YOCOMO Pilot experience based on the ETS Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally

European
Training
Strategy

SALTO Training & Cooperation RC
October 2018

CONCEPT PAPER for the series of offline and online pilot activities and learning modules for Youth Workers

Background

In the framework of the European Training Strategy (ETS) SALTO T&C RC has developed in cooperation with youth work experts the Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally (hereinafter: the Competence Model).

The Competence Model is one of its rare kind in the European youth education and training of youth workers (hence, at European level). It offers in its complexity eight different competences - presented in a sequence of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviours. The Competence Model is rounded up by a context description of international youth work, principles of non-formal education, and quality aspects. It also offers a series of definitions, not exhaustive but aiming to support understanding the Competence Model better.

The competence-based approach was chosen in line with the competence-based focus in European education and training policies, the one of Youthpass, and the developments with regard to learning and competence development in Erasmus+: Youth in Action. The Competence Model has the potential to ignite, inspire, deepen and pushes processes with regard to quality development of youth work and capacity building - with a possible impact on individual youth workers, training and education institutions and organisations, and on the systemic framework (overall system around the programme and its structures, for instance).

To better support a structured and adequate implementation of the Competence Model, SALTO T&C RC has started to develop a series of support measures. Those include, amongst others: three pilot training courses to train youth workers at international level; online resources and e-learning opportunities; standard presentations; a manual/manuals for different target groups (individuals, NGOs, institutions) and with different focus (educational, strategic, etc.) and methods for youth workers; and support to National Agencies of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme (NAs).

This concept paper focuses on the

> *pilot experiences - online and offline - to train youth workers on using/working with the Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally*

Why dedicating time and resources to pilot courses?

Although we already have a quite wide offer of European training course for youth workers with different levels of experience and focusing on specific topics, none of these courses are at the moment based on a given competence model especially designed for youth workers and linking/bridging local and European youth work.

Taking into account the experience around the Competence Model for Trainers Working at International Level, one can conclude that **courses and activities on or around the Competence Model take time to find their genuine final shape** and **require constant monitoring and adjustment**, if to be true to its intentions and to the needs and expectations of participants.

Parallel to that reflection, a pilot project phase allows developing and fine-tuning an online offer that supports the residential courses. This also requires a proper time and a set of experiences and evaluations.

Target group

The focus of the Competence Model is on youth workers, meaning that the pilot experience (and its final version) should go into that direction as well. To avoid entering into what is a youth worker (who defines him/herself as such), whether youth leaders can apply as well, etc., the pilot experiences **addresses those active in youth work on a regular basis, actively involved in activities with young people (supporting them). In their structure, they must have the space and mandate / possibility to design, develop, and evaluate pedagogical activities for young people (the fact of being paid for the task / work or not is not a criteria here).**

It is rather fair to leave it up to the participants-to-be to measure their level experience based on an accurate description of the course and of the expected profile, instead of pre-deciding for them. **Participants must have a structure that supports them (NGO, youth centre, municipality, school, etc.)**

Structure and format

The intentions of the overall pilot experience are to **support directly participants (youth workers) in working with the Competence Model (hence on their competence development, in line with their practice).** To do so, SALTO T&C developed a first approach to the format and the structures of the pilot courses, in cooperation with a group of experts and with the team and the host NA of the first training course.

YOCOMO (**YO**uth Workers **CO**mpetence **Mo**del courses) is based on a long-term approach, with different residential courses and a series of online support courses, activities and support material.

A set of three residential courses is foreseen for the time-being (see visualisation on the next page - keep in mind that the numbering is <u>NOT hierarchical</u> but used only as a way to easily identify the different courses). **Those courses are not linear (no need to take part in course 1 to do course 2) and focus on different dimensions of working with the Competence Model:**

- YOCOMO 1 = how to work with competence models and with a self-reflective practice
- YOCOMO 2 = how to work specifically on / with attitudes and behaviours
- YOCOMO 3 = how to work with the Competence Model and with self-assessment considering the whole system around (me, the group, the topic, the environment and beyond); hence, having a systemic approach.

