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DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUPERVISED PRACTICE OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

The Supervised Practice System Development Plan

The development of a complex new system, such as the supervised practice system examined in this book, requires a good plan, which should include the key points of the project¹², project execution plan, and possible risks. Before responding to the Call for Project Proposals within the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 programme, we intensively worked on the SUPER PSIHOLOG Project Execution Plan (PEP)¹³ for half a year, taking into consideration our needs, goals, previous experiences, and ideas. Our planning was based on the criteria required by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 (Norway Grants, 2014). The following points were defined (Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana, 2014):

1. The operator and the main holder of the Project. The holder is responsible for the coordination of activities of all collaborating partners and is the main engine of the project's implementation.
2. Project partners. We identified who would collaborate in the system development, what the partners' activities were, their references, and what their human resources, technical, and financial capacities were, in relation to the

12 When talking about the project, we have this SUPER PSIHOLOG project in mind; however, under this title a reader can understand the development of supervised practice in a wider sense, outside the framework of the program financed by public resources, that is, as a project organized by a professional association, organization, and similar.

13 The collaborators in the preparation of the project content and NIP were: Črt Bitenc, Urša Mars Bitenc, Vesna Mlinarič, Anja Podlesek and Vlasta Zabukovec.

implementation of the project. We determined the expected contribution of each partner, their role and responsibilities during the project implementation, their tasks, and what results and impacts of the project they would help achieve. The definition of the tasks and responsibilities of different partners facilitates the implementation of the project.

3. Members of the project team. Their role in the project, key knowledge and experiences, and their tasks and responsibilities were specified. An outline of the knowledge and experiences of individual partners/persons helps predict whether a partner/person will be capable of performing a task, and also aids in finding partners/persons who are most qualified for the performance of a particular activity.
4. Project justification. We conducted a comprehensive analysis of the situation and problems addressed by the project, and the challenges faced by it.
5. Project goals. We illuminated how the project would contribute to the resolution of problems. The goals were linked to the goals of different users, and incorporated into national and European strategies and directives, and linked to corresponding documents (guidelines, rules). The incorporation of the project into a broader framework was enabled by our emphasizing the importance of the project and providing arguments for the project goals, for instance, in conversations with competent authorities. For instance: *In the project we will develop and implement a comprehensive training programme for supervisors and train 25 supervisors. The system of the supervised practice will be introduced and the pilot supervision will be implemented. Each supervisor will supervise two novice psychologists for the period of one year. Supervisors will participate in regular supervision where they will analyse and reflect on the acquired supervision experiences. We will train five supervisors of supervisors. The project will follow the Resolution on the National Programme on Mental Health 2011–2016, the EU Guidelines for the Employment Policy, Regulations on EuroPsy, and the Code of Professional Ethics of Psychologists.*
6. Target groups. For instance: *A target group consists of psychologists, in particular novice psychologist, supervisors, and supervisors-of-supervisors.*
7. Project work plan. We defined how the project would try to achieve the specified goals, how it would surpass the existing practice, what its main activities would be, and what its key results would be. We identified different groups of activities (i.e. work packages) and defined individual activities. Each of these was described in detail. For instance: *The project encompasses the following activities: coordination and management of the project (tasks of the project leader, steering committee, accountants, partner administrative staff, the project supervisor), information and publicity, the training of supervisors (preparation and implementation of workshops), the implementation of the supervised practice (establishment of supervisory dyads, supervisory groups of supervisors, and web platform, the implementation of the supervised practice, and supervision*

- of supervision), and the evaluation of activities (evaluations of training, the supervised practice implementation, the supervision of supervision, and the entire project), and so on. The steering committee will meet once every half a year. Resources for the conduction of the meeting are set to the amount ... and so on.*
8. Planned outcomes of the project. We defined what exactly we wanted to accomplish with the project. The indicators of outcomes and their target values were determined for each project activity. For instance: *Prepared curriculum for the training of supervisors, individual presentations, teaching materials. The curricula for each part of the programme (3) will be posted on the project website. Attendance of participants in workshops will be recorded (25 supervisors present, the minimum attendance of 80%). Submitted documents as evidence of fulfilled requirements (each supervisor submits two reports).*
 9. Project financial plan. We determined the resources needed for the implementation of each activity.
 10. Project roadmap. We determined the duration of each activity, i.e. from when it started to when it finished.
 11. The sustainability of project results and its financial and institutional aspects. We anticipated who would implement the developed system after the end of the project and what resources they would utilize. Long term impacts on the target group were considered, as well as further cooperation among the partners. For instance: *The Slovenian Psychologists' Association will care for the implementation of the supervised practice after the project has been concluded. Module 3 workshops will be offered to psychologists by the Slovenian Psychologists' Association within the continuing professional development activities, and to other professionals in the field of mental health; workshop fees will be paid by the participants. Supervisors and supervisors of supervisors will be allowed to use project forms, documents, guidelines for the implementation of the supervised practice and the supervision of supervision, and web platform for carrying out and monitoring the supervised practice. Supervisors will be awarded a supervision qualification certificate.*
 12. The information and publicity plan. Aims, target groups of communication activities, communication strategies, activities for spreading information and publicity, and evaluation of the activities were defined. For instance: *The target groups for information and publicity activities are psychologists, novice psychologist, students of psychology, the staff at departments of psychology, employers of psychologists, the wider public (potential users of psychological services), and the competent authorities (ministries). Strategies for communication include: the use of the project website, leaflets, e-news, lectures at departments of psychology, breakfasts with journalists, and special conferences about the project. Evaluation of informative activities will be based on the following: number of disseminated leaflets, website visitations, contacts with journalists, and conference papers.*

