interviews, obviously the topic of the Program already selected the candidates, however, some applicants stated that, among others, they applied for the Program because they wanted to find out whether the negative views in the Hungarian society about the Roma minority were true or not. We found that the student mentoring program helped teacher trainees to overcome many of their stereotypes and misconceptions.

The relationship of teachers and student mentors

The cooperation between student mentors and teachers influenced the mentoring work in many areas. Where the relationship was satisfactory, student mentors gained valuable new information that had a significant influence on the effectiveness of their activity. For example, teachers informed the mentors before written or oral tests about the weaknesses of pupils, thus mentors could build their tutoring and developmental activities around these weaknesses. Moreover, the fact whether teachers considered student mentors as their partners influenced their well-being. Student mentors' effectiveness and motivation was shaped by the feedback they received from teachers to a great extent.

In our opinion, the cooperation between student mentors and the receiving institutions was most successful at schools which employed developmental teachers. On the one hand, this was most probably due to the fact that this type of job was well-recognized in these institutions, on the other hand, the staff in these institutions were more experienced in working with pupils who needed extra help.

During the first few years of the Program, the relationship of student mentors and teachers in Szeged was heavily burdened by the fact that the majority of the teachers did not support desegregation (*Bereczky* and *Fejes*, 2013; *Szűcs*, 2011), while student mentors started their work within the framework of desegregation measures. In some cases, teachers considered student mentors as inspectors who control their work. Another difficulty was caused by the fact that the majority of teachers did not think that teacher trainees could have a significant effect on the development of pupils, which may be because in several cases, teachers wanted to help pupils within the framework of the 'traditional' teacher-pupil relationship. Some of the teachers were less sensitive to the opportunities opened by the mentoring relationship and the new framework it entailed. In some cases, usually with the most motivated, most innovative mentors,

this led to conflicts as the role student mentors took and their behaviour did not match with the expectations of the teachers. We can hardly say student mentors were experienced, which must have had an effect on their work, however, in several cases this inexperience and ignoring the traditional framework lead to new, valuable solutions. The inexperience of student mentors might have been a source of conflict with regard to the internal workings of schools.

A further disadvantage was caused by the fact that in some schools, the coordination of student mentors was assigned to mentor teachers who had been transferred from closed-down schools, so they found themselves in an unknown situation, in a new community and quite often their responsibilities were not well-defined. Moreover, the assimilation process of transferred teachers was not smooth in all institutions as – due to the lack of knowledge about segregation mechanisms (*Szűcs* and *Fejes*, 2010b) – part of the staff of receiving institutions blamed transferred teachers for the poor performance of the new pupils saying that transferred teachers had done a bad job (*Bereczky* and *Fejes*, 2013).

Symbolic use of space – the staff room

The use of the staff room has become one of the symbols of the partner relationship between the teacher and the student mentors. Student mentors saw it as a sign of an asymmetric relationship if they were not offered the privilege to use the staff room. There was an institution – which dropped out of the Program later – where student mentors could not even store their coats in the staff room, while in another institution mentors were given their own desk in the staff room. In one of the institutions, student mentors were granted access to the computer of the headmaster, which they saw as a sign of respect for the work they performed.

The process of helping the primary target group, that is, the pupils who were transferred into a new community as part of the desegregation measures, also lead to misunderstandings. Some of the teachers expected that student mentors learn with the pupils to process the curriculum in order for the pupils to perform better and avoid re-examination. Since the level of basic skills (e.g. reading, basic mathematical skills, learning methodology) required to be able to learn and do the homework was not satisfying, student mentors, who were less bound by the curriculum, tended to concentrate on the development of these skills. However, the time allocated to mentoring was limited, therefore, quite often, student mentors found themselves in a catch 22 situation, meaning that within a limited frame of time, they should have improved both the basic skills and the curricular knowledge of pupils. In some cases, we found that some of the teachers considered activities that affected the learning process only indirectly, activities that were aimed at improving the social relationships and the mentor-mentee relationship unnecessary. Again, this was the result of different role conceptions.

Our experience shows that the relationship of teachers and student mentors – despite a few misunderstandings – was satisfactory in the majority of the schools, and it got better and better throughout the years. This was partly the result of the visible help of student mentors, which could be traced both in the better performance of the pupils and in the easier work of the teachers. In line with the newly formed informal relationships between mentors and teachers at the schools, student mentors could find the teachers from the staff they could cooperate with.

