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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN APPRENTICESHIP MENTORING



IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT

PROJECT REFERENCE № 2024-1-BG01-KA220-VET-000247196

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report evaluates the impact of the [AI in Mentoring training programme](#) for work-based learning mentors and related workplace support roles in Bulgaria, Belgium and Spain. The evaluation uses three survey points: an entry survey before the first training, an exit survey after the AI Literacy training, and a final exit survey after the AI in Mentoring training. The report also uses trainer feedback from the national pilot activities.

The data scope contains 68 entry responses, 50 AI Literacy exit responses and 42 final Mentoring exit responses. The overall AI practice familiarity score increased from 1.96 at entry level to 3.52 after the AI Literacy training, an increase of 1.56 points on a 1 to 5 scale. The overall exit results were also positive, with an overall final average of 4.25 across all final numeric items.

The strongest evidence of impact is in three areas. First, mentors reported higher familiarity with using AI for everyday mentoring tasks, such as planning meetings, preparing feedback, monitoring progress and discussing ethics. Second, following the end of the programme participants felt better prepared to use AI in the four mentoring phases: preparation, induction, implementation and evaluation. Third, trainer reports confirm that the sessions moved many participants from curiosity or uncertainty towards more practical use of AI, while keeping the human relationship at the centre of mentoring.

Note on data analysis:

The figures across the document are average self-ratings. A score of 1 means very low familiarity or confidence. A score of 3 means moderate familiarity. A score of 5 means very high familiarity. An increase from 2.0 to 3.5 means that, on average, participants moved from limited familiarity to a more usable level of confidence. It does not mean that every single person improved by exactly 1.5 points.

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1. PROJECT AND TRAINING CONTEXT

The [AI in Apprenticeship Mentoring project](#) is implemented in the domain of vocational education and training, with a specific focus on work-based learning (WBL), dual education and workplace mentoring. The project responds to a practical problem: mentors are often experienced professionals, but many of them have limited preparation for the actual mentoring process, linked with guiding apprentices, trainees or newly employed colleagues. At the same time, artificial intelligence tools are entering everyday work and training practice, but mentors need clear guidance on when these tools are useful, when they are risky, and how to use them responsibly.

The project developed the [training programme “Supporting Work-Based Mentoring with AI: A Guide for Trainers and Company Mentors”](#). The programme presents mentoring as a human process supported by practical tools. It does not treat AI as a replacement for the mentor. The central idea is that AI can help mentors save time, prepare materials, adapt tasks, support feedback and organise information, while the mentor remains responsible for trust, judgement, communication and ethical decisions.

For the pilot work, the training content was delivered in two main training periods. The first focused on AI Literacy. It introduced basic AI concepts, common tools, risks, privacy, bias, safety and prompt design. The second focused on AI in Mentoring (to be referred as Mentoring training in the following sections and figures). It linked AI tools to the main phases of the mentoring process: preparation, induction, implementation and evaluation.

The target group included company mentors of apprentices in work-based learning or dual education schemes, HR professionals, mentors responsible for onboarding new colleagues, trainers and other professionals involved in workplace learning. This mixed profile is relevant for the project because mentoring in real workplaces is not limited to one job title. It often sits between training, supervision, HR, team leadership and professional guidance.

The report therefore looks at impact in a broad but practical way. It examines whether participants reported stronger familiarity with AI tools, higher confidence in using AI for mentoring tasks, better understanding of mentoring phases, and greater readiness to apply the training in their own workplace context.

2. EVALUATION DESIGN

The evaluation uses pre- and two post-training surveys completed by mentors participating in the pilot training encompassing two phases as mentioned - AI Literacy and AI in Mentoring. The entry survey was distributed before the first training session and provides the baseline picture of participants' initial knowledge, confidence, motivation, and expectations. The first exit survey after the AI Literacy part was completed after the first training session and captures the immediate learning progress linked to the first part of the programme. The final exit survey was completed after the second training period and shows how participants assessed their progress after working with the full training content, including the use of AI across the main phases of mentoring.

Before the analysis, the surveys were reviewed and finetuned in order to retain only unique and usable responses. This was important because the surveys were collected through separate national Google Forms and the exported files were not fully identical in format. The review process helped avoid double counting of responses and ensured that the findings reflect the actual available sample from each country.

The surveys were administered at three points in the training pathway: before the first training period, after the AI Literacy training, and after the final AI in Mentoring training. This makes it possible to follow the development of the national mentor cohorts across the full pilot process, from initial expectations and starting confidence to final readiness to use AI in mentoring practice.

The evaluation therefore looks at the trained groups as they moved through the programme. This is the right level of analysis for the pilot, because the project aimed to test the effectiveness of the “AI in Mentoring” training programme and materials in real WBL mentoring contexts. The focus is on whether the training produced the expected positive benefits in the participant

groups: stronger AI literacy, more positive attitudes towards AI-supported mentoring, clearer understanding of practical use, and higher readiness to apply the approach in their own work.

This also reflects the impact logic of the project. The expected change is not limited to knowing more about AI tools. It concerns the quality of the training experience, the usefulness of the handbook and materials, the mentors' confidence to work with AI in a safe and practical way, and the potential for wider use by trainers, companies, VET providers and other stakeholders. These aspects are best assessed by combining survey results with trainer observations from the national pilots.

The survey data provides the numerical picture of change, while the trainer reports show how this change appeared in practice: active engagement, peer exchange, practical experimentation, better understanding of AI risks and benefits, and stronger links between AI tools and the phases of mentoring. Taken together, this evidence gives a solid basis for judging the pilot-level impact of the training programme and its readiness for further use, transfer and multiplication within the wider WBL mentoring framework.

