

**Laia Orozco Joan**  
*Fundació Privada Servei Solidari*  
*European Project Manager*  
 SPAIN, Barcelona  
 laia.orozco@serveisolidari.org

**Òscar Prieto-Flores**  
*Institute for Educational Research at UdG*  
*Associate professor of Sociology*  
 SPAIN, Girona  
 oscar.prieto@udg.edu

## SOCIAL MENTORING PROGRAMMES ON MIGRANT YOUTH INTEGRATION, A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE FROM BARCELONA

With prospects forecasting a 70% of the total population living in cities by 2050, Barcelona is currently experiencing a big migration flow that shares many similarities with other places in Europe and in the world. In this regard, resilient cities and social cohesion have been set as one of the key elements in order to achieve the SDG 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”. Furthermore, an intercultural approach on social integration offers a space for an inclusive global dialogue, which most likely, tends to happen in cities. Finally, this article remarks the importance of social mentoring practices working with migrant youth, as enabling intercultural environments for the acquisition of social capital and contributing towards a more sustainable development.

It is not new to us that cities play a critical role in sustainable development, accounting for developing and increasing its participation in economic, social and environmental issues. The fact that cities are expected to host almost the 70% of the world’s population by 2050, has made their political participation essential in the global order [2].

However, cities are also the places where global threats have the most power and impact: security, poverty, exclusion and climate change, etc (UCLG, 2018). In this context, a ‘super diversity’ interaction takes place, built mostly at the local level, with a highly bigger impact happening in cities [11].

Cities are also recognized crucial international actors dealing with one of the most pressing global challenges: migrant reception and settlement. Consequently, migration remains primarily an urban and local phenomenon, as municipalities are at the forefront of managing the impacts of migration and promoting inclusive, safe and sustainable societies [7]. This relevance is acknowledged in The Global Compact for Migration agreement [10] and the World Migration Report [5].

Mentoring programmes offer a secure space of personal growth and development to the mentee and the mentor, by sharing common interests and values, enabling spaces where to interact under an informal or a formal relationship. Because of its impact on social mobility, labour market integration, school attendance and stereotypes reduction among others [6], youth mentoring programmes play a crucial role when accounting for intercultural integration strategies at the local level in order to build more inclusive, reflexive and resilient societies.

Moreover, another key aspect identified in mentoring programmes is the acquisition of social capital, which has an impact on poverty reduction, government performance, ethnic conflict and even economic growth [12]. The theory of social capital suggests that individuals social relationships or networks have an impact in their own personal development [1]. For example, having social capital has been found to be deeply tied to the successful transition from school to work or higher education for young people [3].

Finally, an empowerment effect has been identified in youth mentoring programmes because of their capacity to provide low-status youth with highly valued institutional resources, empowerment of youth with a critical consciousness, and with the means to transform themselves, their communities, and society [8]. A key asset for a multiple sociocultural world that we are heading to.

The programme form which Servei Solidari Foundation takes part in is called Rossinyol, joining together youth in risk of exclusion together with university students. Such programme is carried out in Spain in four other local regions and created under the Nightingale Network (<http://nightingalementoring.org>), which takes place in six European countries. This programme has been recognized as a successful city initiative for migrants with irregular status in Europe [4]. At the same time, the Spanish social mentoring programmes have come together and created an umbrella organisation called Coordinadora of Mentoria Social (<http://mentoriasocial.org/>), leading the assessment of good practices and quality of mentoring programmes in Spain and Europe. Currently working together with academics and NGOs to identify evidence-based practices to fight against discrimination and favour the settlement of migrants, unaccompanied minors and refugees in our territories. Such actions are also coordinated under The European Center for Evidence Based Mentoring (<http://www.ecbmentoring.eu/>), where nowadays a total of 25 000 couples is estimated to be partnering together in social mentoring programmes in Europe.

### REFERENCES:

1. Coleman, J. S. (1990). “Foundations of social theory” Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
2. Curtis, Simon (2016). “Global cities and global order”. OXFORD Press.
3. Graham, J. R., Shier, M. L., & Eisenstat, M. (2015). “Young adult social networks and labour market attachment: Interpersonal dynamics that shape perspectives on job attainment” *Journal of Social Policy*, 44(4), 769–786.
4. Delvino, M. & Spencer, S. (2019). *Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe: Guidance for Municipalities*. Oxford: University of Oxford.
5. IOM (2018). “World Migration Report”. United Nations Press.
6. Oberoi, Ashmeet K. (2016) “Mentoring for first-generation immigrant and refugee youth”. *National Mentoring Resource Center Population Review*
7. Slocum, John (june 2018). “The indispensable role of cities in migration governance”. *Artículo de opinion 537 CIDOB*
8. Stanton-Salazar, R. (2011). “A social capital framework

for the study of institutional agents and their role in the empowerment of low-status students and youth". Youth and Society

9. UCLG (2018) "Towards the localization of the SDGs". The Global Taskforce.

10. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (2018). "Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Draft outcome document of the Conference".

11. Vertovec, S. (2007) "*Super-diversity and its Implications*", Ethnic and Racial Studies 30(6): 1024-1054.

12. Woolcock, Michael and Deepa Narayan. (2000). "Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy". World Bank Res Obs 2000; 15 (2): 225-249