The relationship of student mentors and mentees

The everyday practice of student mentors was not only shaped by the limits set by the headmasters and the expectations of the teachers, but also by the role conceptions of student mentors. Leaders of the Student Mentoring Program strived to clearly define the attitudes and activities expected from student mentors, however, relying on the professional and personal commitment of student mentors as well as on the regular consultations and control exercised by the leaders, they gave freedom to mentors in forming their own conceptions of their role. In the first year of the Program, as the pilot year, this was the only viable way to do it.

Since mentoring roles are the practical manifestations of the strategies applied to cope with mentees, one student mentor may have taken more than one role as a way of adjusting to the personality, behaviour and knowledge level of the mentees they worked with. The practical application of a strategy is a dynamic process; the pupil's status, their relationship with the mentor and the mentoring situation all shape and may change the mentor's roles. Student mentors had to take into consideration their own personality to be able to maintain their credibility, thus they could not force themselves to take up roles that were not in line with their personality.

We identified four major roles during the Program, which are defined by four factors.[6]

(1) On the axis named symmetry we can describe the hierarchical relationship of the student mentors and their mentees. The relationship is s y m m e t r i c if mentors consider mentees as their equals, while the relationship is a s y m m e t r i c if it is characterized by hierarchy. An asymmetric relationship may mean the dominance of the student mentor or, in some cases, the opposite, their intentional or indirect subordination. The symmetric relationship as well as the subordinate role of the mentor deviate from the usual educational situation, which is always characterized by either a formal or a functional asymmetric relationship between the teacher and the pupils (*Trencsényi*, 1988).[7]

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[6] We identified these role types based on the writing of Péter Csempesz (2010) as well as by analysing brainstorming tasks related to the identification of mentoring roles on team building trainings.

[7] The distance between the two parties, the extent of the asymmetry, may be used in a flexible way in the classroom, for example, if the teacher uses activities where they dominate as well as activities where pupils are on the same level as the teacher.

(2) We called it an emotional role conception when the mentor built their relationship with the mentees on an emotional basis, that is, when their cooperation and the methods applied by the mentor to motivate the mentee were dominated by bonding between the mentor and the mentee, by the strength of their personal relationship. In the case of a rational role conception, the mentor's motivating and teaching strategy was presenting arguments and pointing out the logical links, in other words, building an emotional relationship was less preferred.

(3) The conformist attitude meant that the student mentor considered the norms of the school they worked in as unquestionable, they looked at the teachers working with them as well as the headmaster as models. Their behaviour with these persons was characterised by conflict avoidance. While it was not in the interest of non-conformist student mentors to generate conflicts, they were willing to undertake them if they thought the interests of mentees were violated. Their work was characterised by innovative methods, they communicated in an informal manner. They did not consider it their task to adjust to the pedagogical practice of the institution, what's more, they often questioned its integrity.

(4) We considered the mentors developers from the point of view of teaching if their primary aim was to improve the cognitive competence as well as the skills and abilities of mentees. Mentors with the tutoring attitude concentrated on the acquisition of the learning material, on test preparation and on providing support for mentees to prepare their homework.

Table 5. Types of student mentors' role conceptions[8]

Role name	Emotionality	Symmetry	Conformity	Teaching strategy
Expert	quite rational	asymmetric	quite conformist	neutral
Trainer	emotional	symmetric	neutral	concentrating on developing
Step parent	quite emotional	slightly asymmetric	conformist	neutral
Buddy	emotional	quite symmetric	non-conformist	neutral

The primary model for student mentors who preferred the role of expert was the teacher of the mentee. They consulted the teachers on a regular basis, they tried to live up to the teachers' expectations. Expert mentors top priority was doing the homework and preparing mentees for tests. They valued tutoring more than developing. Their relationship with mentees was more formal, they focused on establishing their authority as well as on controlling the communication. Some of the expert mentors required mentees to use the formal "you" when addressing them.

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[8] In order to describe the role types listed in the table, in the following boxes, we publish extracts from the interviews (Szűcs, 2011) we did with student mentors of the Student Mentoring Program.

Expert mentors criteria of success was the better school performance of mentees, the prevention of re-examination and the satisfaction of teachers. Expert mentors clearly defined their aims and applied rational, logical argumentation to emphasize to mentees the importance of success at school and compliance with the norms.