The evaluation also includes a second source of evidence: reports prepared by the trainers of WBL mentors. Before the national pilot trainings with mentors, the project first formed and prepared national trainer teams. These trainers were trained to apply the "AI in Mentoring" training programme and then delivered the two training periods to WBL mentors in their respective countries.

This distinction is important. The questionnaires capture the perspective of the mentors who took part in the national pilot trainings. The trainer reports capture the perspective of the people who delivered those trainings after their own capacity had been built through the project. In total, 15 trainers were prepared across the partnership: 7 in Bulgaria, 4 in Belgium and 4 in Spain.



This is above the planned minimum of 12 trainers and confirms that the project had functional national trainer teams in all three countries.

The trainer reports are used as qualitative evidence in the impact assessment. Although submitted in narrative form, they speak directly to the planned indicators related to trainer capacity building, peer learning, quality of training content, organisation of the training process, practical application of the materials and positive feedback from participants. They also show whether the training programme, scenario and exercises were clear enough for real delivery with mentors, not only in theory but in actual national training settings.

For this reason, the report reads the mentor questionnaires and trainer reports together. The questionnaires show how mentors assessed their own progress after the training. The trainer reports add evidence on how the sessions were delivered, how mentors reacted during the activities, and how the trained trainers judged the usability of the programme and materials. This gives a fuller picture of impact across the two levels foreseen in the project: first, the capacity building of trainers of WBL mentors, and then the development of WBL mentors through the national pilot trainings.

3. HOW TO READ THE SURVEY SCORES

Most survey questions are based on a Lickert scale (1 to 5). The report uses average ratings across participants. This average is referred to as a mean score. In simple terms, the mean score is the sum of all participant ratings divided by the number of responses. For example, if five people give ratings of 3, 4, 4, 5 and 5, the mean score is 4.2. The increase is the difference between two average ratings. If the average AI familiarity score was 2.0 before the training and 3.5 after the training, the increase is 1.5 points. This means that the group rated itself 1.5 points higher on the same 1 to 5 scale after the training.

The scale is read as follows:

- 1 = very low familiarity, confidence or satisfaction;
- 2 = limited familiarity, confidence or satisfaction;
- 3 = moderate familiarity, confidence or satisfaction;
- 4 = high familiarity, confidence or satisfaction;
- 5 = very high familiarity, confidence or satisfaction.

This scale shows perceived progress. It is useful because confidence and readiness matter in mentoring practice. At the same time, they are not the same as an external skills test.

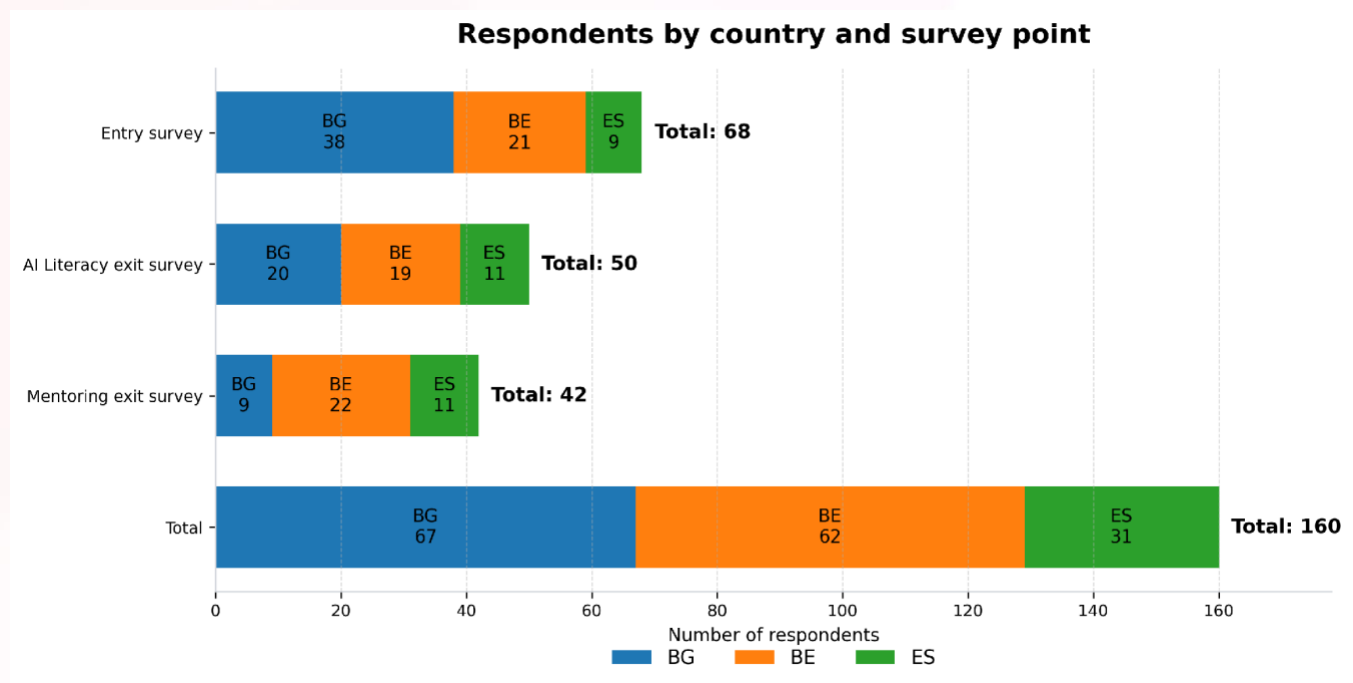
Important note on comparison

The entry and exit results are compared at group level. The surveys were not fully matched person by person across the three points. Therefore, the report examines the change in the context of group profile progress and not the individual progress of each participant.

