**European Training Strategy** 

A competence model for trainers working at international level

# **Tools to get started**







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ence.

### Does the Competence model for Trainers Working at International Level tickle your interest?

#### What?

This publication provides you with **practical tools and methods** to experiment working with the competence model for Trainers Working at International Level, and their quality criteria and indicators. Learn how to use the competence model in different ways and for a variety of purposes. Use it for your competence-based training work and help us to refine it. The competence model has great potential. It is yours to explore!

#### Who?

You can use the competence model as an **individual trainer** and for working in a team of trainers. And **training providers** can also use the model to recruit trainers and develop their training strategy.

help them to express more clearly what they can contribute to a training course (e.g. in applications for training jobs or in a recognition processes).

**Teams of trainers** can use the competence model to identify the profiles of the team members and how complementary they are. It provides a structure for giving feedback to each other and for reflecting on your team work, and, if needed, to address competence areas that are underdeveloped.

**Training organisers** can use the competence model to recruit trainers and composed balanced teams that cover all competence areas needed in international training courses. Or institutions can use the competence model to define in which competences they need to invest and what training for trainers they will provide.

#### Why?

The competence model helps you to become more aware of your trainer competences and describe them. **Individual trainers** can use this awareness to identify competences they want to develop further or get recognised. For instance, it can

#### But...

... the list of competences, the quality criteria, the indicators and the possible uses of these tools are not exhaustive. They have been developed over the past few years and have been explored by trainers across Europe.

## Then let's get started!

#### Practical tools and food for thought

This publication contains a number of methods (Part 2) to operationalise the competence model (Part 3). But you will also find reflection texts related to the values and principles behind it (Part 4).

Similarly to the competences listed in the competence model, the suggested tools and methods are a **series of proposals**. We have adapted them from existing training practices and invite you to adapt them to your context too. They are **not a 'must-use' list of instruments** for working with the competence model.

This publication does not prescribe how to develop trainers' competences nor does it give you a complete panorama of training in the European youth field. These methods and background texts are rather a **springboard** to start working more consciously with competences in international training.

The collection of tools will evolve and grow. If you have relevant methods and models, feel free to submit them to the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre.

#### Content overview

- An overview of support tools and methods Part 2 (p. 04)
- Introduction to the competence model for Trainers Working at International Level – Part 3 (p. 08)
- Values and principles behind the competence model – Part 4 (p. 10)
- Glossary of terms used in the competence model and in this publication – Part 5 (p. 14)
- References for both the competence model and for the glossary Part 6 (p. 18)

## Support tools and methods

Some of these tools have been specifically created for this context, whereas others have been adapted from existing tools or methods. You can find the list and a short **description of the tools below**, but we would like you to refer to the methods in this tool box for the full description, including aims and objectives, target group, step-by-step process, tips and possible variations. The full description will allow you to implement the method.

#### **Aims & objectives**

# Short description, suitable for which type of teams & training courses

1 Mapping competences in the team	
With this tool, team members 'map' the competences in the team.	This is a self-assessment tool for collective mapping of team competences.
It gives a good picture of the strong points of the team as well as possible weaknesses.	Mainly for teams of trainers who haven't worked (much) with each other before.
	Team members who are used to collaborating with each other can use it to see any changes in competences within the team. It helps team members to 'update' each other on improved competences. This remains primarily a 'getting to know' exercise with a focus on competences.
	For short and medium-term training projects.

#### Aims & objectives

# Short description, suitable for which type of teams & training courses

## 2

3

#### **Experimenting in teams**

Each team member has the opportunity of having their competences assessed with the support of their colleagues. This allows them to further develop their competences during and after the course.

A mix of self-assessment and semi-external feedback.

This tool uses the competence model to get feedback from team members and to assess their competences.

This method is composed of five steps and includes three variations.

For teams of three and more, in which one of the trainers has worked with at least two other members of the team.

It works best in medium-term training courses, because the process requires time.

# Team Core Quadrant or exploring the team's core qualities (focus on attitudes)

This exercise explores whether there is a common approach to attitudes in the team. It helps teams become aware of challenges and areas where development is needed and relates this to the competence model.

This method raises awareness of commonalities and differences in the team, making you attentive to them while working together.