Expert

„I always visited the form teacher to check what had happened, how things had gone, how my mentee had behaved. If it turned out my mentee had done something wrong, I usually confronted them: „Why did you do this?!", I said. „How do you know about it?" „Believe me, I know everything!", I said.

„It's cool that the teacher tells us what to do. I need it because that's how I know what our aim is and I make sure he reaches it. So, there's no excuse, we sit down and I get the stuff into him. I make him sweat until he knows the learning material."

„If your attitude is like „Hi, ciao, call me Joe, dude.", then nothing good will come out of it. It is extremely difficult to motivate these kids to want to learn. Well, if we get on very well, if we open up to them, if we get friendly and act like we are the big brother, then we cannot achieve anything. I think some distance can only do good. We can establish a very good, friendly relationship while also maintaining our respect. For us, it is very difficult to be on informal terms and make them respect us as well. For a child, it is very-very difficult."

The most important characteristic of trainer mentors was their commitment to competence-based education, they preferred development to tutoring. They strived to build an equal relationship with mentees, they avoided to use formal communication. Trainer mentors rarely confronted teachers, although, due to their use of innovative pedagogical methods, they considered themselves as rebels and progressive in the professional sense. During their mentoring activity, trainer mentors used a large number of activity-based and game-like tasks. They regularly looked for and adapted "good practices", and they themselves tried to develop tools and tasks. As part of their teaching methodology, they established personal, emotionally rich relationships.

Trainer

„If you tried to tell them as in the classroom, they will apply the 'züm-züm' face. [...] glassy-eyes, and the mentee is far away. This doesn't work for us, because I see that the kid is somewhere in Timbuktu, although sometimes he writes down something and nods. [...] We must be more relaxed with them, we have to make lots of jokes."

„The teacher gave me the instructions that the pupils will write a test on sentence types. There's a huge chaos in the head of the boy. And then I said: „OK, Johnny, we will play cards a bit, then we will learn!" „Nooo, please, play some more cards, teacher!" I said, „You can take another card if you form a declarative, an interrogative or any type of sentence I ask you to form." We played like this during the whole session. After 1.5 hours I said, „OK, Johnny, time to go home now!" „No, no, please, teacher, let's play some more cards!" „They had the test yesterday, I don't know his result yet, but I think he understood the study material."

Step parent mentors considered establishing a bond of trust as their most important task, therefore they managed to build a strong emotional bonding with mentees. These mentors knew the family background, everyday problems and the way of thinking of their mentees very well, and they tried to alleviate the disadvantages caused by the socio-economic background of mentees.

Although step parent mentors strived to treat their mentees as equals, the trust of mentees was partly fed by the protection, support and understanding they expected from their mentors, thus the relationship can be considered somewhat asymmetric. Step parent mentors firmly protected their mentees, they were even willing to confront the teachers if it was in the interest of their mentees. Yet, we cannot say this role was confrontational since these mentors strived to resolve conflicts, they socialised their mentees to comply with the system of norms and to follow the rules. From the perspective of pedagogical objectives, step parent mentors can be considered developmental or tutoring, this category is not relevant from the view of role conceptions.

Step parent

„Well, it was not a traditional teacher-pupil relationship for sure. Sometimes I felt like they thought we were their step parents. In fact, they were so close to us. Especially, the younger ones.”

„None of them are silly, they are all smart, but what is missing is... that instead of mummy and daddy, it is us who sit by their side at the table and tell them to open their books, do the homework, check it!”

„The aim would have been to be their friends or their mentors who guide their lives. They shouldn't see the teacher in us, but someone they can turn to, someone they can share things with.”

„We talked a lot about what is normal and what would be normal?! How it is at their home?! They need us to talk to them. So that they can tell us what's going on at home.”

Buddy mentors also established an emotionally-rich relationship with the pupils, but they – as opposed to step parents – did not emphasize the experience of adulthood and its protective authority, instead, they tried to point out the similarities that link the mentor and the mentee, the similarities that move them closer. This relationship is radically symmetric, thus it is non-conformist as well. Buddy mentors understood and accepted their mentees' system of norms. These mentors were familiar with the questions, music and relationship issues youngsters were interested in. Buddy mentors were always on the mentees' side, their alliance was grounded on firm trust. They protected their mentees both from the teachers and from the other pupils. Violating the norms and confronting others were the means of promoting the trust of their mentees. The buddy mentor type was the one that was preferred by teachers the least, as they thought their own authority was ruined due to the confrontations and the symmetric attitude of student mentors.