13. Project implementation risks. We defined the risks in the implementation of the project which could hinder the performance of project activities, the achievement of goals, and the overall results of the project (e.g. difficulties in obtaining the needed resources, including a lack of human resources). Even with a good plan it is not possible to accurately predict the course of a project, as unforeseen obstacles can occur and thus the plan has to be adjusted or even changed significantly at certain points. Therefore, it is good to consider certain risks in advance, in order to assess what measures to take to avoid these, or minimize them. For instance: *A risk in the training of supervisors is the intensity of the training programme, and thus its implementation was spaced out equally through the entire period of the project. A risk in conducting supervisory meetings is a lack of resources for travel expenses and for the payment of supervisors. Supervision meetings can thus occasionally be carried out by means of video conferencing.*

Obstacles to the Implementation of the Supervised Practice

When developing a system of supervised practice we must be aware of the current situation. The main limitation is caused by legal decisions which define who can independently practice psychology in the focal state. If there is no law specifying that supervised practice is a prerequisite for independent performance of psychological services, it is virtually impossible to ensure that all novice psychologists will participate in the supervised practice. The inclusion of supervised practice into a system where the profession is not formally regulated can be difficult, in particular if certain areas of psychology have already been regulated and there no need is seen for a change to the system, and other areas have not been regulated and there is no culture of participating in supervision.

An important limitation in the implementation of supervision is the time which has to be scheduled for supervision by the supervisor and psychologist, i.e. time needed for the supervision sessions and preparation for them. Moreover, time must also be devoted to the supervision of supervision. If supervision is not regulated by the system and there is no legal provision stating that part of the work time should be set aside for supervision, then this has to be performed outside of the usual work hours. The supervisee and supervisor, as well as the other participants (supervisors of supervisors, the supervised practice administrator, training facilitators, etc.) need to invest extra time and resources into the implementation of the supervised practice. In such cases the motivation for long-term collaboration can be weak.

Obstacles to the implementation of supervision sessions can be of a financial nature, a lack of space for the implementation of supervision sessions and for the training of supervisors (and supervisors of supervisors), a lack of human and other resources (e.g. qualified supervisors and supervisors of supervisors who are experts in a

particular psychological domain, competent trainers, equipment for the implementation of training, equipment for quality performance of supervision sessions, such as instruments for recording of psychological work), lack of time on behalf of the participants, and inconvenient locations of the supervisor or supervisee.

Another obstacle has recently emerged in the implementation of supervised practice, as there has been a lack of psychologist positions on the labour market and thus employment is no longer stable or assured in this profession. Changes in work positions are therefore very frequent, and novice psychologists often apply for part-time employment or do casual jobs. Changes in the area of employment among early career psychologists can be an obstacle to one-year inclusion in supervised practice with a supervisor who is qualified for supervision in a particular field of work.

Another important obstacle may be insufficient devotion to the profession, and the system of supervised practice needs to be cared for in this regard. It is essential that psychologists do not have any reservations towards the system administrators, their management of financial resources, of their leadership strategies.

A further obstacle can be caused by a lack of interest among the educational institutions which provide psychology study programmes if they do not offer support to the system, give timely information to students, develop their awareness of the importance of the supervised practice, prepare them for internships, and so on.

Moreover, other obstacles to accepting supervised practice as part of psychologist training are an insufficient knowledge of the focal society and work organizations (leadership, co-workers, and non-psychologist mentors in traineeship) with regard to psychological services, importance of supervised practice, psychologists' need for supervision, lack of understanding about the needs of psychologists who want to participate in supervision, or those who want to be trained as supervisors and supervisors of supervisors, lack of interest and support for training in the workplace, fear of work organization of disclosing business information to external professionals, feeling of organizations of being controlled by people who do not have one's interests at heart, and feeling of being unprotected.

Importance of Information and Publicity with regard to the Supervised Practice

Good publicity and information about the supervised practice and its importance are essential for the establishment of the related system. If we want novice psychologists to participate in supervision, then supervised practice needs to be a requirement or we need to motivate these individuals to take part in it. If the supervised practice is required, e.g. to obtain a license for practicing psychology, and it is not possible to offer such services in the state without it, then psychologists who want to practice psychology independently will register for it without the system

administrator needing to make any additional effort. The situation is different if psychological practice in the state is not regulated and participation in supervision is not required to start work, as is the case in Slovenia for the majority of fields of psychological practice. Inclusion in supervised practice in the first year of their careers can be an additional workload for young psychologists if the supervision is not regulated, in particular when they do not have experience of supervision, or at least do not have positive experiences, and have to do it in their spare time and pay for it. Expenses for inclusion into supervised practice can be too high for novice psychologists to bear, and thus they will not be able to participate in supervision even if they are aware of its importance.

Until a culture of inclusion into supervised practice is established, special attention must be paid to informing psychologists (students, beginners, supervisors, and other psychologists) and their employers, as well as the users of psychological services, about the importance of supervision. Various stakeholders should feel the need to ensure and maintain high quality psychological services, and so understand the importance of participating in supervision. They have to be willing to support the supervised practice of the novice psychologists, the activities of the supervisory dyad, groups of supervisors, and so on. The positive aspects of inclusion into the supervised practice must outweigh possible negative points, such as financial consequences, time and energy devoted to supervision, and so on.

