INTRODUCTION
The professional development of teachers is a complex process that comprises three phases:
• the initial teacher education
• the induction phase
• the phase of the continuing professional development
The support that is given to teachers during those phases is important for the development of their competencies and teaching self-efficacy. During the transition from their initial teacher education into working life in schools, the beginning teachers will have to develop competencies defined by national standards or similar regulation. In that process they need personal, social and professional help that is usually provided by their mentor.

AIM
Currently, not much attention has been given to the programs that support teachers during their induction phase and the mentoring process is relatively unsystematic in most countries, including Croatia. Therefore, the aim of the research was to describe the induction phase combining different perspectives:
• beginning teachers’ perspective
• beginning mentors’ perspective
• experienced mentors’ perspective
in order to recognize the needs of the beginning teachers and mentors, as well as the key aspects of the relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher.

METHOD
This descriptive study was conducted with three focus groups consisting of beginning teachers (N = 4), beginning mentors (N = 6) and experienced mentors (N = 5). All of them were mathematics teachers in elementary or high school in Croatia. The interview guide for the beginning teachers included questions about their:
• view on the professional competencies and needs of beginning teachers
• views on the role of the mentor
• mentoring experiences (only for the mentors group)
Focus group interview lasted for about 60 minutes. They were recorded and transcribed verbatim. For the data analysis thematic analysis was used. The categories were used to build a model of the beginning teacher-mentor relationship within the induction process.

RESULTS – model of the induction process based on perspectives of beginning teachers and mentors

BEGINNING TEACHERS
• Mathematical knowledge
• Pedagogical content knowledge
• Readiness for posing questions to the mentor
• Openness
• Patience
• Motivation
• Responsibility

SUPPORT
• School professionals
• Conference for beginning teachers

INDUCTION PROGRAMME
• Classroom observation and reflective questioning
• Creating portfolio of the work
• Posing questions to the mentor
• Discussions and feedback
• Sharing teaching materials
• Working alliance
• Support (especially in unexpected situations)

MENTORS
• Expertise
• Experience
• Communication skills
• Benevolence
• Accessibility
• Openness
• Patience
• Empathy
• Motivation
• Responsibility

EXPECTED OUTCOMES
• Implement effective teaching
  • Planning
  • Using curriculum
  • Using textbooks
  • Adapting to the students’ developmental level
  • Using different teaching strategies
  • Time management
  • Learning outcomes, assessment
  • Written exams
  • Forming relationships with students
  • Legislative requirements
  • Administrative requirements
  • School as organization
  • Cooperation with colleagues

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
• Flexibility and individualization in teaching
• Students with special educational needs
• Classroom management
• Role of the class teacher
• Communication with parents

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS
The perspectives of different groups were in the large extent overlapping and the important role of the mentor was recognized by both beginning teachers and mentors. The main difference was that, in comparison with beginning mentors, experienced mentors had deeper insights. The most important themes were:
• for mentors – the question of the responsibility, the definition of the role of the mentor, the expectations from the beginning teachers, methods for working with the beginning teacher (e.g., classroom observation, reflective questioning)
• for beginning teachers – the importance of the clear expectations, the quality of the relationship with the mentor and guidance through the induction process
The model of the induction process is very complex and the quality of outcomes of the induction process depends on many factors:
• beginning teacher’s competencies and attitudes
• mentors’ competencies and attitudes
• the quality of their relationship
• the quality of the methods used to enable experiential learning of the beginning teacher
All of that elements have to be supported when planning educational programs for beginning teachers and their mentors.

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