Buddy

„Well, when I enter the room for the first time, I take it easy and drop my coat on the hanger so that the mentees can see I don't care what we gonna do. Then, let's say I find the jerk in the group. Then, I go to him, sit down beside him and ask him „what's up?"! He starts talking about his weekend... Then, I peep behind and say, hey, open a book, please, to imitate we are doing something, after all I'm being paid for being here. Then, it gives him a good laugh, really, at least six of them find it very funny. They see that it doesn't bother me either. Then, he will probably open a book he used at school that day. [...] Then, finally, we manage to do that homework, after all."

„They think I'm their buddy. So I go out with them during the breaks, we play tag during the whole break. I don't know how they can do it, but I try to keep up with them. It's not working out very well... So, I'm a brother, a buddy and a teacher at the same time."

Identifying the different roles turned out to be useful both during the preparation of student mentors prior to their work and for improving their operation. Initial presentation of the roles offered models that student mentors could follow, while it also created ground for describing a number of conflicts and their possible solutions. Looking at the advantages and disadvantages of each role type drew the attention of student mentors, who could identify themselves with the relevant role types, to the issues they could use as well as to the possible threats.

Liaison with parents

In the first three years, liaising with the parents was the responsibility of Roma NGOs, some of whose members were parents affected by the desegregation measures. This made the cooperation with some of the parents significantly easier, however, we saw division in both cities with regard to the NGOs involved, so it was a disadvantage for some of the affected families. After realising this issue, we assigned the task of liaising to a former student mentor, whose previous experiences as a mentor as well as her Roma identity both helped her to establish her credibility. This colleague of us later founded a youth association (SHERO, Public Benefit Association of the Young Roma in the South Great Plain), whose members were former Roma mentees who had reached their maturity as well as Roma student mentors.

Means of communication and its frequency was different for each family. Personal meeting, the use of telephone and social networks, mostly with mothers, were the most frequent type of communication. Among the objective conditions (e.g., own mobile, internet access), regularity depended on the available free time of parents (e.g. employment) and on the quality of the relationship established. About ten parent-mentor meet-

ings took place in the home of the mentees per month. These meetings were primarily with those parents, whose children had participated in the Program for several years.

On the one hand, the key to building the trust was the good relationship of the mentee and the person responsible for the liaison with parents. For this, the contact person and the mentee had to meet previously more than once, so when the contact person visited the family, the mentee was happy to see her, because she already knew her. Moreover, it was also important that parents realised the advantages of mentoring and liaison. This could be reached through discussing the mentee's success, which made the parent proud, or if the parent saw how good the relationship was between the mentee and the contact person, or if the contact person helped the family fill out official documents, prepared the mentee for the re-examination, or, for example, if the contact person walked home with the mentee. We considered it as the sign of strong trust when it was the parent who contacted the mentor, the contact person, to ask for help in the above mentioned issues, or when they enquired about the possibility to involve their relatives in the Program.

During family visits, topics covered included the personality of the mentee, the experiences they told their parents about mentoring, upcoming activities, school events, actual issues at school, grades awarded, major tests and homework-related issues. During family visits at the homes of seventh or eighth graders, further learning options and opportunities were often discussed as well. The contact person frequently used family visits to tell parents the questions and insights of student mentors. As the trust was building, other issues were more and more often discussed as well (e.g. living issues). Several cases, these discussions with parents helped us understand and solve the problems of pupils at school (e.g. lack of learning aids, motivational issues), and reach other parents.

Maintaining the motivation of student mentors

Maintaining the motivation of student mentors was of key importance, especially in the case of volunteers. Due to the mentees significantly lagging behind, success in learning was often rare, however, positive feedback from mentees and strong mentor-mentee relationships managed to counterbalance this fact. The relatively small age difference had a positive influence on the mentor-mentee relationship, as discussed above, in several cases the relationship was friendlier than the traditional teacher-pupil relationship. In these close relationships mentors took roles that were quite far from the traditional teacher roles (e.g. they were confidants in relationship issues, they were asked for advice on handling parent-child conflicts). On the one hand, this increased the motivation of mentors, however, in some cases it also put a tremendous emotional burden on them, as they were faced with situations for which they hardly saw a solution to or with situations for which a solution was far beyond their scope. Sometimes, the supporting role of a mentor was outstanding when taking into consideration the family background. This established the bonding, however, it was emotionally difficult for the mentor and it was often combined with the feeling of helplessness.

