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Generational change of teachers and school-university co-operation

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In the near future a generational change in the teaching profession will be taking place: one third of all teachers in Europe are aged over 50 years and many senior teachers are going to retire as early as possible. At the same time, a significant number of novice teachers leave their profession during their first years. By 2015, over a million primary and secondary education teachers will have to be recruited and trained. Thus, there is a growing need for supporting novice teachers at the early stages of their careers and to encourage experienced teachers to remain in their profession and to continue their professional development.

This presentation introduces the first results of a 2AgePro project which creates reciprocal collaboration models for interaction between experienced and novice primary and secondary education teachers. These collaboration models have been created in a close co-operation between universities and schools and thus they integrated both theoretical and practical know-how. Results are piloted and evaluated nationally in Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. The developed models are aimed to motivate the experienced teachers to remain in the profession and offer them options to develop their professional skills, and opportunities to share their competence and knowledge accumulated with novice teachers. For novice teachers, the models aim to provide social and pedagogical support at the early stage of their careers. By utilising and widening the ideas of coaching and mentoring, the created models offer pedagogical, social and technical support to primary and secondary education teachers participating in the project.

The presentation outlines five intergenerational scenarios for reciprocal collaboration between novice and experienced teachers. The scenarios describe how intergenerational challenges are tackled in each country: for example through pair discussions, independent collaboration models, group mentoring and by working on shared projects. The presentation includes introduction to each national scenario and a description of the similarities and differences of the scenarios. The role of the ICT in each scenario is also introduced in the presentation. Also, the challenges of the start-up of this kind of new support function will be presented and how it could become a part of the everyday life in schools. Finally, the experiences of the pilot programmes and the further development of the scenarios will be discussed as well as the role and importance of school-university co-operation.

The 2AgePro project has been funded with support from the European Commission Lifelong Learning Programme. This abstract reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.