



COMETS – Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work

Team report

Training Course
26 April - 2 May 2017 | Dresden, Germany

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT	3
<i>ETS and COMETS.....</i>	3
<i>The intentions of COMETS.....</i>	3
<i>The principles of COMETS.....</i>	4
<i>COMETS – Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work</i>	4
Description	4
Intentions	4
MAIN SESSIONS DAY BY DAY	6
<i>Day 1 – getting into the course</i>	6
Intentions of the day	6
Description	6
<i>Day 2 – working on influences.....</i>	9
Intentions of the day	9
Description	9
<i>Day 3 – working on attitudes</i>	11
Intentions of the day	11
Description	11
<i>Day 4 – working on limits</i>	14
Intentions of the day	14
Description	14
<i>Day 5 – harvesting and closing</i>	19
Intentions of the day	19
Description	19
<i>Special features.....</i>	22
Walk the talk wall.....	22
Manfred's calling.....	22
LSD groups.....	22
The sandpit.....	22
Meeting with a local organisation	23
Guided tour in Dresden	23
CONCLUSIONS.....	24
<i>Team evaluation</i>	24
Approach, methods and methodology	24
Cooperation	25
The group of participants.....	26
Logistics and extra features	26
ANNEXES	28
<i>Programme</i>	28
<i>List of participants</i>	29
<i>Learning needs of the participants.....</i>	30
<i>Outcomes – what drives me to be a trainer?</i>	33
<i>LSD Groups.....</i>	35
<i>Summary of the evaluations by participants.....</i>	39
<i>Presentations</i>	50

ETS and COMETS

In the context of the European Training Strategy (ETS), SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre (SALTO T&C RC) developed the Competence Model for Trainers Working at International Level - www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetences

As a tool to reflect on and work with and on the competence model, the 'COMETS training courses' were developed as a support for trainers in their competence development, each course focusing on one competence area of the above-mentioned model.

More concretely, the COMETS courses follow a training for trainers' format which will, in the forthcoming years, provide trainers, being advanced¹ in the implementation of international trainings for youth workers, with opportunities to come together to reflect upon, discuss and develop further on different competence areas of the ETS competence model.

The general aims of the COMETS training courses are:

- To contribute to quality development of youth work and of training practice in the field;
- To put the ETS competence model into practice;
- To support National Agencies and other youth sector organizations in working with trainers on competence development;
- To contribute to the professional development of trainers in the field.

The intentions of COMETS

COMETS training courses intend principally to offer trainers a space to reflect, exchange and contrast their practice and understanding with regard to a certain ETS competence area. The main purpose is to enable participants to take further steps in their professional practice.

The COMETS courses respond to a strategy developed by Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme National Agencies and SALTO T&C RC to provide opportunities for trainers to develop their competences according to their needs and needs of training providers like National Agencies. For more information: www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetencedevelopment

¹ In the context of COMETS, 'advanced' means that the trainer-learner has the capacity to direct his/her own learning and in particular, the ability to self-assess his/her own competences.

The principles of COMETS

No matter the focus on each course, COMETS are all based on a series of principles, which are:

- Awareness: me – the group – the field – the context;
- Readiness to question and to review practice;
- Readiness to stretch boundaries;
- Being explicit about choices as trainers;
- Integrity: Walk the talk!
- Giving space to the whole person: body - mind - soul - heart;
- Awareness: Being here as learner in a community of learners;
- Giving to Caesar what's Caesars': acknowledging [re]sources of practice.

COMETS – Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work

Description

'COMETS – Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work' is a training for Trainers on integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work based on the ETS competence model for trainers working at international level. It was the third edition of COMETS.

This particular competence from the model encompasses the following competences:

- Linking (youth) policies and educational programmes
- Integrating political values and beliefs in the context of the trainers' work;
- Supporting learners in developing political thinking;
- Applying democracy and human rights principles.

Intentions

Taking the above into account, the intentions of the course were:

- To explore what are the personal, internal and external influences on the role of trainers (politics, policies, environment, social and economic contexts, etc.);
- To reflect and share on the notions of ethics and ethos of trainers;
- To work on the attitudes of trainers with regards to authenticity, openness, curiosity and dealing with personally challenging values and beliefs;
- To reflect on and explore the limits of the 'political role of trainers' in their practice;
- To reflect on human rights principles and human rights education in the work of trainers.

This COMETS was hosted by JUGEND für Europa, the German National Agency of Erasmus+: Youth in Action and coordinated by SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre.



Photo: Nik Paddison

MAIN SESSIONS DAY BY DAY

Day 1 – getting into the course

Intentions of the day

- To recall who's here and start the group building process;
- To get more information about the place (context / history);
- To introduce the programme and link it to the learning needs;
- To reflect on the principles of COMETS;
- To introduce the concept and context of COMETS and the competence area (for the group to go more in depth into the course);
- To share participants' stories: how did they become a trainer?
- To build a common understanding of the concepts and terminologies behind the word 'political' (big 'P' or small 'p');
- To explore the ideas behind the political role of trainers and highlight the links with influences, attitudes and limits.

Description

The first part of the day was divided into several moments. It started with a general **welcome by Udo Teichmann** (SALTO T&C RC), an **introduction of the place Brücke-Most Zentrum² by Tobias Kley**, and a recall of the names.

This was also the moment to orally **introduce the competence model and the competence area**. The intention wasn't to get into the model in depth, but to make sure that the group understood the overall intentions behind it, and the approach taken when developing it. This moment also highlighted the focus on the model on understanding 'attitudes' as a pre-requisite for knowledge and skills to 'be translated into action(s), into being, and into doing'. This is why the COMETS (and especially this one) focus a lot on attitudes and not so much on skills and knowledge.