Hit and run insult to the soul

We named a typical type of failure hit and run insult to the soul. Since participation in the activities with mentors was voluntary, despite previous arrangements and in the hope of a better free time activity, mentees quite often decided not to show up and they went home after school. Mentors took it hard, especially when they had invested their time and efforts to prepare for the activities. It shows the ambivalence of the situation that the same mentors usually reported that when they did manage to "catch" the mentees, they were happy to participate and showed activity, they were hard to "shake off". Looking at the situation from a different perspective, we may conclude that if a mentee boycotted the mentoring on a regular basis, it referred to an inadequate relationship between the mentor and the mentee.

Besides the demotivating effects already mentioned, we had to deal with the issue of stowaways from the beginning. Some of the mentors tended to focus on less time-consuming, less difficult, conflict-free tasks (e.g. they organised free time activities), or they showed that they were less committed otherwise (e.g. they did not attend the university courses on a regular basis, they were not willing to organise activities). This imbalance threatened to demotivate mentors who worked hard and were willing to undertake conflicts. One way to solve this issue was to arrange personal appointments with stowaways to draw their attention to the problem. In some cases, this was followed by expelling these mentors from the Program. Later, we decided to solve the problem by offering some voluntary positions instead of the paid ones. Mentors who invested more of their time and energy were offered the position to be responsible for certain schools to acknowledge their efforts. Our options to judge the mentoring activity were restricted, on the one hand, because the resources (e. g. the time mentors could spend with pupils) provided by schools were quite different, on the other hand, program coordinators only had partial information on the mentoring work at the schools. This also meant that the opportunities for providing positive reinforcement were limited and partly dependant on the assertiveness of mentors.

Team building and discussion forums to share the experiences turned out to be most effective for maintaining and increasing motivation, as the feeling of belonging to a community as well as the efforts and success of the members set high standards for all participants, and those who wanted to belong to the community had to adjust to these norms. Sometimes this also solved the problem of stowaways; due to the high standards of the community, stowaways decided to leave the Program. In the third and fourth year of the Program, the NGO operating the Program provided free mobile communication for paid mentors when communicating with each other. This, together with the regular activities organised together greatly contributed to the cohesion of the community.

ADAPTATION OPTIONS

In the short term, initiatives like the Student Mentoring Program helped to alleviate the disadvantages of pupils, while on the long run, they made the education of teacher trainees more effective. These programs may help to make schools more open, moreover, by building on the new institutional relationships, they may help to launch new valuable cooperation. Our Program may be linked or integrated into several tenders and disadvantage-compensation initiatives (e.g. Útravaló-Macika Scholarship Program, Integrációs Pedagógiai Rendszer [Integrated Pedagogical System], extracurricular programs, Roma College). Within the framework of the Integrated Pedagogical System, for example, one of the tools for supporting teaching and learning that schools may undertake is the operation of tutoring/mentoring systems, to which – according to our experience – the institutions find it difficult to assign activities. This is one of the areas where student mentors could help the schools. Combining the Program with public employment, according to our experience, offers new opportunities. It may enhance the local integration of disadvantage-compensation initiatives and also provide human resources for them.

Hungarian data shows that the composition of the teaching staff is less favourable at schools where the ratio of disadvantaged pupils is above the average (*Varga*, 2009). One of the consequences of teachers' contraselection is that teachers are usually less educated in these institutions, the ratio of less competent teachers is above the average. Preparing teacher trainees within the framework of our Program may bring progress in this field through changing the prestige of the pedagogical work of dealing with disadvantaged pupils, through improving teachers' self-confidence and knowledge, moreover through linking beginner teachers with schools. Practical experiences gained as well as the relationships established during their training may help in the future decisions of beginner teachers to a great extent (*Maier* and *Youngs*, 2009).

A program similar to the Student Mentoring Program may be realised in any city which has a higher education institution there or near it. Taking the longer term effects into consideration, it is beneficial if the higher education institution offers a teacher training program as well, however, it is not a strict condition of launching a mentoring program. These programs do not necessarily need to be linked to comprehensive (e.g. desegregation) measures, mentoring pupils may be launched in only one school as well.