4. DATA SOURCES AND RESPONSE BASE

The response base is sufficient for descriptive analysis and for identifying a coherent direction of change across the pilot training period. It is also broad enough to compare country patterns.

Figure 1. Respondents by country and survey point



The respondent figures show that the pilot reached a meaningful number of mentors across the three participating countries. In total, 160 valid survey responses were included in the evaluation across the three survey points. The largest number of responses was collected at entry level, with 68 participants completing the initial survey before the first training session. This provided a solid baseline for understanding participants' starting point in relation to AI literacy, confidence, motivation, and expectations.

The number of responses was lower in the two exit surveys, with 50 responses after the AI Literacy training and 42 responses after the Mentoring training. This is expected in a multi-stage piloting process, where not all participants complete every feedback form at each stage. Even so, the data remains sufficient to show the direction of change across the training pathway.

Bulgaria contributed the highest number of responses overall, followed closely by Belgium, while Spain provided a smaller but consistent sample across the two exit surveys. Taken together, the survey data offers a useful basis for assessing the progress made by mentors after each training stage and for identifying common patterns across the three national pilots.

5. FINDINGS FROM ENTRY SURVEYS

The entry survey showed that many participants already had relevant mentoring or workplace learning experience, but their initial AI-related practice was limited, which is visible across all three participating countries. The average AI practice familiarity score at entry level was below the average for each country: 2.05 in Bulgaria, 2.02 in Belgium and 1.43 in Spain.

This baseline is important because it shows that the training did not simply serve a group of advanced AI users. The starting point was closer to early exploration. Participants knew that AI existed, and some had used tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot or similar applications, but they had not yet fully connected these tools with mentoring tasks in work-based learning.

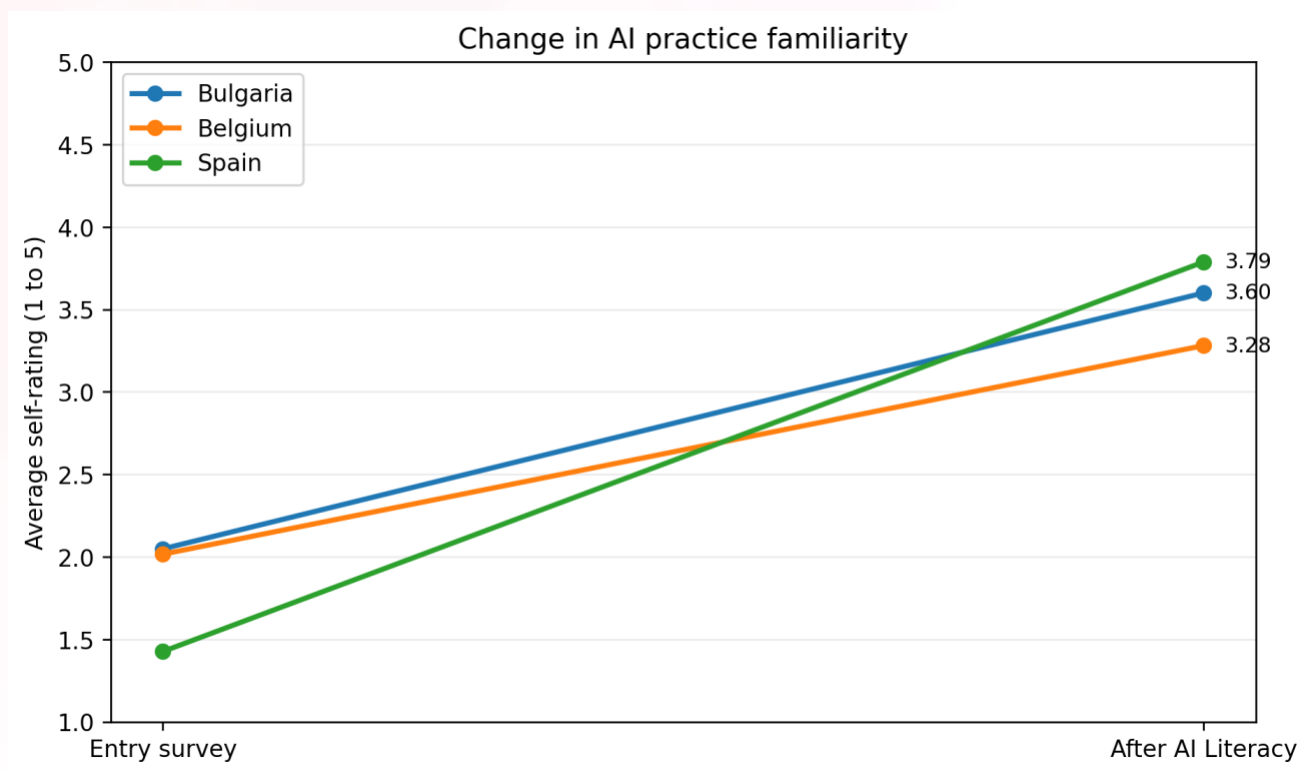
The Bulgarian entry survey also showed a high level of familiarity with work-based learning and the mentor role. This is consistent with the profile of several participants from vocational education, training and public or institutional learning contexts. In Belgium and Spain, the baseline on dual education and mentor responsibilities was less explicit, reflecting a more mixed group of professionals from business, HR, coaching, education, IT and other fields.

The main entry-level conclusion is clear: **the proposed pilot training is addressing a real capacity need**. Participants were not starting from zero in professional terms, but many needed a practical bridge between AI tools and the everyday work of mentoring apprentices, trainees or new colleagues.