The points tackled during this session on the competence model for trainers and on the competence area were:

- The competence model and this competence area: what is it about?
- The special focus on attitudes in the model (and competence area);
- COMETS are courses for competence development but not a 'tool delivery box', meaning that the main focus is on reflection and exchange between peers, including a space to reflect on how [all] this affects our practice.

The focus on the so-called 'political competence' already generated at this stage a spontaneous though quite rich and vivid exchange and reflection.

It was followed by an **introduction of the programme and the approach to working on the competence area** (pointing out what would be tackled, when and how (not always in a very explicit manner). This part also included a presentation of the compilation of the learning needs (see annexes) and which ones related to the programme (or not).

² <http://www.bruecke-most-zentrum.de/>

The second part of the day was dedicated to exploring the **principles of COMETS**, not only as the basis to build the course on but also to make links with the political dimension of the role of trainers as several of these principles do relate to values very often mentioned as trainers to base their work on. This session was conducted in an interactive way, asking the group to share their understanding of each principle before summing up.

Below you can find a series of the key words or sentences to explain what lies behind the principles (list non-exhaustive):

<p>Awareness: me – the group – the field – the context</p> <p>personal development process</p> <p>individual learning with and in a group</p> <p>all individuals in group work in the youth field</p> <p>'wholeness' of our work, what we do, why we do it, how we do it, and what the impact is</p> <p>ready to work on the follow-up</p> <p>ready to take action</p> <p>ready for the next step</p> <p>It doesn't stop the last day of the course</p>	<p>Readiness to question and to review practice</p> <p>capacity to reflect on own practice as trainer</p> <p>capacity to question to review practice</p> <p>to live with the ambiguity of 'many truths'</p> <p>underlying attitudes and assumptions</p>	<p>Readiness to stretch boundaries</p> <p>learning atmosphere enables everyone to stretch their boundaries</p> <p>ready to challenge comfort zone</p> <p>go beyond what is sure and accept uncertainty, the unknown</p> <p>embracing ambiguity</p> <p>dimension of trust</p>
<p>Awareness</p> <p>I am here as learner in a community of learners</p> <p>individuals are trainers</p> <p>participants first as learners</p> <p>process in the shoes of learners</p>	<p>Giving to Caesar what's Caesars' acknowledging [re]sources of our practice</p> <p>trainers must be able to provide the group with the source of the knowledge applied</p> <p>be fair with where you've got the sources of your work and acknowledge those who have worked on that before</p> <p>challenge oneself to explore where 'it comes from'</p>	

Being explicit about our choices as trainers

trainers able to explain why they opt for a given approach, method, theory, etc.

'transparency'

passing on certain 'knowledge'

not about right or wrong

share and explain choices and able to reflect upon them

Integrity

walk the talk!

integrity

capacity to be honest with one self

true to what one 'preaches'

to be 'whole'

to be ethical, consistent, trustworthy, etc.

readiness to regularly check own values

'is my practice in line with my values'

Giving space to the whole person – body, mind, soul, heart

not just trainer learners, whole person

trainer team has an interdependent relation with the group

participants to engage wholeheartedly and wholly

trainers aim to find an appropriate way to respond for care of body, mind, soul and heart

balance and harmony (include strong emotions)

give space to all dimensions

person to express themselves

Before enjoying a Skype input and exchange with Manfred Zentner – '**Manfred's calling**' - on the 'concepts and terminologies' behind the political role of trainers, participants were invited to share (in groups) their personal stories, what made them become a trainer, to identify what drives them today, and what keeps them going (please refer to the list of drives in the annexes).

The day ended with the **input of Manfred**. The session was divided in three parts:

- The input by Manfred (see presentation in the annexes)
- Buzz groups answering questions raised by Manfred (the buzz groups took place offline)
- Back to Skype: answers to Manfred and open exchange

Before closing, the '**sandpit**' – a possibility to illustrate the feelings of the day and how/where does everyone feel - was introduced. Each person had the chance to introduce their object or figurine and place it somewhere in or on the sandpit. Explanations for the placements were of course possible but not compulsory.

Day 2 – working on influences

Intentions of the day

- To explore the different types of influences, their impact on the trainers' practice, and the drives;
- To share the history of the ETS and have a better idea where the COMETS courses fit in;
- To provide a space for the group to reflect about the day and name/identify their insights;
- To have a fun evening that would allow the participants to discover each other from a more personal perspective.

Description

The day started by recalling the possibility to change position in the sandpit, should anyone wish to do so. A **video** was also shown as a light first step into thinking about our political role:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfZPDQQZFyo>

The first main session focused on the '**trainer and the political being**' dimensions within one person (how do they live together? Which one takes the lead, if any? Does it change? Etc.)

This work was addressed through a method usually applied in *systemic constellations* or *systemic dynamics in organisation*.

For the first part, participants were invited to work with two pieces of paper:

- Me as a Trainer
- Me as a political being



On each one, participants drew one arrow on top of the function (pointing up). They were invited to stand on the papers one at a time. On each they were encouraged to let flow the sensations, the impressions, and the feelings. Participants were then asked to 'play' with the papers, changing the positions of the arrows (opposing, pointing in the same direction, pointing in different directions, placed at the same level, one above the other, unified, etc.). This part ended with a sharing in pairs.

The second part of the session on influences consisted of taking their two pieces of paper and sticking them to a larger paper (to 'unify them within one person'). They explored the external influences (what influences them, as trainers or as political beings, or both) and what does the person influence (as a whole person). The external influences would be symbolised by arrows coming towards the two papers (or one of them if specifically influencing one dimension of the person, trainer or political being). Arrows coming out from the paper represented who and or what they in turn influence.