Dilemmas concerning observations

During the history of the Student Mentoring Program, we were often faced with the problem of satisfying the demands of interested parties – auditors during monitorings, journalists, foreign experts during international study visits – concerning the observation of the workings of the Program. In the classroom as well as in most of the activities we organised, the proportion of mentees was usually low, which made it difficult to observe the mentoring work. For us, the low proportion of mentees was natural, it was the result of the integrated educational system that was realized in our partner institutions. Moreover, we were particularly proud when we managed to organise heterogeneous programs with the participation of the classmates of mentees. However, from the perspective of the observers the target group was underrepresented in these situations. If only the programs where only our mentees participated were presented to the interested parties, the Program's philosophy, our commitment to integration and its realization within the framework of the education system was overshadowed. During the years, we learned to manage this issue by showing interested parties different types of programs as well as complementing them with background discussions. However, the problem is also relevant on the macro level: it is difficult to present the everyday successes of integrated education to the public.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Two of our experiences gained during the academic year of 2013/2014 were of key importance for us for the future planning of the Student Mentoring Program. Thanks to our cooperation with the Teacher Training Faculty of the University of Novi Sad, we have gained valuable experience on the issues arising during the multiplication of the program. Although we had supported the launch of a similar initiative at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Miskolc – we had provided materials, held trainings and exchanged our experiences – and we had tried to prepare for the challenges, we learned how to teach the know-how of our Program, partly by analysing our mistakes, during the seventh year.

Another significant experience of the academic year of 2013/2014 was how complex and comprehensive effect we can reach through the cooperation of an extracurricular program and a mentoring program. The extracurricular programs in Szeged and Tiszasziget are run by student mentors who used to work in the Student Mentoring Program and some of the mentees in Szeged have already been mentored before, so some volunteer and paid student mentors of the EDUCOOP project had the opportunity to work with experienced mentors who were by now experts in disadvantage compensation and who had gone through a similar developmental path, thus they understood the difficulties and problems of new mentors and knew how to support them. Infrastructural problems mentioned earlier lost their relevance; while liaising with parents was realised within the framework of extracurricular programs. Student mentors meant extra labour force and replacement for the extracurricular programs. Although the introduction of all-day schools could make our Program more attractive, in the academic year of 2014/2015, the Student Mentoring Program will be realised by the above mentioned two extracurricular programs. Moreover, within the framework of the *Younger Sibling Program*, we plan to extend the age group of mentees and launch an early developmental program as well as a program supporting primary school selection. We aim to help parents support the success of their children through the *CooParent-program*, which is still in the preparation phase. We strive to realise these plans by involving students as mentors based on their university majors (e.g. preschool teachers, primary school teachers, youth workers, andragogists, social workers, cultural mediators, psychologists, art pedagogy teachers).

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CODE OF CONDUCT

For student mentors and organisers of the Student Mentoring Program

This Code of Conduct is the summary of the norms, regulations and guidelines that shall be followed by all student mentors participating in the Student Mentoring Program as well as by the organisers (hereinafter referred to as "participants").

I. Objectives

Due to the tasks they perform with regard to primary school and high school pupils, participants of the Student Mentoring Program are expected to follow higher ethical norms. In order for the participants to be able to fulfil the requirements set by the Student Mentoring Program in all aspects, moreover, in order for the participants to be able to perform their tasks on a high level, it is important to set some ethical principles.

II. Duration

This Code of Conduct enters into force on ....

III. Principles and expectations defining the content of this Code of Conduct

1. Lawfulness, compliance with the law, the requirement of fairness
   All participants shall perform their job in a lawful manner, with particular reference to children's and students' rights as well as to legislation on data protection of children and students.
2. Professionalism, doing quality work, responsibility
   All participants of the Student Mentoring Program are expected to continuously improve their professional and general knowledge, skills and abilities and to perform their tasks in a professional manner and on a high level. All participants shall take responsibility for their actions and decisions, doing quality work shall be an intentional objective to them. Participants shall be open to new information, new solutions and to their application.

3. Cooperation, predictability, motivation, strengthening the team spirit
    In order to achieve the common goals, participants are expected to be helpful, continually cooperative, they shall strive to build and maintain good relationships with their co-workers.
Participants shall identify with the objectives of the Program since this is the only way to ensure the motivated, regular, predictable work.