6. FINDINGS FROM AI LITERACY TRAINING EXIT SURVEY

Following the AI Literacy training, the overall AI practice familiarity score increased from 1.96 to 3.52. This is an increase of 1.56 points. In practical terms, the group moved from limited familiarity towards a level where participants felt more able to try AI tools.

Figure 2. Change in AI practice familiarity by country



The country's results are positive in all three cases. Bulgaria increased from 2.05 to 3.60. Belgium increased from 2.02 to 3.28. Spain increased from 1.43 to 3.79. The strongest country-level increase was recorded in Spain, where the entry mean was particularly low. The results point in a clear direction. The AI Literacy training helped participants move from basic awareness to more practical familiarity. This matters for work-based learning because mentors are more likely to use AI responsibly when they understand both its possible benefits and its limits.

The major overall gains were linked to monitoring progress, deciding when AI fits the mentoring context, working with scenarios, and discussing ethics or safety. These are relevant results because they go beyond simply learning how to use an AI tool. They show that participants started to connect AI use with judgement, feedback, and learner support.

Figure 3. Main gains after AI Literacy training

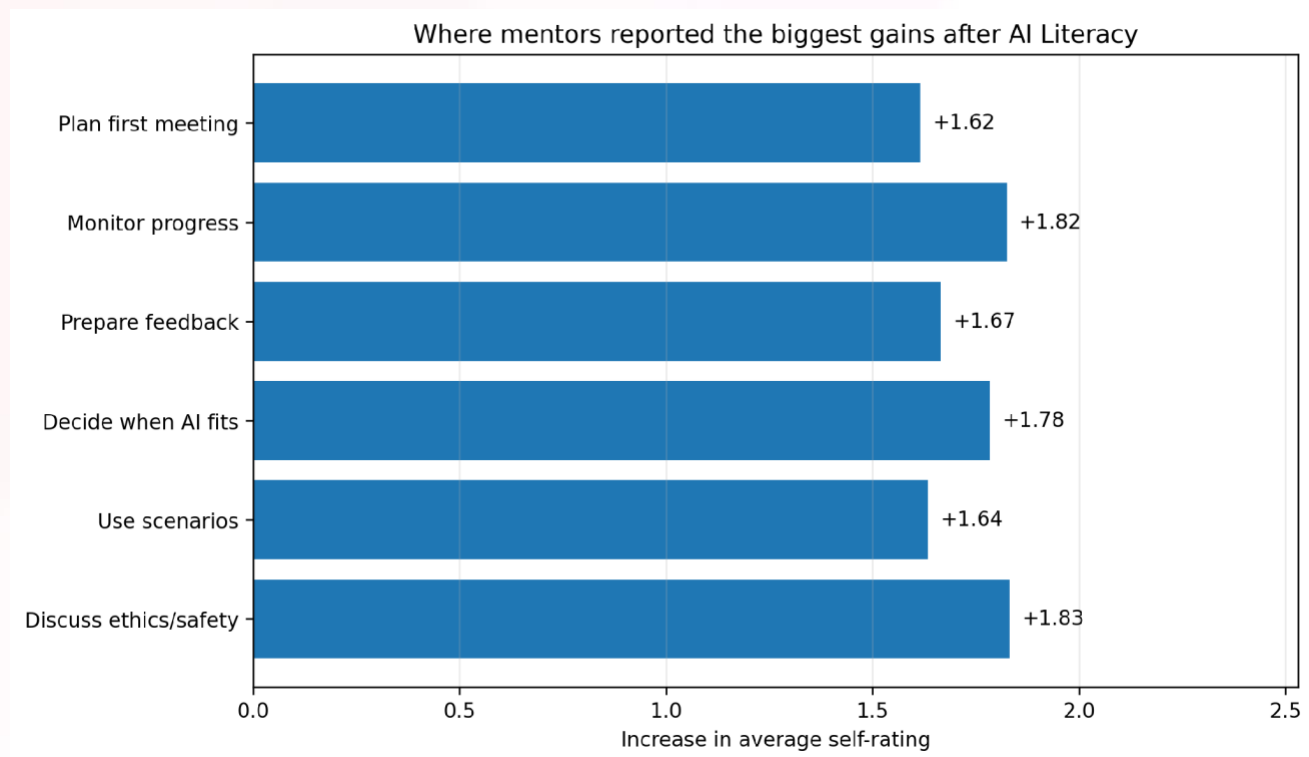


Table 2. AI practice familiarity before and after AI Literacy

Country	Stage	Number of responses	AI practice mean
Bulgaria	Entry	38	2.05
Bulgaria	AI Literacy exit	20	3.60
Belgium	Entry	21	2.02
Belgium	AI Literacy exit	19	3.28
Spain	Entry	9	1.43
Spain	AI Literacy exit	11	3.79

The scores show that the first training period achieved its core purpose: **mentors became more familiar with AI applications relevant to their own work.** The change is particularly important because the training did not focus only on tool demonstration. It also introduced ethical, privacy and safety considerations, which are central when AI is used with learners or employees.