In pairs, participants were supporting the reflection by addressing specific questions to each other:

- Discuss together who (defines) influences the trainer/the political being?
- What has influenced their practice?
- What has changed over time? Why?

After the break, the session continued on a more 'practical note' since the group was invited to refer back to their stories of the day before and to explore one dilemma they could recall that has to do with either their trainer dimension, or their political being one. Each participant was invited to think about:

- What happened? Elements of the dilemma/conflict/clash?
- What did they/their team do?
- What happened as a result of what was done? How did they feel about it?
- Sense of 'failure', of 'it worked!!' or sense of giving up or of 'let go'?

The session ended with a debriefing, sharing their main insights while working on their dilemma but also their feelings when working on the first two parts of the session. More concretely, the points addressed in the debriefing were:

- How did they feel while working on their two dimensions?
- What steers them?
- What drives them?
- Can they identify better what influences them the most?
- Can they identify better what they influence the most?
- What did they get out of that session? Any A-Ha? Or...?)

The afternoon session started with an **exchange with Markus Kemper, from the organisation 'Kulturbüro'**³. Since 2001, Kulturbüro Sachsen e.V. has been advising local associations, youth initiatives, church communities, networks, companies as well as municipal policy and administration in Saxony with the aim of opposing right-wing extremist structures with an active democratic civil society. Their projects work out methods and contents, strengthening civic engagement and concrete actions against right-wing extremism and thus anchor democratic everyday culture in Saxon municipalities and counties. Kulturbüro Sachsen e.V. implements projects in different areas of work, which are implemented in Saxony through participation of the citizens,

³ Kulturbüro: <http://www.kulturbuero-sachsen.de/index.php/arbeitsbereiche/mobile-beratungsteams-mbt.html%20/>
<http://www.kulturbuero-sachsen.de/index.php/ueber-uns.html>

sociocultural work and Political education to develop and support democratic structures.

The idea behind this encounter was also for the group to get acquainted with one of the local realities and with the political work of a local organisation. The session opened with an introduction of the work of the organisation with concrete examples of their work, and continued on an informal note, with questions and answers that continued into the break.

The break was followed by a thorough **presentation of the European Training Strategy** by Udo Teichmann from SALTO T&C. The session was supported by a visual presentation (see PowerPoint in the annexes) and gave the space for questions and comments.

The day ended with the **LSD group** (learning and self-development) groups (see annexes for the outcomes and the 'special features' section for more information).

Day 3 – working on attitudes

Intentions of the day

- To exploring inner-readiness, openness, and curiosity;
- To recall the importance of attitudes in the model as a basis for the rest to happen (knowledge and skills);
- To experiment on how to deal with polarities.

Description

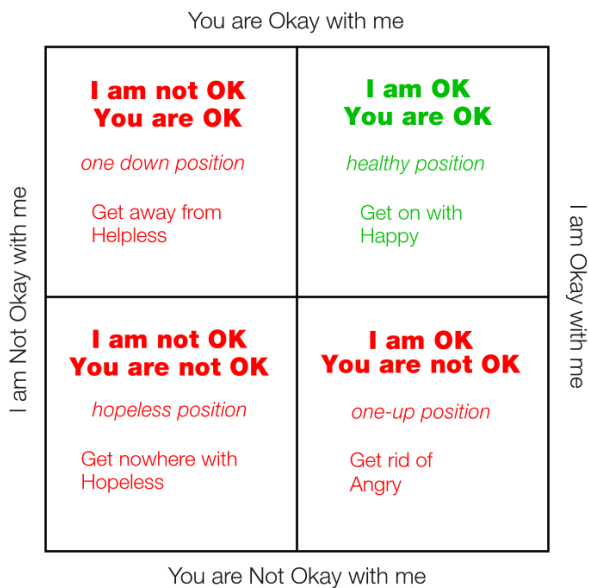
The day opened with the **sandpit**, placed in the middle of the room. Participants were invited to check their position/space and move if they felt like doing so. Explanations were possible but not a must. It continued with a **video** to illustrate in a light manner the idea of 'attitudes':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RHCGfZhheM>

Day 3 was the day that would focus the most on the question of attitudes: what is meant by this? Why is it important? Why does the model give it so much space? What does it mean to 'work on one's attitudes'?

In order to highlight the importance of challenging oneself and to make sure of a real and genuine dialogue, the team introduced the model of '**I'm OK – you're OK**' (initially developed by Eric Berne in the context of Transactional Analysis⁴).

⁴ Note: the model was presented from the perspective of its use in the PCM®, though without the focus on assertiveness: <http://processcommmodel.com/pcm-and-assertiveness/>



It highlights that a genuine communication, relation and dialogue is only possible if both persons are considered as 'equals', though that does not mean to agree with the other's opinion. It is not possible with someone that is *a priori* 'underestimated' (that we don't like, that we see 'lower than us', more incompetent, etc.) or 'overestimated' (that we admire, glorify, that we are impressed with, etc.).

The idea was also for people to understand how much we usually have value-based behaviours, thoughts, opinions, and how much our pre-judgmental thoughts influence the way

we can actually exchange with another person. The link was made to our polarities, two dimensions of oneself and how we constantly navigate between them depending on the spaces, contexts, situations, etc., especially when the positive dimension of one becomes 'too much'.

