

**COMMON CHALLENGES, COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS:
MENTORING FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE**

The European Mentoring Summit (EMS2020), a biannual get together for mentoring networks, programmes and organisations, will be celebrated from the 5th to the 9th of October. For the first time, this international event will be held online with an innovative format led by the Spanish mentoring network, Coordinadora de Mentoría Social, and the European Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring. <https://mentoringsummit.eu/>

With world-renowned speakers such as Prof. **Patrick Dolan**, Director of the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, **Pippo Costella**, Director of Defence For Children International Italia, or the Director of the Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring at UMass Boston, Prof. **Jean Rhodes**, the EMS2020 brings together professionals, practitioners, researchers, mentors, government, corporate partners and civic leaders representing the mentoring movement in Europe and across the globe.

Mentoring is a tool that promotes the construction of relationships between mentors, who voluntarily provide support, and mentees, who are people at-risk. To date, according to an ongoing survey conducted by the European Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring and AFEV France, more than 200 organizations across Europe support more than 250.000 people who belong to collectives such as at-risk youth, migrants and refugees, or women in vulnerable situations.

Under the slogan *Common Challenges, Collective Solutions: Mentoring for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future*, the EMS2020 aims to bring together all these organizations coming from different parts of Europe and the globe to put together all the knowledge and resources available and build a stronger civil society that can support those people in need of emotional, professional and social support.

The 2020 edition comes at a key moment. In the hard times of social distancing across Europe, mentoring organizations have made great efforts to keep their programmes alive. The achievements of mentors with their mentees have been outstanding. Despite the requirements for physical separation, thousands of mentors from all over Europe stayed connected to their mentees with the help of online tools. All people in need should know that we as mentoring organizations stay behind them when they feel lonely, scared and isolated.

In this context, the international mentoring community has been connecting and adapting more than ever before by sharing knowledge through online meetings and training sessions. Aware of the difficulties that vulnerable communities are living during the pandemic, an international network is born, and it aims to position mentoring as an effective tool for social inclusion and personal development, both in Europe and across the globe. This advocacy campaign will be officially presented on Friday the 9th of October, during a debate where some European MPs will discuss the relevance of promoting mentoring within the European Union.

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