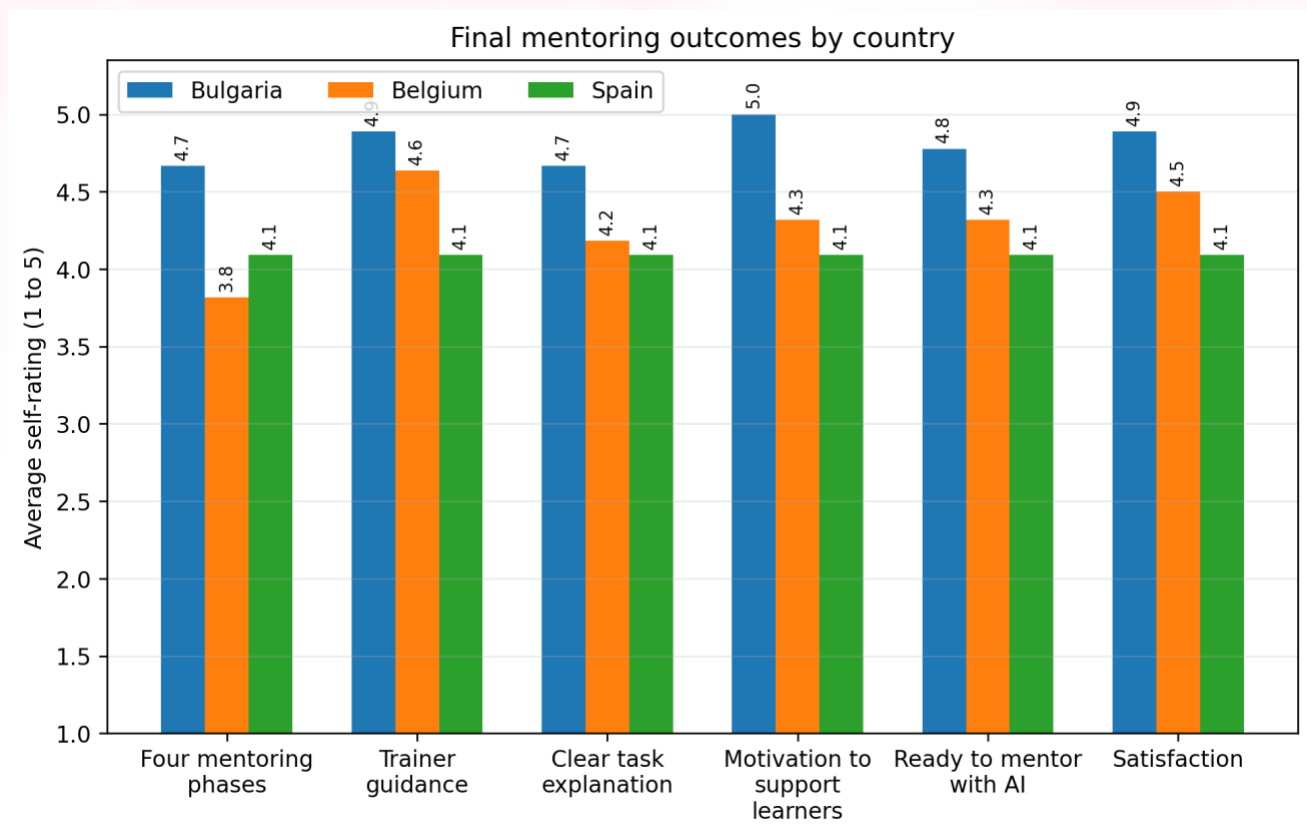
The post-AI Literacy survey also shows high satisfaction with the learning experience. Trainer guidance reached a mean of 4.37, and overall satisfaction reached 4.33. The training materials were also assessed positively, with a mean of 4.13. The item related to the organisation and delivery of the session received a mean of 3.77. This remains a positive result, although slightly lower than the other satisfaction items. It suggests that participants appreciated the content and guidance very strongly, while leaving some room for further refinement in the practical organisation of the sessions, such as timing, format, flow or logistical arrangements.

7. FINDINGS FROM AI IN MENTORING TRAINING EXIT SURVEY

The final survey examined whether participants felt more familiar with the mentoring process and more prepared to use AI within that process. The results are positive across the three participating countries. The overall final average was 4.31, which is clearly above the “high” level of self-assessed readiness and satisfaction.