The mini input was followed by a thorough introduction of working on and with polarities. As for the session on influences, the approach was based on *systemic constellations* or *systemic dynamics in organisation*, following a process developed by the Braided River Group: <http://braidedrivergroup.com/polarity-management-2/>

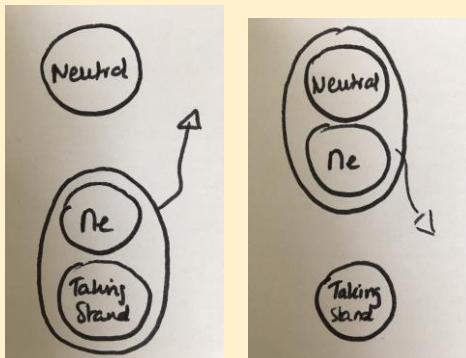
The two polarities used as example were: being neutral / taking a stand (the reason for this choice is the fact that this was very often mentioned as a hard 'choice' to make for trainers, through the various consultations that took place with regard to this competence area).

The introduction was followed by a series of positions that participants were invited to take (working in trios) with regard to their polarities. The key words were to feel, sense, listen to the emotions, etc. The idea was to try to avoid remaining on a cognitive level.

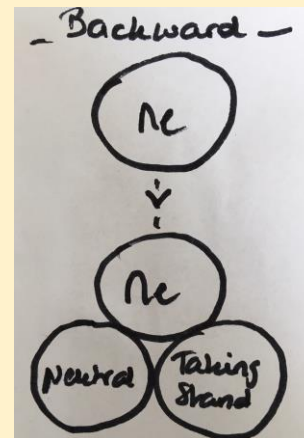
Part 1 - starting point and taking distance. Participants chose two persons to represent their polarities. They first stand close to the two poles, and are asked to go backwards until they have a good vision of both poles at the same time (global vision). Elements to explore: how does that feel now? How did it feel before? What feels better?

Part 2 - walk between the polarities. Participants walk around their polarities and sense how it is when they are close to one of their polarities, how it feels when they are far from them, etc.

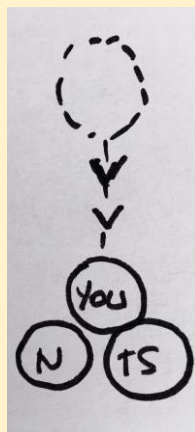
Part 3 - being with one/becoming one polarity. Participants get close to one of their polarities. They 'become one' with that pole. Participants' head and polarity's head can turn towards the other pole until they meet its eyes... What are the senses/feelings? To be repeated with the other one.



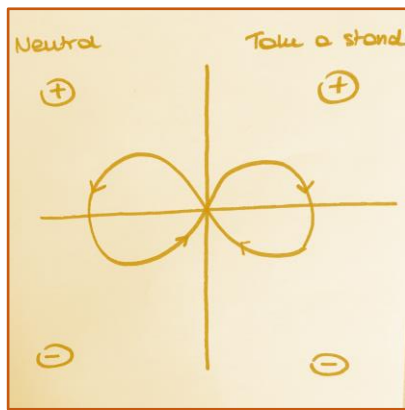
Part 4 - lean on my polarities. Participants are asked to place their poles behind them, next to each other. They walk backwards until they touch both polarities, until they can actually lean on them. How does it feel?



Part 5 - go towards my polarities facing them. Participants are asked to place their poles in front of them, next to each other. They walk towards until they touch their polarities, until they can actually touch their feet, hands. How does it feel?



Once this part was finalised, participants requested a moment to feel, think and write notes on the process they had gone through as well as the impressions, feelings and emotions that came up.



The session continued with an exercise done first individually and then in duo/trios (for the sharing). Participants were asked to draw the 'quadrant of polarities' and to do it for themselves (getting into a more cognitive level, leaving the sensing one aside). They could use the example being neutral/taking a stand but that was only optional and they were free to change.

The session ended with sharing in plenary the impressions they got from the different steps of the exercise: what does that say about which attitude they take? Do they adjust them to the group? The context? Do they rather follow senses, feelings and intuition? The sharing/work together was meant as a sort of coaching by a peer, to support the defining of the different elements of the quadrant, what helped when blocked, etc.

The working session ended with the **LSD groups**, before a bit of free time in Dresden. The group met again around 18:00 to enjoy a little **guided tour** of the city centre, to end the day in a nice local restaurant.

Day 4 – working on limits

Intentions of the day

- To explore internal and external limits to trainers' work and role(s) – the limits of the group – the limits of HR and Democracy;
- To provide a space for participants to further explore topics not tackled formally or other learning needs.

Description

As almost traditionally by now, the day opened with the **sandpit** and with a **video** to spark the question of 'limits':

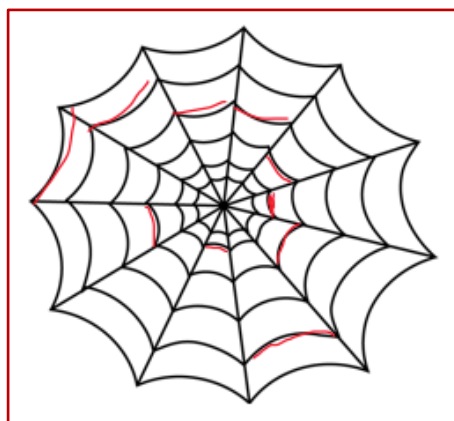
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9NQatne0xg>

An introduction of the day clarified the **focus of the day on 'limits'** and what it embedded (as not everything could be tackled):

- Internal and external limits to the trainers' work;
- The limits of the trainer and the limits of the group: where to find the balance? How to push/steer? How far is this the trainer's ambition? (whose need is it when pushed or steered? The trainer's or the group's?);
- How far are we ready to accept the limits of the group, that some people are not able to go further, that some steps have been done, etc. → this can go as far as accepting the world's imperfection = our drive to move;
- Democracy and human rights: as a context trainers work with and in. As principles to apply. As limits to be aware of ('our rights are limited by the rights of the others').