The tool includes two aspects: self-assessment focussing on the team and collective reflection on qualities (attitudes) within the team.

Most suitable for teams that have worked together before and therefore know each other well.

#### Aims & objectives

# Short description, suitable for which type of teams & training courses

# Using the competence model for training curriculum development

This approach provides stakeholders<sup>1</sup> and trainers a competence-focused foundation to build a training course on.

Even if the curriculum of the course is specific, the competence areas help explore objectives and course elements.

Of course, adjustments will be needed. The competence model is a reference rather than a list of competences to be used in a strict and limiting way. This tool uses the competence model (competence areas, competences, criteria, and indicators) to develop a curriculum for long-term or short-term courses.

It helps stakeholdersand trainers to develop a competencebased curriculum for training programmes.

Relevant for:

- Long-term training courses or a training programme mostly targeting 'advanced' trainers
- Shorter training courses (e.g. 5 days)

Please check the section 'tips and examples' for more information about possible adjustments.

# 5

#### The 3L assessment of competences

This tool helps to assess trainers on different levels and from different perspectives for training purposes.

3 level<sup>2</sup> (3L) focuses the assessment on the Levels of the competence model: competence areas, competences and criteria. It helps to stay focused on what is important and to leave aside what is obvious or does not need attention at a particular moment.

This tool is ideal for teams of trainers working at international level, who possibly know each other well, e.g. peers, colleagues, training providers, contractors, etc.

#### Aims & objectives

# Short description, suitable for which type of teams & training courses

# Support tools and methods

#### Self-assessment tool

This assessment tool raises the trainers' awareness of their competence levels.

This tool proposes different assessment perspectives (personal or for work) of the competences under each competence area and in the end helps you visualise your competences.

For trainers working at international level.

## 7

6

#### **Continuous assessment of competences**

The tool makes trainers aware of their competence levels while developing them over a longer period.

This tool helps trainers to develop professionally. It is based on the principle of inter-subjectivity: it combines assessment from different angles, such as self-assessment by the trainer and assessment by someone else (peer-learner, colleague or trainer of trainer).

For trainers working at international level.

Particularly relevant for long-term 'training for trainers' courses or other long-term programmes - for professional development of trainers (e.g. within pools of trainers).

## The Competence model for Trainers Working at International Level

#### Why?

The competence model for Trainers Working at International Level is part of the European Training Strategy in the youth field. We developed it in 2013 to raise the quality of training programmes and related trainer competences in the field of youth work. Ultimately, this also benefits the **quality of educational programmes and projects** in the youth sector.

We are convinced that if we describe competences in a standardised way, this will improve the image and **recognition of youth work** and its contribution to society. It will lead to better capacity-building strategies, based on appropriate resources and support mechanisms.

#### What?

On the one hand, the competence model helps to **develop training modules**, on the other, it gives the opportunity to further develop your personal and professional competences. It guides trainers to **take on personal challenges** and try out new experiences with the help of peer support and (self-) assessment.

It can be used in various ways according to the context, the target group, the youth workers and the young people the participants are working with. Remember, there is no such thing as a 'perfect trainer' and this document does not aim to create one.

Please adapt this competence model to the context in which you use it!





#### Competence areas

The competence model contains seven different competence areas, each with **quality criteria and indicators**: the competence areas are:

- Understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes
- · Learning to learn
- Designing educational programmes
- Cooperating successfully in teams
- · Communicating meaningfully with others
- Intercultural competence
- · Being civically engaged
- the competence area "Being civically engaged" was added to the initial six areas after the feedback received during <u>Bridges for Trainers</u> in December 2014, which required integrating the political dimension of the work of trainers.

#### Quality criteria and indicators

The **quality criteria** are principles or standards that help you assess how effective and successful you are in the different competence areas. Each criterion describes the level of knowledge, skills and attitudes desired.

The **indicators** are obvious elements and behaviours that demonstrate that you meet the quality criteria. They describe actions and reactions expressed in terms of:

- ways of thinking and approaching a task (applying knowledge),
- ways of doing things (putting skills into practice),
- ways of expressing emotions or attitudes.

#### Also for youth workers

Parallel to this competence model for trainers, we developed a **competence model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally**. We will explore the links between these two models over the coming years.