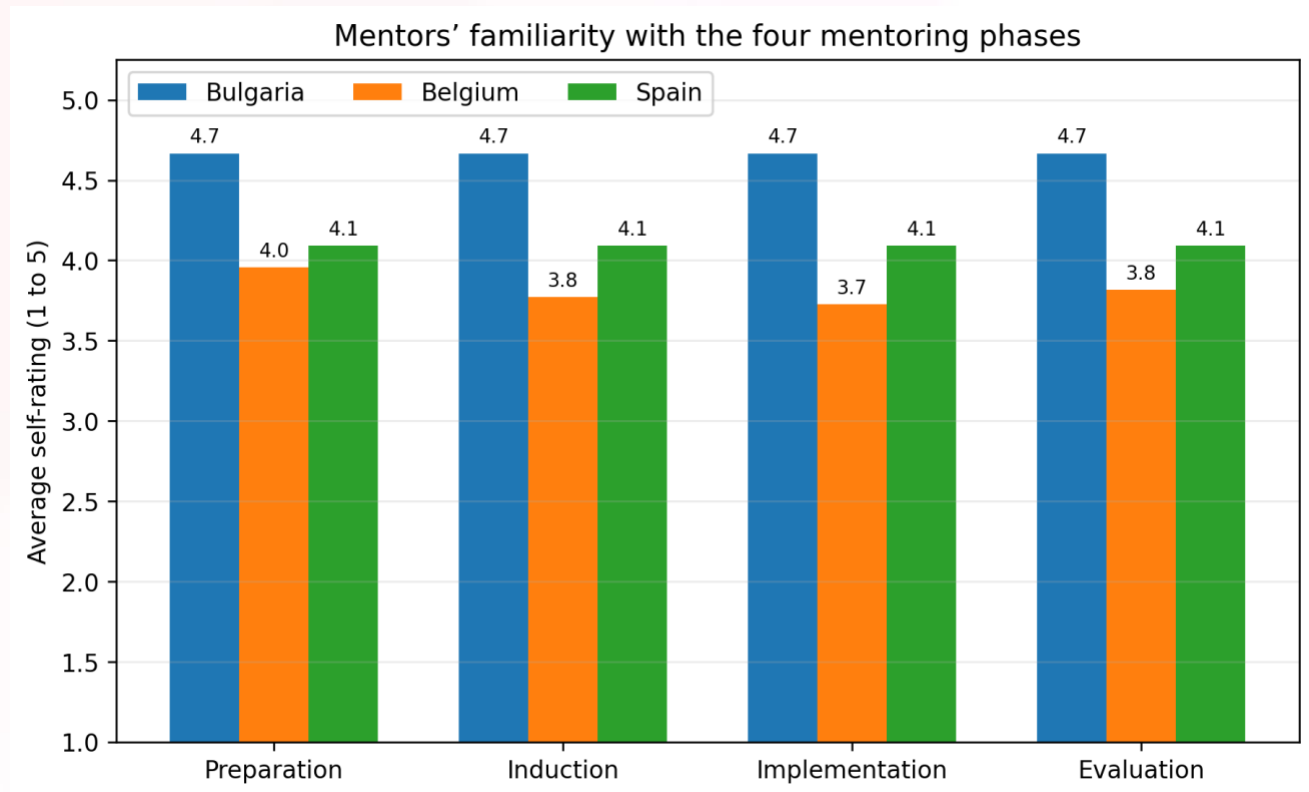
The strongest final results were found in Bulgaria, where the final average was 4.70. Belgium also showed a positive final average of 4.14, while Spain reached 4.09. All three countries reached results around or above 4.0, which is a good outcome for a pilot training with mixed participant profiles.

Figure 4. Final mentoring outcomes by country



The final survey also asked participants about the four phases of mentoring. These phases are important because they help mentors think about mentoring as a process rather than a set of separate conversations. The results show that participants were familiar with all four phases after the training. Bulgaria reached 4.67, Spain 4.09 and Belgium 3.82.

Figure 5. Familiarity with the four mentoring phases



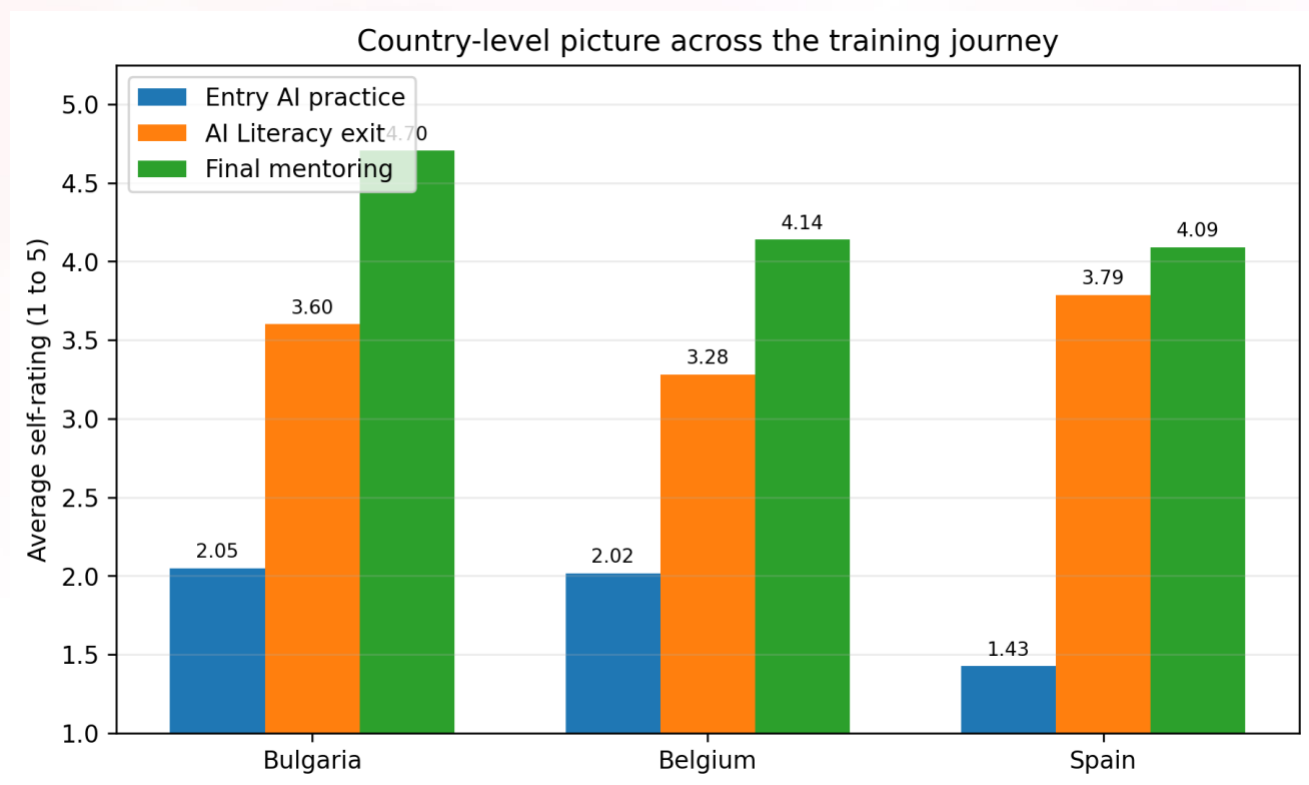
The findings suggest that **the second training period helped mentors connect AI tools with concrete moments in the mentoring cycle**. In practical terms, this means using AI to prepare onboarding plans, adapt explanations to a learner's needs, generate first drafts of feedback, design practice tasks or review progress. These are everyday tasks where AI can save time, but the mentor still needs to check, adapt and humanise the output.

