

## Partnership



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# TRUSTME

*Training for Unique Skills & Techniques for Mentoring*

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## Introduction

EU level comparative statistics reveal high bankruptcy rates in the SME sectors of the member countries. It is an even more striking phenomenon in the new, Central and Eastern European members. Since the contribution of the SME sector to the GDP is overwhelming in most of the countries it is appropriate to look for remedies. For these reasons it is necessary to point out shortages which can be blamed for SMEs' weak sustainability and to fill these gaps. This has become high priority of the national economies. This analysis has sensibilised Budapest Business School (BBS) to develop and extend its curriculum system targeting SMEs with the help of a series of European project. The latest element of this series is Trust me project.

## Rationale

The mentioned projects of BBS produced training materials for divers SME target groups and potential entrepreneurs. The different degree-delivering and non-degree blended-learning (b-learning) courses were tailored to the needs of specific clusters of SMEs and developed the teaching staffs' capability in on-line work. However, as far as the operational SMEs are concerned our training experience and the feedback of the participating entrepreneurs pointed out that traditional and even b-learning training are not ideal for the entrepreneurs any longer and that various sort of mentoring increasingly proves to be a more effective mechanism. The partners realised that a mentoring/coaching approach is needed for the easy access of the entrepreneurs. This radically new approach necessitates an important change of mindset of the teaching staff. This analysis gave birth to the Trust me project.

## Objectives

The major objective of the project is to elaborate an internationally certified training of future SME-mentors who, with the new hard knowledge and soft skills can work with the SME directors/owners as a process counsellor in a more personal and convivial environment. Beyond the mentor training material an entry level assessment and a continuous monitoring will be elaborated ending in a final evaluation of the learning outcomes achieved by the trainees. Pilot trainings will finish the project's work plan with their feed-back facilitating the last fine tuning of the training material.

## Target groups

- The teaching staff members of the VET institutions will learn the French and Finnish mentoring experience and through the course development will become SME mentors
- Regular Master students in economic studies will have access to the courses integrated as facultative trainings into the VET institutions' curriculum systems
- Entrepreneurs or other experts in economic fields wishing to work as SME mentors
- A long term target group is the entrepreneurs wishing to be mentored

## Partnership

The new approach necessitates a heterogeneous consortium of partners with complementary competences. Beyond the Finnish, Romanian and Hungarian vocational education institutions an international mentor-network developing associations (with French roots), and a Romanian and Hungarian SME federation have been invited to the partnership.

## Sustainability

The new courses will be permanently integrated into the course system of the participants assuring sustainability. The courses will be accredited in the countries which will raise the trainings' reputation. The international partner will make sure that certified mentors receive an international label of SME mentor. The project will set the stage for national and international network development of SME mentors to be led by the international partner.

## Results and outcomes

### Intellectual outputs

- Competency framework and skill card for mentors (research)
- Assessment tool of entry level
- Training module: Soft skills of a mentor
- Training module: Diagnosis and accompanying
- Continuing and final assessment tool
- Guidelines for the establishment of SME Support Centres
- Accreditation documents

### Multiplier events

- International training session for staff members in France
- Dissemination workshops, conference
- Pilot trainings in the 4 countries