## Values and principles behind the Competence model

#### More than a mere list of competences

The competence model approaches competences from two complementary angles:

- Competences that trainers already have when starting a training activity
- Modules to be addressed in training curricula

A transparent description of competences and of a specific training context helps to 'harmonise' the approach taken to train trainers. It creates **a common framework** and allows comparison.

However, trainers come from a range of different educational and cultural backgrounds. Therefore we kept any reference to theoretical approaches and educational models fairly generally. This keeps the competence model flexible so that it can be **easily adapted to different contexts**. It is up to the trainers to connect the competences to theoretical approaches and educational models that they find appropriate and to develop their competences accordingly.

Finally, this competence model does not only offer a framework to develop training modules or competences. It also allows teams of trainers to **map the competences** present in a team and the complementarity amongst the members of the team.

#### Quality

In the last decades has seen an increased focus an increased focus on quality in training and nonformal learning in Europe and beyond. We need to demonstrate the quality, importance and positive impact of youth work and non-formal education activities. The competence model provides a framework that enables peer review and external assessment.

Trainers need to develop a **holistic and systemic approach to quality.** 'Quality' goes beyond the educational activity and the competences of the trainers. Quality encompasses the following dimensions<sup>3</sup>:

- 1. Ethos: Coherence
- 2. Fidelity to Objectives
- 3. Change: Transformation
- 4. Innovation

According to Harvey and Green (1993), quality refers to a **process of transformation**. Transformation (i.e. learning) goes beyond the active involvement of the learner. Many more aspects are directly or indirectly involved in the process and influence the potential for change. According to Elton (1992) '[...] in education [...] the provider is doing something for the consumer. This process of transformation is necessarily a unique, negotiated process in each case. [...] This leads to two notions of transformative quality in education, enhancing the consumer and empowering the consumer. This unique process determines the quality of learning'.

The above continues further in the concept of **Total Quality Management** (TQM) by Cua, McKone and Schroeder (2001). It describes a series of elements that stakeholders and trainers provide learners with. To implement TQM in train-the-trainer courses in European youth work, they should focus on:

- 1. Ethics
- 2. Integrity
- 3. Trust
- 4. Training (process, contents and methodology)
- 5. Full involvement and participation of the learner
- 6. Quality culture and approach
- 7. Recognition
- 8. Communication (including partnerships)

This goes in line with the principles of non-formal learning as developed by Helmut Fennes and Hendrik Otten in 'Quality in non-formal education and training in the field of European youth work' (2008).

We should also be conscious that any assessment of acquired competences – and thus the assessment of the quality of a course – may be biased. Assessment tools and mechanisms should therefore be based on a Total Quality Management approach. This ensures a more holistic and systemic approach to quality.

#### Culture and identity

Culture is a dynamic process that is strongly related to the notion of identity. It relates both to the individual and the groups this individual is part of. However, we should avoid the pitfall of cultural relativism and shift our focus in training to a wider or systemic approach of culture. In other words, it's important to think beyond the usual labels.

We invite you to **challenge the views on culture and intercultural learning** as practiced in training in European youth work. Are the standardised approaches we are familiar with still adequate and accurate? We need to deepen our reflection about culture and identity, for example inspired by Gestalt therapy, art therapy, emotional intelligence, drama, coaching, etc.

#### The principles of non-formal learning

This competence model is specifically adapted to European youth work and the principles of nonformal learning. These principles are transversal and **applicable to every competence**.

The principles of non-formal learning are4:

- Learner-centredness (i.e., a focus on the learner and their development)
- Agreement between trainers and learners on learning objectives
- Transparency
- · Confidentiality
- Attention to content and methodology
- Voluntariness
- Participation
- Ownership
- · Democratic values and practices

#### Inner readiness, authenticity,& intuition

Underneath the competences and indicators lies something more – something that is difficult to grasp. It is a kind of **inner readiness** that allows the competences to 'surface' or to be expressed in the 'here and now'. This inner readiness is linked to authenticity and intuition.

Authenticity refers to the degree to which you are in tune with the nature of the work you do. It means your training work needs to be in line with who you are and what you believe in. Authenticity is a genuine and inner characteristic of what we do and how we do things.