IV. General behavioural requirements expected from the participants

Participants shall take into consideration at all times that during their work, and when they represent the Program, the Student Mentoring Program may be judged through their behaviour.

1. Participants shall be loyal to the objectives as participants of the Student Mentoring Program.
2. Participants shall exhibit self-restraint even in the most difficult situations; they shall avoid using abusive language and generating conflicts.
3. When they work and or stay at the school, participants shall not use any amount of any drug that may affect their activity negatively or prevent them from carrying out their activity.
4. Participants shall strive to maintain the good reputation of the school they work at.
5. Participants shall strive to establish and maintain a constructive relationship with teachers, headmasters and fellow mentors, especially those fellows they work together with at their assigned schools.
6. Participants shall be cooperative, they shall selflessly help new members to integrate into the Program. New participants shall be active in the process of mutually getting to know each other.
7. Confidentiality of participants applies to all information they get to know during or in connection with their mentoring activity. Participants shall keep any information they get to know confidential, they shall not use it for their own or for others benefit or for compensation, and they shall avoid even the appearance or use of information. Participants shall not disclose any confidential information or data in their published papers or during their public presentations.
8. Student mentors shall consult with the organisers of the Program prior to their media appearance.
9. During activities supporting the same target group, especially during the initiatives of the Motivation Group, participants shall be cooperative.

V. Behavioural requirements and guidelines related to mentees

1. Participants are expected to consider children as the most important assets regardless of their sex, race or the origin of the children and regardless of whether the child requires special attention. The Student Mentoring Program shall reject all forms of discrimination and shall identify the respect for the otherness of other people as their governing principle.
2. All participants shall take into account the interests of mentees above all things.
3. Participants, as individuals supporting the negotiation power of mentees, shall carry out their duties in a way that if the interests of pupils are violated, or if they experience any form of discrimination, they shall take remedial action. Participants shall report in writing any such issue to the Project Manager of the Student Mentoring Program.
4. Participants are expected to intentionally think about the disadvantages of mentees resulting from their family or other social conditions.
5. When selecting the pupils to participate in the Program, participants, consulting with the teachers, shall strive to involve pupils most in need, that is, the most "problematic" pupils.
6. Decisions made concerning the composition of mentees are not final, student mentors may consult with the teacher or the organisers of the Program any time if they think a new pupil should be involved. Student mentors shall report in writing any change in the composition of mentees to the organisers of the Program.

VI. Final provisions

1. Adding an Addendum to the Code or expanding its scope: if they consider it necessary and reasonable, participants may make suggestions concerning the content of the Code of Conduct.
2. The content of the Code of Conduct shall be stated to all interested parties.
3. Before their appointment, the content of the Code of Conduct shall be stated to all applicants of the Student Mentoring Program.
4. The Code of Conduct is a public document.

STUDENT MENTORS (2007–2014)

Acsai-Varga, Emerencia
Auvalszky, Katalin
Bakos, Róbert
Balassa, Emese
Balázs, Ákos
Balázs, Bianka
Balázs, Brigitta
Bálint, Regina Katalin
Balogh, Virág
Barta, Krisztina
Bartha, Angelika
Beák, Orsolya
Béleczki, Petra
Benkucs, Katalin
Benyeda, Zsuzsa
Bereczky, Krisztina
Bernátsky, Zoltán
Berta, Dominika Anna
Berta, Julianna
Bíró, Erika
Borszéki, Judit
Bozsó, Beáta
Budai, Éva
Bús, Enikő
Chezan, Júlia
Czédli, Márta
Csapó, Edit
Csempesz, Péter
Csík, Edit
Csirmaz, Anna
Csizmazia, Ágnes
Csonka, Adrienn
Darkó, Adrienn
Dezső, Orsolya
Dombi, Boglárka
Domokos, Csilla
Dongó, Rita
Doszpod, Kitti
Dózsa, Renáta
Dudás, Zsanett