As a first step into 'limits', participants have been asked to place themselves on a spider web, depending on the level of reaction to a given situation (10 were presented in total):

- a) Each participant received an A4 paper with a spider web on it. Each section of the spider web represented a question/statement/situation.
- b) Participants had 15 minutes to reflect on each statement and decide where is there red line for this situation.
- c) Participants marked the spider web ring which corresponded to their level of response: close to centre: neutral / no response / no reaction / ok --- far from centre: redline / strong response / strong reaction / not ok



As a second step, the participants were given the space to tackle a few statements that generated strong reactions for them and to place themselves in the room, as they did on their spider web. A few people were asked to explain their position. The points for reflection were:

- Is it about my limits (am I imposing my limits on the group?)
- Is it the limits of the group - and I am ok with this/can I happily (or not) accept this?
- What are my feelings about this?
- How do I decide on a limit?
- Am I pushing or being pushed?
- Am I considering this as my limit or the limit of the group?

Statements / Scenarios:

1. During a training course, you are openly but subtly criticising a 'P'olitical perspective you disagree with
2. A participant consistently refers to Gypsies during a discussion at a neighbouring lunch table
3. You are running an international youth exchange on working with young refugees, one member of the group discovers there is a demonstration taking place that afternoon in the city in support of refugees, there will also be counter demonstrations taking place...
4. While facilitating a discussion some members of the group begin to express right wing views you fundamentally disagree with

5. 'Shaffiyah Khan' anti English Defence League (right wing) protester (see image): you hold a debate about non-violent protest and use her picture as an example! Knowing the context that she shouted at the EDL while they were holding a minute of silence for the victims of the Westminster terrorist attack (April 2017) hence provoking such a strong reaction from the men in the picture... (this is also a reinterpreted version of the actual events)



Picture shown in the media while standing in front of a EDL protester



Picture seldom shown in the media during her arrest

Source: Google images (no copyright indicated)

6. A participant shares with you during a break their views on a subject where you hold the opposite views
7. The residential centre where you are holding your activity proclaims itself as an ecological centre, during breaks they provide Nescafe and use plastic disposable cups...
8. Members of the group hold an informal discussion that you can hear, many of the 'facts' and points of view are clearly incorrect and/or misleading
9. You have a contract to run a training course on the promotion of Europe as a concept for young people in Tunisia with a combination of participants from Erasmus+ programme countries and the South Mediterranean countries. European Political policy is rejecting more and more refugees coming from Middle East and North Africa...
10. On an environmental training course a participant approaches you in the break to point out that you always say 'Coffee Break'! He passionately points out that coffee is bad for the environment and asks you not to say this anymore...

Case study to explore: as a next step, participants were presented with a situation that happened in an activity:

In a project on social justice, during the movie night, one participant declares that gay people are sick, that homosexuality is an illness, and that they should be helped. Not the whole group hears as some participants are in the dining area having a drink. Some participants present seem clearly shocked. A couple of team members that witnessed the scene share the info with the rest of the team and they quickly meet to decide what to do.

In groups of 6, they became the trainers in that team, being given four options to opt for:

- i. they let go and do not intervene,
- ii. they address the participant,
- iii. they address the whole group,
- iv. or...?

It was highlighted that any of these situations could or could not work. The only requirements were to make sure that throughout the process and no matter their option, no one would be harmed and their decision (and actions) would be genuine, and well-intentioned.

The options were shared in plenary and debated. The guiding questions to do so were:

- How did they come to this option?
- Did they all agree or were there different opinions?
- How did they feel in the discussion?
- What were the elements that made them opt for one way or another?
- Did they feel limited?
- Did they feel like following (following the needs of others) or leading (pushing for their own need)?
- What would they have done on an individual basis?

The session on limits moved towards exploring the **notion of values**, and especially the need to be able to comprehend what we 'can't stand', meaning our anti-value. The intention was to link this to human rights and democracy from a value-based perspective. The introduction used to recall what happened the days before and the need to keep in mind the following elements:

- Trainer's stories from the first day
- The influences explored on the 2nd day
- The attitudes explored on the 3rd day
- The issues explored from the morning and the concept of Limits
- Democracy and human rights: what does it mean in the trainers' work?

The participants were asked to consider their journey of the last days, considering all the above elements, and what value or values came to their mind? They had to choose one. In groups of 4 or 5, they shared their values, explaining why they are important for them.

As a result, each group picked one value and analysed it according to the following table (if there is time a second value could be analysed - 2nd one should be the most challenging one). Process (in that order):

1. What are the advantages of the value?
2. What are the disadvantages of the anti-value?
3. What are the disadvantages of the value?
4. What are the advantages of the anti-value?

Example:

Value		Anti-Value	
+	-	+	-
Justice		Injustice	
People treated fairly	Equity Positive discrimination	Individual needs recognised	Discrimination Abuse of power
1	3	4	2

The debriefing in plenary did not focus on the lists in each category but on what understanding the participants took from the exercise? How does this exercise link to limits? What links did they see with human rights and Democracy?

This part of the day ended with further explanations on why are human rights and democracy present in the competence model, in which way are they in, how does this limit a possible misuse of the competence model itself, how does this frame our working context, etc.

This session also meant the end of the parts dedicated to the competence area as such, to leave space to the Open Agenda and, the next day, to the harvesting and closing.