How can we promote supervised practice? At the closing conference, we discussed with the participants of the SUPER PSIHOLOG project how to establish a sustainable system of the supervised practice in Slovenia, and, among other things, how to promote supervision practice among (future) psychologists and their employers. A summary of findings, as set out below, points to what needs to be addressed by any such promotion efforts.

The system of supervised practice enables a higher quality of psychological services and greater protection of the users of these. Supervised practice represents the systematic training of psychologists, and it impacts the professional development of psychologists as it enhances the building up of the required competences. It thus makes it easier for the psychologists to transfer from education into the workplace. The supervisees gain an opportunity to properly apply the knowledge acquired in the supervised practice, through feedback received from more experienced colleagues, helping in the resolution of ethical dilemmas. With supervised practice the psychologists develop awareness of the need for further professional growth, and build their network of colleagues. They can thus shape their psychological practice in contact with colleagues even if they do not work in a team of psychologists and may even be the only psychologist in their work organizations. Supervised practice supports collaborations and connections among

psychologists, and can aid when transferring between psychological domains. The psychologists who take part in supervision feel more competent, are highly motivated with regard to their work (the feeling of greater competence leads to greater assurance and feelings of safety), and have a stronger professional identity.

Participation in supervision during the supervised practice is beneficial for both supervisees and supervisors. The psychologists who take part are in contact with professional knowledge, they apply and upgrade it, and are in contact with new ideas in the field of practice. Novices then transfer their knowledge to practice, while supervisors gain new knowledge from supervisees, update and upgrade their expertise. This is beneficial for the institutions where supervisors are employed.

The system of supervised practice includes the offer of quality education for novices, supervisors, and supervisors of supervisors. It sets educational standards for psychologists after they have concluded their academic studies. It is thus a form of lifelong learning. Initially it means the acquisition of new information from experienced colleagues, and later it enables further professional development from the role of a novice to that of a supervisor, and then to a supervisor of supervisors. Institutions gain an opportunity to offer quality mentoring and supervision with the training of psychologists, and thus the better development of new human resources.

The system of supervised practice enhances networking and connections among the various domains within psychology. It presents a method of self-regulation of profession, and thus supports higher recognition of the profession.

Various parties should be informed about the importance of the supervised practice and its implementation: those employed at departments of psychology, psychology students, novice psychologists, those who independently perform psychological services, employers of psychologists, the competent authorities and wider public. The users of psychological services, the general public, and employers in particular have to be aware of and understand the distinctions between novice and experienced psychologists, i.e. differences in their competences and responsibilities. They need to understand that supervision can contribute to enhancing the quality of psychological services, as in this way they will support the inclusion of novice psychologists in supervision, the training of supervisors, and the offering of assistance to colleagues when needed.

In the SUPER PSIHOLOG project special attention was paid to informing both the professional and wider public about the *EuroPsy* Certificate and about the benefits of the supervised practice of psychologists. A comprehensive graphic design system was created for the project. Recognition of the project content was also achieved with the

project acronym, SUPER PSIHOLOG, which the professional public started to associate with the supervised practice system. The central communication strategy was the use of the project website, which in future will also support the system of the supervised practice. Links to the website were added to the websites of project partners and to Slovenian *EuroPsy* website. The contents on the website were in the Slovenian language, although key information and outcomes were also presented in English.

The project and supervised practice were presented to psychology students and to staff at departments of psychology, who are supposed to encourage students to join the supervised practice in the future. The supervised practice and project were introduced to the competent authorities at meetings, and information was also spread using leaflets on the *EuroPsy* Certificate and project, formal correspondence, and personal communication. The professional and wider public were also informed about the project's activities and results by means of electronic news, the Facebook page of the Slovenian Psychologists' Association, and presentations at national professional and scientific meetings and conferences.

Three public events were organized: (i) a breakfast with journalists, where project goals were presented and the wider public was informed about the implementation of the project and the need for the regulation of the profession; (ii) an interim conference, where a professional audience was presented with details of the project's activities, while discussions on the traineeship and mentoring/supervision of psychologists in Slovenia were also carried out; and (iii) the closing conference of the project, where its results and the guidelines for further implementation of the supervised practice in Slovenia were presented.

Finally, the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Supervised Practice of Psychologists in Slovenia were prepared, and a booklet intended for psychologists giving details of the supervised practice was created, as well as one for their employers.

The Administrator of the Supervised Practice

The tasks of the administrator of the supervised practice (hereafter: the system administrator) include expanding the network of supervisors, caring for the training of supervisors and their supervision, connecting the supervisors and novice psychologists, i.e. forming supervisory dyads, caring for supervision agreements, monitoring the implementation of the supervised practice, assisting and advising supervisory dyads in the resolution of possible complications in the implementation of the supervised practice, taking action in cases when the implementation of the supervised practice is inadequate, maintaining and upgrading the web platform where the information on the supervised practice can be accessed, updating the forms of the supervised practice, procedures of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the supervised practice, in accordance with the results of project evaluations.