Some indicators in the competence model are based on **intuition**. This is often an essential success factor in your training. Intuition brings the best out of your knowledge, skills and attitudes. So even if you tick off each indicator in the competence model, there is that extra 'magic element' that makes everything fall into the right place at the right time. An open mind and leaving space for intuition are therefore two important attitudes to have.

## **Glossary of terms**

#### Competences

The term 'competences' refers to a system of values, attitudes and beliefs, and skills and knowledge that can be applied in practice to manage various complex situations and tasks successfully. Confidence, motivation and well-being are important prerequisites for someone wishing to successfully apply developed competences.

#### **Formal education**

Formal education is a form of purpose-driven learning that takes place in a distinct institutionalised environment. This environment is designed for teaching/training and learning, is staffed by qualified and examined educators, is geared towards specific topics and levels, and usually serves a clearly defined category of learners (age, level and specialisation). Formal education (and hence formal learning) is organised and formalised by means of national curricula. Formal education is built up in a way that allows successful students to move up to the next level and obtain a corresponding degree, diploma or certificate. Typical formal education institutions include primary and secondary schools, vocational colleges and universities. Most formal learning is compulsory.

#### Identity

Identity is understood as a cluster of elements and dimensions that define an individual at certain times and in certain situations, contexts and settings. Identity encompasses not only dimensions such as gender, sex, persona, culture and ethnicity, but also includes processes such as identity (personality) change and social transformation. Developing ones' identity is a dynamic process.

#### Informal learning

Informal learning is not necessarily purpose-driven and is generally unstructured (i.e. it lacks defined learning objectives, predetermined learning settings or educational materials). Informal learning takes place in everyday contexts in the family, at work, during leisure time and within the community. While informal learning does have outcomes, these are rarely recorded, virtually never certified, and are typically not immediately visible to the learner. These informal learning outcomes do not necessarily have an inherent value for formal education, training or employment purposes.

#### Intercultural competence

Intercultural competence as developed and demonstrated within the framework of youth work includes a set of qualities that people need so they can live in contemporary, pluralistic societies. It enables them to actively confront social injustice and discrimination and promote and protect human rights. Intercultural competence requires an understanding of culture as a dynamic, multifaceted process. In addition, it calls for an increased sense of solidarity that allows individuals to negotiate their insecurity and fear of the 'other' e.g. through critical thinking, empathy and by accepting ambiguity.

#### Quality

In the framework of this competence profile, quality is to be understood as encompassing dimensions such as ethos and coherence, adherence to defined objectives, change, and innovation.

#### Quality of training in the youth field

Training quality plays an essential role in promoting the recognition of non-formal education and youth work; the role of trainers and of training for trainers is thus essential. The criteria pertaining to training in the youth field represent agreements on which existing training courses in the youth field are based. These criteria may include the following:

- · The training is based on the values and principles of non-formal learning
- The training is aligned with the evidence-based knowledge about mutual needs of learners and society and promotes a defined set of competences
- The training responds to the needs, competences [abilities] and the individuality of learners and leaves room for both expected and unexpected outcomes
- · The training is carefully planned and executed in terms of its educational impact and practical organisation
- · Sufficient resources are made available in advance, and are employed in a clearly results-oriented and efficient manner
- · The training is evaluated based on jointly agreed criteria
- · Its results/outcomes are recognised and visible

#### **Quality of trainers**

The quality of trainers – i.e., their professional expertise combined with their ability to perform within an educational framework – has a crucial impact on the quality of the training activities they deliver. For stakeholders and training organisations, composing a team of trainers who are able to function and deliver according to expectations ought to be a permanent concern. Trust and transparency are of particular importance in this process. Special attention must be paid to the ability of each trainer and to the importance of the smooth functioning of a given team of trainers. It must hence be ensured that all areas of competence relevant for the educational activity in question are addressed, that the individual trainers can work together as a team, and that the necessary sex/gender and geographical balances are safeguarded.

#### Learner

A learner is a participant in the learning process. The training is always targeted towards the learner and his/her competences are developed through it. The terms 'training participant' or 'trainee' are often used as synonyms.

#### Learning

Learning is a process that results in permanent social transformation and change in a learner's competences and actions. Learning allows them to become a more experienced, self-aware and self-directed individual. Based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle, one of the learning cycles that can be observed in many youth work situations encompasses the following four steps: observe, stop, reflect, and adapt.