Open Agenda

The group was given space (60-90 minutes on this day and the day after, 2 rounds with up to 4 topics each) to spend some time tackling topics that the formal agenda could not tackle. This could be for time reasons or because it was not fully linked to the topic (priority would be given to issues linked to the competence area, but not only). The intention of the Open Agenda was to tackle the learning needs participants still wanted to talk and reflect about with colleagues here in the COMETS.

Subjects proposed and undertaken by the participants for this day:

- Assertive behaviour in communication
- Basket of values to take home
- Group dynamics experience
- Online tools for values development

The day ended with the **LSD groups**. The group was invited to join an 'end of winter' party by the river Elbe, with bonfire and a firework later on that night.

Day 5 – harvesting and closing

Intentions of the day

- To provide a space for participants to further explore topics not tackled formally or other learning needs
- To reflect on the course and harvest the insights, outcomes and learning
- To 'prototype' the next steps, the follow-up

Description

The day started with a **video** on how to approach 'fear' (with humour): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=An18wQ3asMw>

The **Open Agenda** continued for up to 90 minutes, tackling the following subjects proposed and undertaken by the participants:

- Drugs (understanding drugs and how to work on that issue)
- Inspiration for practice: the 'p'olitical dimension
- Method of the Theatre of the Oppressed (and emotions)
- Youth participation in the electoral process

As a way to close content-related sessions, a second '**Manfred's calling**' was organised. This session built on the reflection of the LSD groups and on some of the issues raised during these groups. Participants also had the opportunity the day before to define concrete questions for Manfred, which were as follow (*note: reformulated for the Skype session*):

- From your research, can you share some good examples of preventing youth radicalisation?
- What are the current trends among young people in Europe?
- Where is the EU going? (populism/radicalisation)
- What would say about "You cannot change the world, just accept and take a position after exploring the other polarity"?
- If you develop a T-shirt after this project, what will it say?

This created a transition between the reflection on P/p-olitical and a more meta level on the competence area and the approach to COMETS, which partly included going through a self-assessment process (of the given competence area). Participants were invited to go back to their self-assessment (for those who did not do it before: to have a look at it now) and to share in pairs what are the biggest changes they notice based on the following questions:

- Is there any change in the way they look at the self-assessment (elements to assess) now?
- Have they developed a different understanding of the competences, criteria and indicators?

A plenary exchange allowed the sharing of some thoughts on the self-assessment while another dimension – of usefulness – was tackled:

- How useful is it to go through the self-assessment process before the course?
- How useful is the self-assessment form as such?

Recommendations of participants on the self-assessment

Following the space given to feedback the process of working with the self-assessment form (which was required before the course), participants naturally had very varied opinions, which are summarised below.

For some, working with it before and having a look at it at the end of the course did not change much: the understanding that was there initially remains identical.

For some others, working with the self-assessment before the course was pretty challenging, for different reasons:

- Because it was too abstract at that moment (one month before the course) and the links/connection with the course could not be made
- Because the relevance of the process wasn't clear enough
- Because some concepts were too blurry (e.g. the concept of 'limits' in the competence area)
- Because the wording is sometimes demanding; the competence area is complex
- Because assessing oneself with numbers (ratings) does not work
- Because it felt as an obligation rather than an invitation

For most of those who have expressed the above reasons, the situation has changed after having taken part in this COMETS course: the understanding of the concepts are clearer; some 'priorities' or elements assessed initially in one way did change; and the link to the course is more obvious (so is the relevance of using the self-assessment).

For a few participants, going through the self-assessment before the course was a real help. It was felt as a first step to get into the course, to 'prepare' oneself, to get familiar with some of the concepts (even if challenging), or to start a self-exploring process. The wish to link the competence area to European values was not necessarily easy, but was seen as 'a must do' by some participants who cannot consider their trainer's role without this taken into account.

The 'pluses' in working with the self-assessment before the course – besides identifying learning needs – were very much linked to the above (get into the course, start self-reflecting, etc.). The possibility to write essays was also appreciated by some participants, especially those who have more resistance in using rating systems and tables. The 'small p' approach in the competence area was also relatively clear to several participants (they struggled more with the 'big P' dimension in it, or actually, not being in it).

The 'minuses' in working with the self-assessment form before the course was either linked to the form itself (again, the fact to have to deal with ratings) and that it was to be performed one month before the course, when people are not very much 'there' yet. Some recommended to perhaps propose this process closer to the course (or even upon arrival), which then means that the team has to work on assessing the

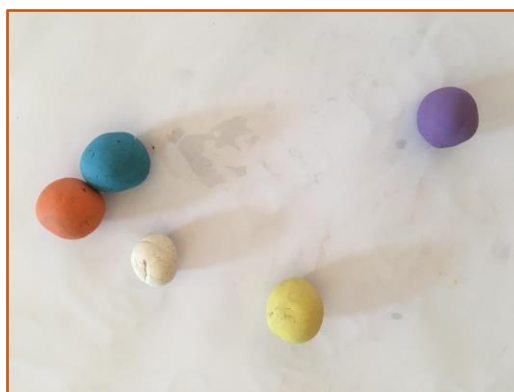
learning needs differently.

Another recommendation was to perhaps make it clear what parts of the competence area would the course tackle, and to focus the self-assessment process on those only. The team was not much in favour as there are no competences that aren't tackled at all (really, not at all, even implicitly) and it is important to comprehend all the competences when performing the self-assessment. But that could be considered when tackling the learning needs (although being aware of all of them – even those that won't be tackled – is important for the team too).

A short introduction document might also be a plus to better understand the self-assessment process in the context of a preparation for COMETS.