The wish here is to **offer training opportunities to youth workers that fit their needs and that can either be a 'modular package' (take the whole and articulate it according to the needs and time) or a 'cherry pick' approach (opting for one or a few elements only of the package).** The decision not to go for courses on each competence area but rather on the 'spirit' and the approach of the Competence Model was a conscious choice, aimed at ensuring a true understanding of the Competence Mode itself, and to complete existing offers, that are usually more practical. For this reason, YOCOMO is for now a set of residential units that participants can decide to attend / take part in. The same applies to the online offers: to the exception of those that are specifically support a residential courses: participants can decide to 'have a look' (in case of material) or follow (in case of webinars) as they see fit.

Online sessions

Webinars

Online sessions

YOCOMO 1 – how to work with competence models and with an evaluative practice

YOCOMO 2 – how to work on attitudes and behaviours competence

Specific online Support for the residential courses

YOCOMO 3 - how to work with/on self-assessment considering me, the group, the topic, the environment (systemic approach)

Specific online Support for the residential courses

Specific online Support for the residential courses

Resources and material available online (researches, studies, etc.)

Online sessions

Online sessions - inputs

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Few words about the 1st edition: YOCOMO 1 - Italy, 4-10 June 2018

For the first pilot course in Italy, it was important to already take into account the means and available resources and to deal with the scarcity of time to prepare accordingly. Thus, for that first edition of the pilot experience, a series of online activities have been prepared through the **SALTO HOP platform**, but those did not include webinars or more complex online sessions.

Indeed, the online material needs to be seen in a more systemic way and therefore needs a rather solid base. Nonetheless, the course in Italy included online work not only before, but also between the residential training and the consolidation seminar (15-17 September 2018) for participants to reflect on and consolidate their learning, as well as to evaluate the course as such. The course in Italy corresponds to the YOCOMO 1 on the visual representation.

The trainers in charge of the preparation and implementation of the first YOCOMO are Snezana Baclija Knoch (RS) and Salvi Greco (IT).
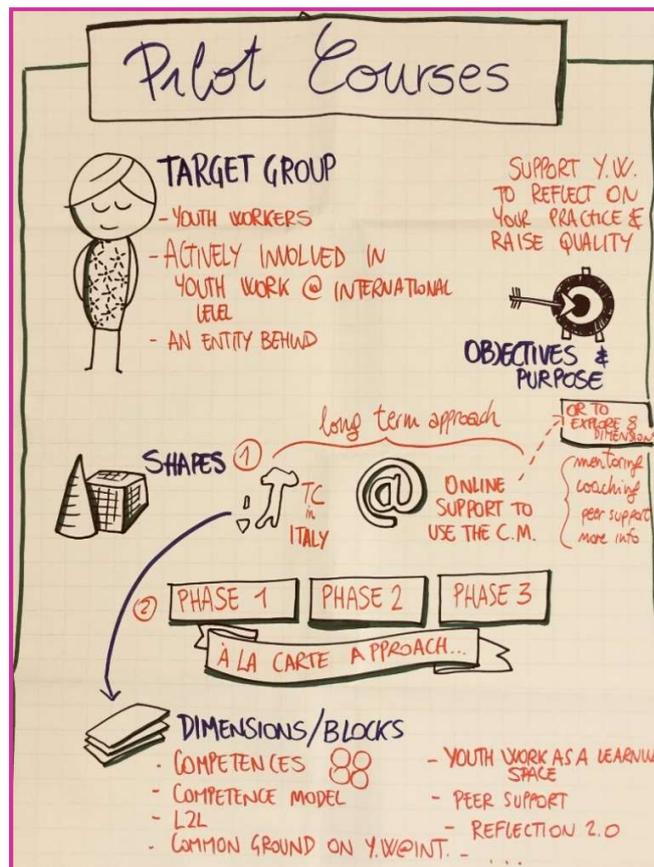
The YOCOMO Online Solutions

End of August 2018, a group of expert met to define the main lines of the 'YOCOMO Online solutions' which aim to form part of the overall YOCOMO pilot experience (April 2018 – June 2020). The first phase of the YOCOMO Online Solution (September 2018 - June 2019) is being developed by Laimonas Ragauskas (LT), Nerijus Kriauciunas (LT) and Snezana Baclija Knoch (RS), thanks to their expertise, closeness to the target group and to YOCOMO, and to experience in developing a 360 self-assessment tool based on the Competence Model for Trainers.