We planned that during the project and after it had been concluded the Slovenian Psychologists' Association would be responsible for the system of the supervised practice. The Slovenian Psychologists' Association is not the only psychological association in Slovenia, as there is also the Chamber of Clinical Psychologists of Slovenia. Choosing the Slovenian Psychologists' Association as the system administrator was a logical consequence of many factors. This Association is a member of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA), provides administrative support to the Slovenian *EuroPsy* National Awarding Committee, works to establish the *EuroPsy* standards in Slovenia, and was previously engaged in establishing conditions for awarding the *EuroPsy* certificate. The Association created the draft of the Psychological Practice Act which proposes one-year of supervised practice as a requirement for the acquisition of a basic license to perform psychological services in Slovenia. It has a function of connecting all psychologists in Slovenia, including those from different fields of practice, caring for the continuing professional development of psychologists. Administering and managing the system of supervised practice was thus logically included among the responsibilities of the Slovenian Psychologists' Association.

While the Association has resources for the financial and administrative support of the supervised practice, these are limited, and providing a long-term solution to this issue was one of key tasks of the SUPER PSIHOLOG project.

Another key task of the project was to ensure the fundamental conditions for the beginning of supervised practice, its implementation, monitoring and assessment after it had been concluded (i.e., preparing what was needed for the system administrator to start work with an immediate implementation of the next stage after the conclusion of the project). As part of the project various methods of formalization of the supervised practice and its support were developed, including the following products and services:

1. The Supervision Agreement.
2. Numerous instruments for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the supervised practice for both supervisors and supervisees. These assist the supervisory dyads in all steps of the supervision process.
3. Website and web platform. The purpose of the website was to collect all information regarding the SUPER PSIHOLOG project and the supervised practice in one place, including the materials for the training of supervisors and instruments for supervision. The web platform was also intended to enable (and make it easier) for the supervisory dyads to document and monitor the supervised practice and supervision process, and allow communication between the supervisee and supervisor outside of the supervision sessions, communication between the supervisory dyad and administrator of the supervised practice system, and communication between different supervisory dyads.

Forming of Supervisory Dyads

Applications for the positions of supervisors and supervisees were collected through separate public tenders and calls for collaboration.

In the public tender for 25 supervisors we invited psychologists with at least three years of work experience (independent psychological practice) in any field of the psychology. Priority was given to the candidates who had a *EuroPsy* Certificate and experience of mentoring of students in an internship.

In the tender it was announced that the project required attendance and active participation in three modules for the training of supervisors for a total of 160 hours, and in six meetings of supervisory groups of supervisors, i.e. about once every two months. The applicants were required to accept one psychology student for a one-month internship in their work organization. They had to be willing to guide the one-year supervised practice of two novice psychologists from the field of their professional practice, for four hours per month for each beginner. The applicants were expected to participate in the evaluation of the programmes for the training of supervisors (sharing ideas and suggestions for improvement), and in the development of a sustainable system for the supervised practice of psychologists.

The potential supervisors' applications contained a curriculum vitae, evidence of work experience and experience of supervision, and a letter explaining their motivation. They also sent a letter of confirmation in which a responsible person at the work organization where they were employed confirmed that the organization would accept a psychology student for a one-month internship within the framework of the training of the supervisor.

A sufficient number of supervisors responded to this public tender process, and successful applicants signed a contract for 10% employment for the period of 13 months while the project was being implemented. The supervisors received a small payment for their participation in the project, and travel expenses for attendance at supervision and supervision-of-supervision sessions were also reimbursed.

With regard to the supervisees, in the public tender we invited 25 psychology students in their final semester or additional (graduation) year who were interested in taking part in the one-month internship under supervision. In the tender it was announced that students' responsibilities would include keeping regular documentation on the internship, as well as attendance at two trainings sessions of the supervisors, implementation of activities important for the supervisors' training (e.g. participating in negotiations, specifying competences, regular reflective practice), preparation of self-assessments of their competences, giving feedback to the supervisors regarding their guidance of the internship, the supervisors' competences, and an evaluation of the internship (made together with the supervisors). In order to motivate students to apply, we wrote in the tender that one advantage of taking part in an internship under

supervision of a psychologist who was being trained for the supervisor was greater systematic development of their competences, and that the experiences gained in this kind of internship had previously proved to be very positive. We also invited the students to attend presentations about the project at different departments of psychology.

A sufficient number of students in the first and second phases of their psychology and biopsychology studies responded to the public tender. Since several psychology study programmes also schedule internships in the middle of the students' studies, and not only towards the end, it was decided to also include students in earlier semesters in the project, and not only those in their final semesters.

In their applications the students specified the preferred fields of psychology where they would like to perform an internship. They also specified the locations in Slovenia where it was convenient for them to do an internship, as if they lived too far to make daily visits to the work organization where the supervisor was employed, then this would soon present problems. On the basis of applications and available supervisors the project coordinator prepared a recommended list of supervisory dyads, and shared this with the students at a joint meeting. The dyads were formed based on matching the supervisors' fields of work and the students' preferred domains. Due to greater interest in certain fields of psychology (in particular clinical psychology), and the lack of supervisors in those fields, a few applicants withdrew because they did not want to do an internship in another field. Some supervisors were thus left without students due to the relative remoteness of their work organizations. However, these supervisors eventually got students for the internships later in the project after additional calls for students, and some of the supervisors made agreements with the students by themselves.