After the exchange, the time came to start the **harvesting and the prototyping** processes. The intentions of that session were to provide the group with a space to envision what they could do with their outcomes of the course, if any, from different perspectives. The process went as follow:

- a) Personal reflection
- b) Shaping the intentions – next steps – follow-up with the plasticine
- c) Look at the sculpture from the 4 directions and asking oneself the '4 direction questions'
- d) In pairs: exchange on the reflection



The 4 direction questions:

- ❖ EAST: What do you love in this sculpture? What other emotions come up? If these emotions could talk, what would they say to you?
- ❖ SOUTH: What are the key realities that you are going to face in your follow up?
- ❖ WEST: What is ending in this situation (or wanting to die)? What wants to emerge (wanting to be born)?
- ❖ NORTH: If this follows up was designed for you to learn, what might it be trying to teach you? Spark of the future: what is the deeper purpose or call of the future that you feel now?

The next step in the process of closing the course was the distributing of the **Youthpass certificates** (parts 1 and 2) to participants. The method opted for was to randomly distribute them amongst the participants and that each person would go to the 'Youthpass owner', give them the Youthpass with some nice words. The invitation to complete the part 3 within 3 weeks was also made (invitation to be sent electronically later on). A request to complete the online evaluation form was also formulated, giving the group one week to do so (please refer to the annexes for the compilation of the evaluation outcomes).

The day ended as it started, with a **video**:

Moments <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fq7xkYo08XM>, before getting into the final move on the **sandpit** and the possibility to share few **final words or thoughts**; a beautiful and emotional moment for the group.

Special features

Walk the talk wall

As for the COMETS ICC, the group was invited to apply one of the principles and to try the 'Walk your talk' wall. This consisted of a flipchart marked 'walk your talk' where, each time someone would think or say something that they did not feel fully in-tune with, or not genuine, the individual would indicate their name on a post-it, put it on the flipchart and paste a sticky dot each time such moment would happen (no explanation was required, and people indicating their names were never pointed to). About 10 participants and team members engaged with it.

Manfred's calling

Manfred Zentner, youth researcher from the University of Krems (Austria) was involved in the preparatory phase of COMETS. The idea was to have a 'critical friend' physically present during the whole duration of the course reacting to key moments as they emerged. For different reasons, this was not possible but the possibility to still involve Manfred remained a strong wish from the trainers' team.

It was therefore proposed to have Manfred through Skype during two moments (refer to the description of Day and Day 3 for more information).

LSD groups

The LSD (learning and self-development) groups were meant to provide a space for the group to reflect about the day and name/identify their insights. They were composed of 3 to 4 participants and the groups remained similar throughout the course.

Each day, the LSD groups were asked a specific set of questions and were invited to write their main insights on moderation cards, that would then be passed onto Manfred to prepare his intervention on Day 5. In the annexes, you can find a compilation of these main outcomes.

The sandpit

The sandpit was a possibility for participants to 'materialise' and to illustrate their feelings of the day and how/where would they place themselves accordingly. The first session with the sandpit gave the possibility to each participant to introduce their object or figurine. When foreseeing a moment with the whole group, placements on the sandpit could be explained orally but that was not an obligation.



Meeting with a local organisation

The intention behind this was to partly illustrate how to work with the model – as a reference to knowing the local context – but also to take the opportunity to tackle the ‘political role of trainers’ and to meet with an organisation that bases its work on values and on political beliefs (in this case: combatting right-wing extremist structures). Factors such as having an active role at local level and being able to present this in English to the group played a role in the difficulty to identify a possible organisation. Kulturbüro Sachsen e.V. was invited. Several participants have expressed that it would have been better to meet an organisation on the spot (in the city) but for Kulturbüro this would have meant to meet them in their office.

Guided tour in Dresden

A guided tour in Dresden was organised, with the same idea to know a bit more about the environment. Given the time available and the wish to still offer few real free hours to the group, the tour wasn't very long: about 75 minutes. It was generally appreciated though several participants added that it would have been better to have a thematic tour, perhaps talking more about the war, or about what is happening with extremist groups meeting on a weekly basis on Dresden, etc. This was actually the initial intention but was not possible to organise anymore.

Team evaluation

Approach, methods and methodology

COMETS concept

One element that the team faced during the course itself and in the writing of this report is how to reference COMETS. In exchanges that took place before the participants arrived both trainers found it easier to refer to the concept as a 'learning experience' as opposed to a 'pure' training course or even a 'training for trainers'. The notion of this being a 'training' automatically creates certain expectations in participants, whereas the notion of a learning experience while maybe vague for some people leaves the interpretation much more open.

The focus on attitudes

The team made a very conscious choice to focus on the attitude part of the competence model (and the competence area). Reflection on such a choice went on during the whole preparatory phase, but remained as it became clearer and clearer that this is probably the most 'human/person-focused' competence area of the whole competence model, and the one that is the least tangible. Of course, moments could be dedicated to more practical elements of the competence area but 'attitudes' seemed to be the right focus to base the whole course on.

This meant giving a lot of space to reflecting, to awareness-raising, to sensing, and to feeling.

Such a focus was made very clear to the whole group who knew from the start (though for some it became clear only on the spot) that this would neither be a course to explore Political issues with a big P (in the sense of trainers involved in changing political situation in their county), nor a course on human rights [education] and democracy. These were some of the learning needs expressed and the team did its best to be very transparent on what would be 'left aside' and why. The fact that COMETS are also not meant as 'toolbox' but rather as moments to reflect amongst peers was also highlighted several times.

Such clarifications were important as it helped to bring everyone to the same level of understanding of what this COMETS would be about and what would be the methodological approach. It was also an invitation to the group to trust and to 'jump in', which they did.