#### Meaningfulness

In this model we use the term meaningfulness as the capacity to clearly express an emotion or an idea with or without words. Meaningfulness also refers to something that is important, that has a value (for a person, for a group of persons) and that relates to a purpose. For some, meaningfulness goes hand in hand with the notion of mindfulness, meaning the ability to remain fully present and aware in the 'here and now', acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations in a non-judgmental manner.

#### Non-formal learning

Non-formal learning is a targeted learning process that supports the development of an individual: their social transformation, potential, creativity, talents, initiative and social responsibility as well as the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. It is understood as a form of learning that takes place outside institutional contexts (e.g. school). Non-formal learning in youth work settings is often structured, based on learning objectives, takes place during a certain period of time, involves specific learning support, and is intentional (and voluntary). Non-formal learning is based on a series of educational values and principles.

#### Principles of non-formal learning

The principles of non-formal learning are agreements on which the organisation of non-formal learning is based: a focus on the learner and their development; transparency; confidentiality; voluntariness; participation; ownership; and democratic values.

#### Trainers in the youth field

'Trainer' is traditionally used to refer to those who shape, guide and accompany the learning processes of individuals or groups. In the youth field, trainers design and implement educational activities based on the values and principles of youth work and non-formal learning, they create conditions that promote the learners' individual development, and they shape the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for youth work.

#### Training in the youth field

Training in the youth field means a targeted educational activity based on the principles and values of youth work and nonformal learning. Training in this area is targeted at young people and those who create the conditions for young people to engage in activities that foster their individual development (youth workers, youth trainers, public officials, leaders, counsellors, etc.). They do so by supporting the development of young people in various ways and by promoting the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are necessary for quality youth work.

#### Values in non-formal learning

'Values in non-formal learning' means a set of convictions and beliefs that guide the choices and approaches applied in non-formal learning. In the youth field, the values of non-formal learning are connected to personal development (e.g., independence, critical thinking, openness, curiosity, creativity), social development (e.g., the ability to interact, participative democracy, solidarity and social justice, responsibility, problem-solving) and ethics (e.g., acceptance of others, human rights, intercultural learning, intercultural dialogue, peace and non-violent behaviour, gender equality, and intergenerational dialogue).

#### Youth and young people

The UN probably has the most flexible definition of youth: 'YOUTH is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed agegroups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because "youth" is often referred to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job'.

From a psychological perspective, young people are persons in the age range of 20 to 35, although youth starts earlier if we include the period of adolescence. Erik Erikson (1959) distinguishes the following stages of psychosocial development: the young adult stage (from 13 to 39) precedes early adulthood (from 20 to 39) and this precedes middle adulthood (from 40 to 64). Daniel Levinson (1978) and Rhona Rapoport (1980) add that '[...] for a variety of reasons, timeliness on young adulthood cannot be exactly defined – producing different results according to the different mix of overlapping indices (legal, maturational, occupational, sexual, emotional and the like) employed, or on whether a developmental perspective [... or] the socialisation perspective is taken'. For Erikson, the psychological crisis during adolescence is about 'fidelity'. Young people ask themselves the existential question: 'Who am I and what can I be?' They learn to position themselves in relationship with others.

Neuroscience defines adolescence as the '[...] period between the physical changes during puberty and the capacity of an individual to play an independent role in society' (Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, 2008).

#### Youth work

Youth work is an extra-curricular field of work, in that it involves specific leisure activities and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes and on voluntary participation. It promotes young people's development in a multi-faceted manner, enabling them to become active outside their families, formal education, and work. Youth work activities and processes are self-managed, co-managed or managed under the guidance of educational staff (either full-time or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders) and can develop and change in line with various dynamics. Youth work is organised and delivered in different ways (e.g., by youth-led organisations, youth organisations and informal groups, and by youth services and public authorities) and is shaped at the local, regional, national and European level.

#### Youth workers

Youth workers work with young people in a wide variety of non-formal and informal learning contexts, typically focusing on their young charges' personal and social development through one-on-one relationships and group-based activities. While acting as trainers/facilitators may be their main task, it is just as likely for youth workers to take a socio-educational or social work-based approach. In many cases, these roles and functions overlap.

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