In the public tender for novice psychologists we invited 50 young psychologists. We emphasized that one advantage of performing psychological services under the supervision given by a qualified supervisor was a more effective and less stressful entrance into psychological practice, due to the more systematic development of a novice practitioner, and that the support provided by an experienced psychologist could strengthen positive feelings towards the profession and thus support the mental health of the supervisee (e.g., burnout would be less likely). It was emphasized that any of the novice psychologists who received a positive assessment of their competences by their supervisors at the end of the supervised practice could use this to obtain the *EuroPsy* Certificate. The fundamental requirements for participation in the project for supervisees or novice psychologists were: (i) A university degree in psychology (having completed a four-year pre-Bologna university degree psychology study programme, or a second-cycle Bologna master's degree psychology programme). (ii) Employment (preferably full-time) for performing psychological services in any field of psychological practice or other possibilities for the regular implementation of psychological services (e.g. part-time employment through the whole period of the project; possibility of volunteer traineeship; regular participation in volunteer activities where an individual performs the work of a psychologist,

and similar). The application thus had to include a detailed description of the possibilities for performing psychological services. (iii) Zero to three years of work experiences in performing psychological services.

The tender included a description of the following project-related responsibilities of the novice psychologists: (i) Conscientious implementation of one-year supervised practice in the psychologist's primary work organization and in agreement with the supervisor. (ii) Regular participation in supervision guided by the supervisor, in the scope of four hours per month (two hours every two weeks, in agreement with the supervisor). (iii) Assisting the supervisor in implementing his/her responsibilities within the framework of the training of supervisors (e.g. reflection on the supervisory relationship, giving feedback about supervision, documentation of the supervised practice). The candidates' applications included a curriculum vitae with details of work experiences and the work organization or where they perform psychological services (i.e., a description of the work position and related services). They also included a letter explaining their motivation for wanting to join the project with their application.

This public tender was responded to by fewer novices than anticipated. Therefore, although we intended to close the public tender two months after the beginning of the project, we had to prolong it and so the tender remained open during the entire project.

After the closure of the first public tender (after the tender had been open for two months) we connected the supervisors and novice psychologists based on their curriculum vitae and letters of motivation. If this was not feasible we contacted the novice and tried to find him/her a supervisor in the related field of practice. If this was not possible we informed the novice that he/she was on a waiting list, and then told him/her if a vacant position appeared. Novices who joined later in the project were connected with available supervisors or with those who were willing to accept more than two people in the supervisory relationship, or they were added to the waiting list.

There were several novices who expressed a desire to join a supervisory relationship, but practiced only occasionally. Several others terminated their employment relationships soon after their applications. We had to end the collaborations in these instances because they were not able to work on real cases in their supervision. A few supervisory dyads experienced difficulties when a novice changed the field of psychological service. If a dyad's relationship lasted for a longer period of time – for instance, if they were already in the second half of a one-year supervised practice – the dyad continued the supervisory relationship even though this could be less than optimal due to incongruence of their fields of practice. Because there were not enough novice psychologists who met the requirements for inclusion into a one-year supervised practice, we enabled few supervisors to lead a prolonged two- to three-month internship with pre-graduates of the psychology

master's degree, so that they could gain some experience in the longer supervision of a young psychologist and apply the knowledge about mentoring and supervision which they acquired during the training.

Supervision Agreement

The conclusion of an agreement or contract is very important for the supervision and supervisory relationship (Duckert & Kyte, 2015b; Falender & Shafranske, 2004). It is an important part of the process because it provides a framework for the work of the supervisor and supervisee, defines their responsibilities and rights, and specifies goals and the context of their performance. The supervision agreement which was used in the course of the project by the supervisory dyads (the supervisor and novice psychologist) was developed in collaboration with project partners. We developed the agreement based on the one used by our Norwegian colleagues in the implementation of the supervision of clinical psychology specialists.

The agreement was translated with the help of Slovenian project partners, and adapted and supplemented when needed. We decided to divide the agreement into two parts – general and specific. The general part, which is the same for all the supervisory dyads, defined the purpose of the supervised practice, goals and purpose of supervision, and the responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisee. General rules for the implementation of the supervised practice were defined (complying with legislation and ethical principles, dual relationship, evaluation of work, and specifications of collaboration with the administrator of the agreement). The specific part of the agreement was divided into several sections which are completed by both the supervisor and supervisee, and this part differed for each supervisory dyad. In the specific part of the agreement the supervisory dyad specified their expectations, the context and contents of supervision (how and when the specification of goals would be carried out, development of competences, development of the supervisory relationship, documentation of the supervised practice, planning work after the supervised practice had been concluded, etc.), delivering the documentation and materials to the supervision sessions, formal managing of supervision (frequency and duration of supervision, rules for cancelation or change of sessions, other rules, how the evaluation of the supervisee would be performed), prevention of obstacles which can occur during the supervision process, the method of evaluation, and how to amend the agreement.

The supervisory dyads concluded the agreement and completed the form in the first month of their collaboration. The supervisor and supervisee printed and signed three copies of the general part of the agreement. Each of them kept one copy of the agreement, and the third was sent to the Slovenian Psychologists' Association, which operated as the administrator of the agreements. Two copies of the specific part of the agreement were printed and signed, then kept until the conclusion of the

supervised practice and six months after the conclusion of supervision. During the supervised practice the two parties checked the agreement and, if needed, revised it with mutual consent.

The supervision agreement form was used by all supervisory dyads (the supervisor and novice psychologist, or the supervisor and the student on the prolonged internship). Negotiations for the specific part of the agreement were carried out for approximately one month for the majority of the supervisory dyads (until the third session). After that they sent the signed general part of the agreement to the system administrator. In cases when there was a termination of the agreement (e.g., due to maternity leave or long-term sick leave), the supervisory dyad sent a written explanation to the administrator.