Édl, Zsuzsanna
Égető, Zsófia
Engi, Mónika
Engler, Márta
Erdődi, Noémi
Farkas, Ágnes
Farkas, Eszter
Farkas, Nóra
Fodor, József
Fodor, Maria
Fogarassy, Fanny
Galó, Orsolya
Gerse, Andrea
Gulyás, Noémi
Gurzó, Emese
György, Szilvia
Győri, Tamás
Hajnal, Edina
Halál, Ákos
Herédi, Anikó
Hermesz, Klára
Horváth, Enikő
Horváth, Gabriella
Hős, Orsolya
Hubicsák, Péter Máté
Hugli, Veronika
Huszár, Vivien
Imre, Katalin
Jáger, Nikoletta
Jantyik, Tímea
Járvás, Andrea
Jenet, Orsolya
Józsa, Enikő
Józsa, Márta
Kákonyi, Ibolya
Kalmár, Enikő
Kaszás, Ildikó
Kátai, Csilla
Kecskés, Márton
Kelemen, Valéria

Kempf, Andrea
Kiss, Gábor
Kiss, Veronika
Kocsis, Renáta
Koczor, Kinga
Kovács, Dóra
Kovács, Lionel
Kovács, Renáta
Kovács, Zsuzsanna
Kozma, Júlia
Kristó, Edina Eszter
László, Alexandra
Lengyel, Zsuzsanna
Locher, Brigitta
Lukács, Krisztina
Lukács, Lilla (1)
Lukács, Lilla (2)
Majoros, Zsuzsanna
Makádi, Balázs
Mamuzsits, Tamás
Markó, István
Maróti, Julianna
Márton, Gábor
Meixner, Ádám
Mencel, Mónika
Mészáros, Árpád
Metzger, Ákos
Mezei, Tímea Erzsébet
Mónus, Anita
Muci, Izabella
Mucsi, Péter Zoltán
Nacsa, Judit
Nagy, Ágota
Nagy, Arnold
Nagy, Ildikó
Nagy, Lilla
Német, Ildikó Márta
Németh, Gábor
Németh, István
Németh, Katalin

Nyerges, Ábel
Orsós, Gabriella
Pajor, Nikolett
Pálfi, Edina
Papp, Anita
Patai, Beáta
Pataki, Balázs
Pete, Erika
Péter, Tímea
Pintér, Petra Orsolya
Polyák, Kamilla
Pósa, Magdolna
Pozsár, Kinga
Rácz, Hajnalka
Rakonczai, Zsanett
Rávai, Ágnes
Rideg, András
Rocskár, Vivien
Rónyai, Zsuzsanna
Sajben, Emma
Samu, László András
Sándor, Rita
Sárközy, Tímea
Sárosi, Ildikó Beáta
Schimpl, Brigitta
Seller, Gabriella
Simon, Ágnes

Simon, Anikó
Simon, Zsolt
Sipos, Aliz
Skadra, Margit
Soczó, Gabriella
Solymár, Zsófia
Steigler, Anett
Szabó, Ágnes
Szabó, Anikó
Szabó, Diána
Szabó, Gyöngyi
Szabó, Henriett
Szabó, Kinga
Szabó, Tünde
Szabolcs, Enikő
Szádvári, László
Szalai, Anita
Szalontai, Nikolett
Számfira, Enikő
Szarvas, Emese
Szatmári, Szilvia
Szekeres, Nikoletta
Szeredi, Emese
Szikora, Nóra
Szilhalmi, Krisztina
Sztruhár, Zsanett
Szunyogh, Edit

Szűcs, Eszter
Táibl, Ágnes
Takács, Dániel
Talpai, Gábor
Tápai, Eszter
Tari, Csilla
Tary, Katalin
Tímár, Beatrix
Tóbiás, Ágnes
Tóth, Csaba
Tóth, Renáta
Tóth, Róbert
Tóth, Tamás
Török, Tibor
Török, Tímea
Vanyúr, Katalin
Varga, Andrea
Varga, Erzsébet
Varga, Gyöngyi
Várszegi, Annamária
Vas, Nikoletta
Verebélyné Erdei, Gréte
Verebes, Adrienn
Vida, Gabriella
Wallner, Júlia
Zsargó, Tamás

Good neighbours
creating
common future ✓

This book describes the Motivation Student Mentoring Program in detail and shares the experiences gained during the seven years of its operation. We hope that these experiences will be useful for future disadvantage compensation initiatives. For this purpose, we summarized the realisation of the Program and our observations with a focus on practical matters. In addition, we included our self-reflexive, subjective opinion and observations in text boxes. First, the organisational background of the Motivation Student Mentoring Program is introduced, followed by the manifestation of the Program, and the activities carried out by student mentors. Finally, our views concerning the results and functioning of the Program are shared.

Motiváció
KIADVÁNYOK