Trainer guidance was also rated positively. This matters because AI training can easily become too technical. The final scores show that participants valued clear explanations, practical tasks and the chance to test ideas during the sessions.

8. COUNTRY-LEVEL FINDINGS

At country level, the findings show both shared patterns and context-specific differences across the training journey. In all three countries, participants moved from relatively limited or uneven AI practice towards stronger self-assessed readiness to use AI in mentoring. At the same time, the national results show different starting points, different professional group profiles and different emphases in how participants understood the practical, ethical and human dimensions of AI-supported mentoring.

Figure 6. Country-level picture across the training journey



Bulgaria

The Bulgarian results show a strong progression from a modest AI practice baseline to high final readiness. The entry AI practice mean was 2.05, while the AI Literacy exit mean reached 3.60. The final Mentoring exit results were particularly strong, with an all-item final average of 4.70.

This suggests that Bulgarian participants found the second training period highly relevant to their work.

The Bulgarian trainer reports support this reading. Trainers described high interest, active participation and practical engagement with AI tools. Several reports emphasised that the handbook helped participants place AI within the phases of mentoring and see how it can support preparation, feedback and adaptation of training materials.

One trainer described AI as a “digital collaborator”, especially for reducing routine workload and increasing creativity when preparing tasks and materials.

A key Bulgarian finding is that participants did not frame AI as replacing the mentor. They described AI as a tool that can free time for the most important part of mentoring: direct contact, trust and personal guidance.

Belgium

The Belgian sample was diverse, with participants from business, HR, higher education, coaching, industry, law, IT, learning and development, and social inclusion. The entry AI practice mean was 2.02 and the AI Literacy exit mean rose to 3.28. The final all-item mean was 4.14, which shows positive progress from early or uneven familiarity to a solid level of self-assessed readiness.

The Belgian trainer report noted that some participants entered with curiosity but also scepticism about the role of AI in mentoring and the possible reduction of the human role. Over the sessions, trainers observed more active engagement and a clearer view of AI as a support tool for ethical and practical mentoring.

The trainers also reported that the pilot strengthened their own facilitation practice, because teaching AI required them to explain ideas clearly and step by step.

Belgium therefore provides useful evidence on how the training works with a heterogeneous professional group. The results show that a mixed group can still build shared understanding when the content stays practical and linked to real mentoring tasks.

Spain

The Spanish results show a clear progression from a low AI practice baseline to a strong final level of readiness. The entry AI practice mean was 1.43, while the AI Literacy exit mean reached 3.79. The final Mentoring exit results were also positive, with an all-item final average of 4.09. This suggests that Spanish participants moved from limited initial experience with AI towards more confident and practical use after the two training periods.

The Spanish trainer report supports this observation. Trainers described a positive overall experience, with participants showing strong engagement and growing confidence in the use of AI tools.

The report notes that participants used or explored tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Microsoft Copilot and Perplexity. It also highlights that the training helped participants connect AI concepts with real mentoring situations, while paying attention to ethical, operational and security issues.

A key Spanish finding is that participants saw AI as a useful support for the mentor's work, especially in planning, communication, feedback and learning guidance. The results do not suggest that AI was understood as replacing the human role of the mentor. Rather, participants saw it as a practical tool that can make mentoring tasks easier and help mentors communicate more clearly with learners.

9. TRAINER FEEDBACK

Trainer feedback was used to strengthen the interpretation of the survey results. The trainer reports are important because they add context that numbers alone cannot show. They describe how participants reacted during the sessions, which exercises worked well, and how mentors understood the role of AI after trying it in practice.

Across the reports, **four** themes appear repeatedly.

1. First, the practical format mattered. Trainers in Bulgaria, Belgium and Spain all pointed to the value of hands-on tasks, concrete examples and guided experimentation. Participants were more engaged when AI was linked to tasks they already recognised: planning meetings, preparing learning materials, adapting explanations, giving feedback and supporting progress review.
2. Second, the training helped reduce uncertainty. In Belgium, trainers observed that participants moved from curiosity and some scepticism towards more active engagement. In Bulgaria, trainers reported that participants asked many questions and took part actively in practical tasks. In Spain, the trainer report described growing comfort with AI tools and more confidence in using them for mentoring-related activities.
3. Third, the reports confirm the importance of the human role. Participants and trainers did not present AI as a substitute for mentors. Instead, they saw AI as a support for preparation, organisation and first drafts. The mentor remains responsible for empathy, trust, ethical judgement, feedback and workplace relationships.
4. Fourth, the training had an effect on the trainers themselves. The Belgian report notes that the trainer team also learned through delivery. This matters for sustainability because trainers who have tested the material in real groups are better placed to adapt it to new participants and organisations.

Trainer feedback in one sentence

The training worked best when AI was treated as a practical assistant for mentors, not as a replacement for the mentor's judgement, relationship with the learner, or responsibility for safe guidance.

One Bulgarian report gave a concrete example of time saved: preparing a test or practical tasks could move from several hours to a first draft in about ten minutes, with the mentor then refining the result. This is an important type of impact because it shows how AI can reduce routine preparation time while keeping professional control in the hands of the mentor.