The Instruments for Monitoring the Development of the Supervisory Relationship

The supervisors and supervisees were given various instruments created in the project to better prepare for and implement the supervised practice. These included a check list for assessing readiness for the supervisory relationship, and questions for directing the conversation between the supervisor and supervisee regarding their personal paths and experiences. The instruments for the supervised practice planning and negotiating on supervision provided guidance for the supervisor and the supervisee regarding the topics they had to discuss prior to the outset of the supervised practice. They were thus able to check whether or not the supervisee's development was progressing in the planned direction, using the instruments for evaluating and assessing supervision sessions which were developed in collaboration with the Norwegian project partners, those for reflection and evaluation of the supervised practice and the development of the supervisory relationship, and those for bringing the relationship to a close. Most of these instruments were prepared in two parallel versions, one for the supervisee and one for the supervisor, so that they could concurrently use them in different steps of the supervision process. The supervisory dyads were encouraged to use the instruments together (e.g. to jointly assess supervision sessions and discuss assessment values, or reflect on and evaluate the supervised practice). If both the supervisor and the supervisee jointly answer the questions and share their impressions and feelings, they can better reflect on individual phases of the supervision process. Mutual evaluation of the supervised practice is a suitable task for bringing the relationship and supervision process to a sense of closure.

The instruments applied in the project are described in Table 8.

Table 8. *Instruments for the implementation of the supervised practice*

Instruments for supervisors	Instruments for supervisees	Description
Personal path	Personal path	An instrument to prepare for the supervision. The supervisor's version contains an outline of the development of the supervision and his/her experiences in supervision. This helps the supervisor become aware of events which influenced the development of his/her practices in this context. The supervisee's version contains an outline of the professional development and experiences of the supervisee, a subjective assessment of competency, and details of any challenges met on his/her professional path.
	Introductory conversation with the supervisor	An instrument to prepare for the supervision with material that supports the introductory conversation with the supervisor. This includes a list of activities and questions for building rapport, identification of needs, the goals of supervision, personal attitudes towards supervision, and learning styles.
Questions for internship planning	Questions for internship planning	An instrument for negotiations. It includes a list of questions which can help plan various aspects of the supervision process and need to be considered before the supervised practice begins. These are questions with regard to expectations for the supervised practice, the psychologists' tasks in the focal work organization, formal regulation of the practice, time planning and organization of internship and supervision, the supervisory relationship, the supervised practice goals, methods of documentation, evaluation of practice, and interpersonal communication. The questions can be helpful in preparing for the supervision agreement.
Preparation for supervision – check list		An instrument for the phases of preparation and negotiation. The supervisor checks whether they (the supervisor and supervisee) have expressed clear expectations and motivations, and if the basic requirements for supervision have been fulfilled. The supervisor evaluates whether the supervisee is well prepared to enter the supervisory relationship.
Supervision agreement	Supervision agreement	An instrument for the phase of concluding negotiations. It is a formal document which serves as a foundation for confirmation of the supervised practice by the system administrator. It is created by the supervisor and the supervisee at the beginning of the supervisory relationship and can be updated if necessary. It consists of general and specific parts.
Negotiations – check-list	Negotiations – check-list	An instrument for the conclusion of the negotiations, and for checking whether or not these have covered all the important aspects of supervision. This includes a list of criteria of successful negotiations and questions for evaluating the fulfilment of the criteria.

Instruments for supervisors	Instruments for supervisees	Description
	Scale for evaluating the supervision session	An instrument for evaluating individual supervision sessions. The supervisee can use this after each session or occasionally. The instrument enables monitoring of the effectiveness of an individual session with regard to the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee, the goals and topic of the session, the methods used, and a general impression of it. Multiple use of this instrument enables monitoring of the development of the supervisory relationship and the supervisor's related competences.
Enabling the supervisee's development – check-list	Enabling the supervisee's development – check-list	An instrument for evaluating the progress of the supervised practice. This consists of a list of criteria for evaluating how effective the supervisor is in enabling the supervisee's development, and is used at the end of the developmental phase.
The supervisor's assessment of the supervisee competences		An instrument for documenting the supervisee's competences and the level of their development. This is intended for assessing the supervisee's competences after a shorter period of supervised practice (e.g. after an internship). The supervisor identifies the competences the supervisee has been developing, describes their expression, assesses them by means of a four-level scale (see Table 3) with an additional five sub-levels, and recommends what can be done to improve them. The instrument can also be used when planning the development of the supervisee's competences.
<i>EuroPsy</i> form C – Competence assessment	<i>EuroPsy</i> form C – Competence assessment	An official form which needs to be submitted by the supervisee after the conclusion of the supervised practice if he/she wants to obtain the <i>EuroPsy</i> Certificate. The form (in Slovene) can be accessed at the webpage www.europsy.si . This is an instrument for a detailed assessment of the supervisee's competences. It provides spaces for descriptions of how each of the 20 primary competences and nine enabling competences, as defined in <i>EuroPsy</i> competence model, are expressed by the supervisor. The evaluator assesses the development of a particular competence by means of a four-level scale (see Table 3). The form containing the descriptions of the expression of each competence is completed by the supervisee, who can self-assess; the supervisor then examines this assessment and confirms it with his/her signature. The assessment of the supervisee's competences can be also done by the supervisor. The instrument is used at the end of the supervised practice, and can be useful for interim evaluation, and monitoring of the supervisee's development of competences.
<i>EuroPsy</i> form B – Assessment of the supervised practice		An official form which needs to be submitted by the supervisee after the conclusion of the supervised practice if he/she wants to obtain a <i>EuroPsy</i> Certificate. The form (in Slovene) can be accessed at the webpage www.europsy.si . In this the supervisor specifies the field of psychological practice in which the supervisee demonstrated that he/she has developed seven clusters of competences, and whether the supervisee meets the criteria for practicing psychology independently. The supervisor completes and signs the form at the end of the supervised practice. <i>EuroPsy</i> form C, on which individual competences are accurately assessed, is attached to this form.