The first part of the YOCOMO Online Solutions will include:
- A **[Self]assessment tool based on the ETS Competence Model for Youth Workers** to Work Internationally. It will enable youth workers to complete an assessment of their competences, store results and share them, if wanted. The online course will equip youth workers with necessary knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of attitudes and behaviours in the ETS Competence Model, not only in terms of structure of the Model, but also in terms of what they mean and how to address them

- A **stand-alone and self-paced online course** to explore the dimensions of attitudes and behaviours in the ETS Competence Model (theme of the residential course YOCOMO 2).
- The first step towards **a resource library** to support youth workers in both, assessing and developing their competence. The online library or toolbox with resources, based on the ETS Competence Model will provide youth workers with opportunities and suggestions for relevant resources to further improve/develop their competences.

The NAs and beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ programme organise various residential training activities that tackle the development of competences of youth workers to work internationally. The online solutions mentioned above will complement residential activities by offering a systemic solution that embeds support to competence assessment and further development.

All these online developments aim at being used as a stand-alone solutions, if wished so. Youth workers will be able to use the [self]assessment tool to assess their competences; choose to follow online courses; and/or access library with resources to further develop their competences.

Having these tools developed, NAs, SALTO RCs, organisations and other stakeholders will be able to reach higher numbers of youth workers in Europe (and beyond) to support their personal and professional competence development to work internationally.

In a **short-term perspective (until June 2019)**: all these new developments should support directly YOCOMO residential courses. These developments will also contribute with new tools, contents and resources that should become accessible through the HOP platform, created to foster e-learning in Erasmus+ Youth programme. That also includes an analysis and recommendations to restructure the SALTO Toolbox to allow it to become the central point for resources for youth workers, based on the ETS Competence Model.

In a **long-term perspective (second-half of 2019-2020)**: the [self]assessment tool should support the Youthpass process and enable youth workers to feed their assessment results into the Youthpass platform. Work on developing the resource library and contents and the possible use of the SALTO Toolbox will continue during 2019-2020.

Note: after this first phase of the online tools (running until summer 2019) that will focuses mostly on the 'self' dimension of the assessment tool, the 'external' (by peers, etc.) assessment dimension should be further developed. Nevertheless, we will mostly refer in this document to the [self]assessment tool rather than solely to self-assessment.

The External Evaluation

An **external evaluator** – Andreas Rosellen, Transfer e.V. (Germany) – has been contracted to evaluate the three YOCOMO residential courses (incl. their consolidation meetings) and to cover the online work up to end 2019 / early 2020. The objective is to use his expertise and evaluation to fine-tune the courses after the pilot experience.

Timeline

YOCOMO 1 (under TCA 2017) April 2018 – September 2018
- Residential course 4-10 June (implemented)
- Consolidation seminar (implemented)
- External evaluation part 1 (in process)

YOCOMO 2 (under TCA 2018) September 2018 – September 2019
- Residential course (May 2019, Germany)
- Consolidation seminar (Sept. 2019 TBC)
- Online support course/activities (to be developed by June 2019), that can include webinars
- Web-based self-assessment tool (to be developed by June 2019)
- Eternal evaluation part 2

YOCOMO 3 (under TCA 2019) June 2019 – Spring 2020)
- Residential course (November 2019, Latvia)
- Consolidation seminar (January 2020 TBC)
- Online support course/activities (continuation of the development), that can include webinars
- Fine-tuning of the web-based self-assessment tool
- External evaluation part 3 and final

On a **longer-term basis**, the intention is to try to form **a group of supporting NAs** that could also function as a sort of 'YOCOMO group'. This group would look beyond the courses and their online support material and focus on the overall implementation of the Competence Model (e.g. to also look at the Handbook; tailored messages to different stakeholders, support to NAs, peer-learning initiatives, links with research and education, etc.)

The overall work around YOCOMO is coordinated/supported by SALTO Training and Cooperation, in cooperation with the NAs that desire to join the adventure.

End of document – Oct. 2018