The feedback also shows that [the AI in Mentoring handbook](#) was useful beyond the training room. Trainers referred to it as a source of examples, exercises and guidance that helped participants apply the content after the sessions.

10. CONCLUSION

The evaluation confirms that the AI in Mentoring pilot training achieved a positive and meaningful result. The project set out to support the introduction of artificial intelligence into work-based learning mentoring in a practical, responsible and human-centred way. The evidence shows that this purpose was met. Across the three national pilots, mentors moved from different starting points towards stronger confidence, clearer understanding and more concrete ideas about how AI can support their role in workplace learning and dual education.

The quantitative results show clear progress. The overall AI practice mean increased by 1.56 points, from 1.96 at entry level to 3.52 after the AI Literacy training. This indicates a movement from limited or occasional familiarity with AI tools towards a more practical level of use and confidence. The final Mentoring exit results were also strong, with an overall final average of 4.25.

The impact is most visible at the level of increased capacity and readiness. Participants completed the training with a better understanding of possible AI uses, stronger confidence in applying AI-supported tools and greater awareness of ethical, practical and security-related questions. This is an important result for work-based learning, where company mentors often work under time pressure and need tools that are simple, safe and directly useful for their role.

The trainer feedback strengthens this conclusion. Across the national reports, trainers observed active engagement, useful peer exchange and growing confidence with AI tools. Participants moved from general curiosity, and in some cases uncertainty, towards more concrete use cases connected to preparation, induction, implementation and evaluation. The handbook was also seen as a useful reference point because it helped participants place AI within the main phases of mentoring and connect it with everyday tasks such as preparing materials, adapting explanations, planning activities and giving feedback.

The value of the project is not only technical. It is also pedagogical. The training helped mentors think about how AI can support the way they guide, explain, observe and respond to learners in real workplace settings. This is particularly relevant because many company mentors are experienced professionals, but not always trained educators. They know the work, but may need support in turning workplace tasks into learning opportunities. The project helped bridge this gap by offering practical ways to use AI when preparing learning tasks, explaining complex information, adapting support to different learning needs and reflecting on learner progress.

A central finding is that participants did not frame AI as a replacement for the mentor. The strongest message across the data is that AI can support preparation, communication, adaptation and reflection, while the mentor remains responsible for judgement, trust, encouragement and personal guidance. This balance is one of the most important achievements of the project. It introduces AI without reducing mentoring to a technical process.

The results from Bulgaria, Belgium and Spain also show that the training programme can work across different national and organisational contexts. The participant profiles, starting points and training settings were not identical, yet all three pilots produced positive results. This supports the transfer value of the training materials and their relevance for trainers, companies, VET providers and organisations involved in work-based learning.

The evidence remains pilot-stage evidence. The surveys measure participants' own assessment of progress, confidence and usefulness. They do not yet measure long-term changes in workplace practice, learner outcomes or company-level use of AI-supported mentoring. Even so, the available evidence is strong enough to show that the training programme was relevant, usable and positively received by both mentors and trainers.

On this basis, the project has created a sound foundation for wider use of AI-supported mentoring in vocational education and training. The training programme and handbook provide

practical resources that can help mentors use AI in a careful and useful way, while keeping the human relationship at the centre of work-based learning.

Annex: summary tables

Annex Table 1. Main survey means by country and survey point

Country	Stage	Clean sample	AI practice mean	WBL/ment or baseline	Mentoring phases	All numeric items
Bulgaria	Entry	38	2.05	4.05	n/a	2.55
Bulgaria	AI Literacy exit	20	3.60	n/a	n/a	4.01
Bulgaria	Mentoring exit	9	n/a	n/a	4.67	4.70
Belgium	Entry	21	2.02	2.24	n/a	2.06
Belgium	AI Literacy exit	19	3.28	n/a	n/a	3.66
Belgium	Mentoring exit	22	n/a	n/a	3.82	4.14
Spain	Entry	9	1.43	1.94	n/a	1.57
Spain	AI Literacy exit	11	3.79	n/a	n/a	3.85
Spain	Mentoring exit	11	n/a	n/a	4.09	4.09

Annex Table 2. AI practice gains by country and item

Bulgaria

Item	Entry	AI Literacy exit	Increase
Plan first meeting	2.18	3.30	1.12
Monitor progress	1.82	3.60	1.78
Prepare feedback	1.87	3.60	1.73
Decide when AI fits	2.05	3.70	1.65
Use scenarios	2.34	3.80	1.46
Discuss ethics/safety	2.03	3.60	1.57

Belgium

Item	Entry	AI Literacy exit	Increase
Plan first meeting	2.19	3.53	1.34
Monitor progress	1.76	2.95	1.19
Prepare feedback	1.95	3.16	1.21
Decide when AI fits	2.10	3.32	1.22
Use scenarios	2.14	3.11	0.96
Discuss ethics/safety	1.95	3.63	1.68

Spain

Item	Entry	AI Literacy exit	Increase
Plan first meeting	1.33	3.73	2.39
Monitor progress	1.22	3.73	2.51
Prepare feedback	1.67	3.73	2.06
Decide when AI fits	1.33	3.82	2.48

Use scenarios	1.33	3.82	2.48
Discuss ethics/safety	1.67	3.91	2.24

Annex Table 3. Final mentoring results by country

Metric	Bulgaria	Belgium	Spain
Four mentoring phases	4.67	3.82	4.09
All final items	4.70	4.14	4.09
Trainer guidance	4.89	4.64	4.09
Clear task explanation	4.67	4.18	4.09
Motivation to support learners	5.00	4.32	4.09
Ready to mentor with AI	4.78	4.32	4.09
Satisfaction	4.89	4.50	4.09