Instruments for supervisors	Instruments for supervisees	Description
The supervisor's competences	The supervisor's competences	An instrument for the supervisor's self-assessment of their supervisory competences. The instrument helps the supervisor become aware of his/her competences and the level of their development. It includes the list of various competences (traits, qualities) of the supervisor, in the areas of general competences, guiding the supervised practice, and the supervisory relationship. The instrument has two versions. The shorter one consists of a six-point scale (1 – not true, 6 – completely true). The longer one consists of the scale and includes additional space for qualitative descriptions of the supervisor's comprehension of individual competences. The supervisee's version resembles the shorter version, and the category "cannot be answered" is added. The instrument can be used upon the conclusion of the supervisory relationship, and for interim evaluation and monitoring of the development of supervisory competences.
	Assessment of the supervisor	An instrument for the supervisee's assessment of the supervisor's supervisory competences. This includes a list of various competences (traits, qualities) of the supervisor. The supervisee assesses the supervisor by means of a six-point scale (1 – not true, 6 – completely true). The instrument can be used upon the conclusion of the supervisory relationship, and for interim evaluation and monitoring of the development of the supervisor's competences.
	Model of structured reflection of the supervised practice	This model includes questions which help structure reflection on the supervised practice with regard to its course, contents, methods, explication of the learning process, and communication. The instrument can be used upon the conclusion of the internship.
Questions for the reflection and evaluation of the supervised practice	Questions for the reflection and evaluation of the supervised practice	This includes questions regarding different aspects of the supervised practice which are used by the supervisor and supervisee to reflect on and evaluate the practice. The questions guide both parties towards thinking of the practice and its progress from beginning to end. They relate to the criteria of successful practice, its requirements (support by the employer, co-workers, financial management), preparation for and planning of the supervised practice, its course and outcomes, general assessment of the supervised practice, and plans for further development in the area of supervision. The instrument is used upon the conclusion of the supervised practice, and for interim evaluation.
Concluding – check-list		A list of criteria for a successful closing of the supervisory relationship. It is used at the end of the supervisory relationship.

In the implementation of the supervised practice, which is formally regulated and confirmed by the system administrator after conclusion, the following submissions are obligatory: the submission of the Supervision Agreement at the beginning of the supervised practice, and submission of the forms for the evaluation of the supervisee's competences at the end of the supervised practice (to obtain the *EuroPsy* Certificate the supervisee must submit *EuroPsy* forms B and C). The utilization of other instruments, as described in Table 8, is not obligatory for the implementation of the supervised practice, although it is recommended. The supervisory dyad does not need to use all the instruments, and they can just select those which can be beneficial to the development of the supervisory relationship and monitoring of the supervised practice. However, it is highly recommended that the supervisor and supervisee reflect on and evaluate the supervised practice in writing, not only orally, as in this way they increase their awareness of experiencing and understanding the supervision process, the development of competences, and so on.

Development of the Web Platform

In cases when supervision is carried out when the supervisees are not employed in the same work organization as the supervisors, it is very important that the supervisees diligently record their activities. Although they meet their supervisors regularly (e.g. for two hours every two weeks), this time is rather limited. It is thus essential that the supervisor receives a good outline of the supervisee's activities. Effective documentation of these will enable the supervisor to monitor the development of competences of the supervisee more easily, and at the end provide an assessment of the supervisee's competences.

As part of the project a web platform was created for the purpose of connecting the supervisory dyads, as well as various stakeholders (supervisors, supervisees, supervisors of supervisors, and project team). The platform was accessible to registered users of the project's website.

Each supervisory dyad had their own private forum, where they wrote down their reflections on the supervision sessions, exchanged materials, made appointments for meetings, and so on. General forums (for connecting various groups) were accessible to all users of the platform, or all the members of a particular group.

In order to monitor whether the supervision sessions are regular and in accord with the supervision agreement, the system administrator should be able to access some of the related documentation on the course of the supervision sessions. For example, the administrator must be able to monitor at least the dates of sequential sessions, but ideally he/she will also be able to gain insights into key topics of the sessions. In the application for the SUPER PSYHOLOG project we planned to monitor the implementation of the supervised practice using the records hosted on the platform,

and use the information thus obtained to inform the holder of the programme, the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, about the effectiveness of the supervised practice. Because of the need to meet this pledge, certain members of the project team had access into private forums, and were able to take records of the dates and number of sessions between the supervisor and the supervisee. However, it should be noted that the participants were informed about this at the beginning of the project.

