

# Inclusion through mentoring: lessons from Scotland

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# Outline

- Introduction to EduMap: disadvantaged young people
- Research Project: Methodology
- Case study
- Conclusion

# EduMap

- Horizon 2020 projet: Edumap (2016-2019)
- The role of adult education in facilitating social inclusion, engagement and active citizenship of vulnerable young adults
- EduMap focus:
  - Vulnerable young people
  - Social exclusion
  - Inclusion and integration
  - Active citizenship

# Issues EduMap addresses

- Identifying vulnerable young people early, in the context of their everyday lives
- Building a clear picture of individual needs
- Developing dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders
- Ensuring vulnerable young people receive personalised support, information, advice and guidance, and learning and development opportunities
- Providing support for vulnerable young people across transitions, for example, moving on from school or from the support of one service to another as their needs change
- Making services more accessible, attractive and relevant for vulnerable young people

# Active Citizenship

- Social participation: e.g. development of social competences, social capital
- Economic participation : e.g. employment, access to social benefits, awareness of rights
- Political participation : e.g. civic and political participation, running for boards, neighbourhood activities

# Target groups: vulnerable young people

The term remains open to various interpretations (different perceptions among stakeholders: practitioners, policy makers and young people themselves)

Some common characteristics: 'disadvantaged', 'marginalised' or 'vulnerable'

- lacking both skills and formal qualifications
- specifically being held back by limited basic skills, as well as wider personal skills
- lacking self-confidence and motivation
- NEET
- refugees and migrants
- **care leavers**
- school dropouts

Gender differences need to be taken into account!

# Criteria for Selecting Good Practices: contextual analysis

- **Participation:** Are the programmes successful in ensuring the participation and retention of vulnerable young people (e.g. completion rates) ?
- **Accessibility:** To what extent are the selected programmes accessible for vulnerable young people? For example, terms of ensuring funding, reaching out those who are hard to reach, other elements of accessibility (e.g. disabled access, childcare provision).
- **Outcomes, both formal and informal:** Does the programme ensure meaningful outcomes for vulnerable young people, either formal or informal (e.g. certificates or qualification, development of social skills)?
- **Contribution to active citizenship:** To what extent does the programme aim to promote AC (including economic, political or social dimensions)?
- **Sustainability:** Is the programme sustainable?
- *Scope of the programme (national, local):* Although we do not consider scope as a measure of success, for fair representation of the programmes with different degrees of scopes, the country groups will aim to include at least one national initiative within each country.

# Methodology

Research questions:

What policies and practices are needed to include young people at risk of social exclusion in active participatory citizenship in Europe?

How are disadvantaged young people supported to achieve their full potential?

In depth case study – 2-day fieldwork

- Semi structured interviews between 35-75 minutes
  - 1 Director of charity
  - 5 Mentors (1 former policy maker)
  - 2 Head of Schools (practitioners)
  - 3 School link co-ordinator
  - 1 Programme Director (Also link to City Council)
  - 7 Young people on the programme;
  - 3 Alumni students
- Analysis using Nvivo

# Case study: Example of good practice

## Why this case?

- A charity developed the programme in 15 secondary schools in a big city and supports ~600 young people – now City Council buy-in
- It is a *talent* development programme (think positive)
- Composite programme with developed infrastructure to ensure success (increased performance in literacy and numeracy, positive destination, 'soft' outcomes)
- Developed for disadvantaged, esp. care experienced young people in schools
- Positive outcome: 81% of the young people participating in the programme went to positive destinations – employment, university or college (48.8% with similar backgrounds went to positive destination in other schools)

# Case study: Composite programme

Aims of programme:

- Young people to have the same educational outcomes, career opportunities, life chances as any other young person

Driver of the programme - belief:

- Education outcomes dictate job choices, which dictate life chances

Focus on positives and look to the future (not the past)

# About the programme

- Not an additional or separate part of the current school system: supplement and complement the mainstream education process
- Young people are in mainstream schools going through exactly the same curriculum

*'What we are effectively doing is carefully injecting additionality at the times that it's needed.'*

- Mentoring to build relationships, confidence and self-esteem
- Vocational tasters and arranged tailored visits to HE to make informed choices and to support effective transition to HE, further training or work:  
Individually tailored bite-sized tasters: 188 jobs from 48 (local) organisations