Documentation of Supervision Sessions

The supervision sessions were documented by the supervisory dyads by means of regular notes that were put on the online platform. These consisted of the sequential number of a session, date and (optionally) the main topic of a session. The text contained a reflection on the session, which included a more details of its content and any arrangements that were put in place until the next session. Some dyads decided to enter only brief session reports on this platform, and to exchange their reflections via e-mail. The majority of supervisory dyads also kept their own private evidence, for instance in the form of tables, where they recorded the content of the sessions and competences which the supervisee had been developing. Others wrote their reflections on pieces of paper and kept them for personal reference.

Support for Supervisory Dyads

Support for the supervisory dyads was offered by the project coordinator in person, by phone or e-mail. The participants also contacted the project leader and other people employed at the project holder. Most questions referred to organizational aspects of supervision (travel expenses, reservation of location). There were also content-related questions (dilemmas with regard to the field of work, or the beginner's change of employment), and documentation-related questions with reference to the documents demanded during the implementation of the supervised practice and upon its conclusion. Other questions related to other aspects of participation in the project.

The provision of support to the supervisory dyads emphasizes the importance of the availability of a contact person who can provide information to the participants, the contact's promptness in responding to participants' questions, and flexibility in providing solutions (i.e. that suitable adjustments to the supervised practice are made in relation to the context).

Monitoring of the Implementation of Supervision

At the beginning of the project we created a form to monitor the implementation of supervision, where the system administrator regularly entered the dates of sessions documented by supervisory dyads on the web platform. Those dyads who were not

prompt in entering the information regarding their sessions received monthly reminders. In the majority of cases this proved to be efficient, and in those where it was not additional reminders were sent containing an explanation of the importance of entering the information with regard to monitoring the supervised practice (for both the project itself and for occasional reporting to the holder of the project programme).

One challenge to keeping regular documentation of the supervision was the lack of motivation among certain participants for entering the data on the web platform. For some of the participants this seemed to be unnecessary, while others questioned the security of the private conversations between the supervisor and supervisee. The former group were encouraged to enter this data with motivational addresses and explanations, while the latter received an explanation of how the platform operated and who had access to the data. With a few participants it was agreed that it was sufficient to post brief reports on sessions instead of personal reflections.

Reporting by the Supervisory Dyad upon the Conclusion of the Supervised Practice

The final report to the system administrator regarding the supervised practice, which served to evaluate the effectiveness of the supervised practice, included the following:

1. *EuroPsy* form C. The form was ordinarily completed by the supervisee who provided a self-assessment of his/her competences. The supervisor then confirmed, by signing the form, his/her agreement with the supervisee's self-assessment of individual competences. In cases when the supervisor's opinion differed from the supervisee's, the supervisor completed those parts of the form where his/her assessment was distinct from the supervisee's self-evaluation.
2. *EuroPsy* form B. The form was completed and signed by the supervisor;

Additionally, in order to assess the supervisor's competence in guiding the supervised practice and evaluating the system of supervised practice established within the framework of the SUPER PSYHOLOG project, the supervisors and supervisees submitted documents:

3. The supervisee's final reflection on and evaluation of the supervised practice. A special form was prepared which contained the questions from the instrument *Questions for the Reflection and Evaluation of the Supervised Practice*, organized into clusters, to which the supervisees could provide integrated, comprehensive answers.
4. The questionnaire for the evaluation of the supervised practice. This questionnaire was developed specifically for project evaluation and was completed by the supervisor. The items in the questionnaire followed the structure of the specific part of the supervision agreement. The supervisor's answers to additional questions regarding the implementation of the supervised practice helped

us shape the *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Supervised Practice of Psychologists*.

5. The supervisee's evaluation of the supervisor's competences of supervision. The supervisees completed a shorter version of the instrument *The Supervisor Competences*, adjusted for their use.
6. The supervisor's self-assessment of the supervisor's competences (*The Supervisor Competences*).

The supervisees also participated in the study described in the chapter *Evaluation of the Training Programme of Supervisors*.

Within the framework of the internship the students took notes of daily or weekly reflections, which were submitted to the project holder together with a general description of the progress of the supervised practice, assessment of the supervisor's competences (using the instrument *Assessment of the Supervisor*), and assessment of the supervisee's competences. The supervisor added his/her report encompassing the supervised practice plan, outline of the supervisee's competences development, the supervisor's reflections, ethical dilemmas which occurred during the practice, and recommendations for the improvement of the internship. The reports provided an overview and insight into the supervisor's development in supervision skills, the assessment of his/her qualifications for supervision, as well as the evaluation of Module 1 of the training of supervisors and project activities. The results of the evaluation of the internship are presented in the chapter *Evaluation of the Internship*.

Over the course of the project we gathered a lot of different information in order to evaluate the effectiveness and efficacy of the established system of supervised practice (the training of supervisors, and the implementation of supervised practice), and the qualification of supervisors for supervision. In ordinary performance of the supervised practice we would ask the supervisory dyads only for the most important reports. However, further consideration is needed as to whether the submission of the signed forms containing the supervisors' assessment of the supervisees' individual competences at the end of the supervised practice is enough, and if all the goals of the supervised practice have been accomplished. Reflection on and evaluation of the implementation of the supervised practice, consideration of what the supervisor gained with supervision, insight into what was good and where difficulties occurred, and recommendations related to changing the system, can contribute to the professional development of the supervisor, improving the quality of both future supervision and supervised practice. On the basis of such information, written in brief reports and submitted to the system administrator, we can arrive to useful conclusions regarding the system's operation. Such information can be valuable for supervisees, supervisors, and the system administrator.