# Target group – young people between the ages 14-18

- No 1: Care experienced young people for 14-18 y olds in schools (but not exclusive)
- No 2: Young people whom the school considers vulnerable and disadvantaged; young carers, who are in a kinship care arrangements, living in families with addictions – emotionally disadvantaged
- No 3: Self selection
- Participation is on a voluntary basis

# Timeline of the programme

- Year 1-2 (age 11-13 y): building **confidence and self-esteem** through group work
- Year 3-4 (age 14-16) : matching young people with mentors focusing on developing **relationships and trust** through active listening and empathising
- Once relationships are established: shifting the focus to the **potential** of the young people  
Mentor's role shifts to helping that young person find, grow and use their talents
- Next: bite size experiences of employment, of access to college, access to university

# Key stakeholders

- Participating young people
- Charity
- City Council
- Schools
- Mentors
- Employers and businesses, and higher education and further education
- Families, parents, carers
- Participating young people – ambassadors

What are their roles and responsibilities?

# Charity – key personnel

- Charity staff based in Charity
  - 1) Volunteer recruitment team: recruits, trains and supports mentors and volunteers; put mentors forward to matching panels
  - 2) Talent taster team: recruits colleges, universities and employers, and ensures opportunities
- Charity staff based in schools
  - 3) Pathway coordinator in each school: supports young people schools, coordinates adult volunteers, ensures that young people are on the right pathway

# Charity – key personnel cont

- Founder of the Charity
- Programme Director
  - Responsible for recruiting mentors and young people
  - Responsible for making pathways clear to everyone
  - Responsible for making sure that the young people on the programme get more than the norm for other young people
  - Working closely with the City Council
  - Chairs the 'Champion Board' at the City council
  - She works with universities' Widening Participation Managers

# Policy makers

- Charity works in close collaboration with the City Council
- Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland
- The Charity has a presence at the Local Authority (LA) and the Programme Director attends all management meetings. The Programme Director also a Principle Officer at the Local Authority.
- From 2019 the LA will take ownership and pay for the programme.

LA takes ownership because of the positive impact the programme has on this group of disadvantaged young people.

# Schools

- The programme is run in 26 out of 30 secondary schools with 1500-2000 young people, ~66% of the most disadvantaged
- School heads – may act as gatekeepers
- School links
- Pathway Coordinators (full time )  
They are employed by the charity but based/integrated in school staff  
Member of staff and school community  
Essential skills: able to build relationships with young people; able to handle adults; have enough education credibility to be able to be accepted in the school

# Mentors

*There's huge goodwill for people to help those that are disadvantaged through no fault of their own, so that's the prejudice we need to get beyond.*

- 1-1 mentoring
- Commitment: meeting 1 hour/week for at least 1 year, ideally 2 years

*We do not tell the mentor [about] the young person's past, it's got nothing to do with the future*

- Mentors are carefully matched with young people: shared interest
- To build a bridge between the young people and adults.
- Recruiting mentors
- Regulating mentoring – place, time, what to talk (or not) about
- Training mentors

Who are they?

- 1700 registered, 40% male, age: more 35 than over 65, 80% are working

# Employers and businesses

- Volunteers as mentors  
Employers' benefit: soft skills development and coaching.
- Offer high quality bite size taster sessions to young people
- Social responsibility to give back to the society

# Families, parents, carers

- Important stakeholders in the programme
- They need to give consent that the young people can participate
- They influence young people's decision
- They need to be fully informed
- They need to be fully integrated

However, the programme is about the young people's future and not about their past.

# Young people as ambassadors for the programme

- Four/five per school
- Represent different pathways – employment, college, university
- They are the voice of young people for their schools
- Represent their peers in their schools and the whole programme
- They are offering opinions and ideas about what they think is going to work for them

# Supportive infrastructure - communications

- Supportive infrastructure co-ordinated by the charity
- Well developed communications channels
- Great emphasis on face-to-face communication
- All stakeholders' involvement

# Conclusion – success factors

- Carefully assembled composite programme
- Flexible programme – learners can opt in at any time and for any element
- Mentoring – individual support
- Tailored to the young people's needs and interest
- Built in to the education system – not an add on
- Communications' strategy
- Stakeholders work in partnership
- It is all about being **positive** and **shaping the future** of young people.

# Conclusion

## Reflecting on active citizenship

- Broad interpretation of active citizenship:  
political, economic and social participation and skills development
- Economic participation – positive destinations
- Social participation:  
young people recognized the opportunity they have received and responded positively  
young people (alumni) talked about their local communities and 'giving' back to the community
- Political participation: as next step