The team focussed primarily on the first two competences of the competence area and tackled the two others more implicitly than explicitly. Curiously (or not), the participants' learning needs also went into that direction (or so it seemed, as of course their needs were interpreted by a team that had already an approach in mind).

Space for improvement:

- It appeared clear during the session on limits and human rights and democracy that the session could have been built differently. The group really connected to analysing and reflecting on concrete situations and as such this was enough to generate a good debate and to exemplify the link with HR and democracy. The session on values and anti-values was therefore not at the right place (and should have remained for the day dedicated to attitudes, as initially meant). The resistance of the team to approach the dimension of human right and democracy from a 'too practical' or 'too superficial' perspective (given the high level of reflection by the group) was in the end not justified and resulted in limiting the potential of this part.
- The same applies to the last two competences in the competence area (they could have been tackled more directly).

Note: The two points above are reflected in the participants' overall rating (see annexes).

- Although even for participants that are not used to spend so much time on reflecting and feeling, the focus seemed to have been a relevant and efficient focus/approach. Nevertheless, the course lacked moments with more movement, generating a different energy. This was a real need that the team should not have ignored or minimised, even though the group was invited to take responsibility for this and to propose something when needed.

Skype moments with Manfred Zentner

The wish to involve Manfred was there since the very beginning at the preparatory meeting. The fact that this was not possible physically anymore did not represent an obstacle and the team explored ways to involve him differently. This report highlights the approach and this will therefore not be repeated here, but it seems worth highlighting that it worked very well. The group, as in many other cases, followed the team on this and involved themselves in this 'virtual relation' in the best way possible, especially when it came to preparing the second intervention of Manfred on the 1st of May. Some evaluations highlight these two moments with Manfred as very much appreciated.

Manfred also took his role very seriously and engaged himself fully into the process. The preparation was smooth and easy, and he understood very well what was expected from him. The fact to have general guidelines but not too strict requirements from the side of the team also made his approach flexible and his interventions smooth as a more informal exchange than a fully framed input.

Cooperation

Cooperation within the team of trainers

Although they know each other for several years, it was the first time for Nik and Gisele to work together. And as a matter of fact, the cooperation went very smoothly. The preparation was planned in one way and went in a different one, but with constant dialogue and 'checking moments' in between. Trust, openness and honesty also played a big role in the easy-going way of working.

The balance in the team was very much present (and needed) when it came to developing and facilitating session either dedicated to feeling and sensing, or to more concrete elements and dynamic in the group. Both trainers did not hesitate to get out of their comfort zone, with a strong reciprocal support. Both trainers also did not hesitate to bring to the course their background, history and of course, experiences, which has proven to be useful in a COMETS tackling such topic than the political role of trainers.

They both showed a big respect for the group and for the individuals in the group, pushing them when necessary but always leaving space to express resistances, ideas, opinions, and needs. This seems to have been generally appreciated by the participants, who felt that they always had the choice to engage themselves or not (as expressed by some).

Cooperation with JfE and SALTO T&C

The cooperation with JfE and SALTO T&C was very smooth. Once the main focus was clarified during the prep meeting, a lot of space was given to the team to work on the content, to define the involvement of Manfred, to define the direction to take.

Special thanks also to Udo Teichmann for the great support in terms of logistics, in planning the guided tour and the meeting with the local organisation, and in making the work of the team on the spot very easy. This is also valid for Udo's support on the spot, both in informal moments or for session led by him (e.g. ETS presentation).

The group of participants

The group reached a level of cohesion from the very first moments, and kept it until the end, even if some sub-groups naturally started to be formed. People cared for each other, supported each other and even if a part of themselves was resisting, they engaged in every single moment (exercise) that the team offered. The success of this COMETS – even with its shortcomings - is surely thanks to them, to their commitment, to their participation and to their generosity.

Logistics and extra features

Brücke-Most Zentrum resulted in being an amazing place to organise such a course. The fact that it was not located in city centre itself but not too far made possible some evening escapades with easy access to public transport until midnight. Being very close to the river also made it easy for the group to reach the bonfire and the fireworks of the Sunday evening, which was initially not foreseen.

The working spaces and the material provided was more than adequate. The staff was very friendly, understanding, supportive, making the work of the team quite easy. Efforts to speak English were made and very much appreciated.

Possible fields of improvement:

- A better Internet in the bedroom that is not based on voucher usable on one device only and blocking a series of private e-mail accounts (it only worked with standard ones such as Gmail, Yahoo, and Hotmail).

- A bit of warm food in the evening, such as soup (available the first evening and repeated the last evening upon the group's suggestion). This is especially valid when the days are fresh, as it was the case, and with groups that are not used to salad, cheese, ham and bread in the evening.

Definitively a place to keep in mind for future meeting!

The preparatory and logistic work by Ingrid and Udo was also very much praised, buy the team and by the group.

Report and pictures by Nik Paddison and Gisele Evrard Markovic

Programme

**COMETS Training Course on Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work
26th April – 2nd of May 2017 - Dresden, Germany**

	Wednesday 26/04	Thursday 27/04	Friday 28/04	Saturday 29/04	Sunday 30/4	Monday 01/05	Tuesday 02/05
9h30 – 13h00		GETTING INTO COMETS Who is here? Intro to the programme of COMETS, special features	LANDSCAPE OF INFLUENCES Exploring the different types of influences, their impact on our practice and our drives	ATTITUDES Exploring our inner-readiness, our openness, our curiosity Which posture do we take as trainer: working on polarities	LIMITS Exploring internal and external limits to our work and role(s) – exploring the limits of the group – exploring the limits of HR and Democracy	OPEN AGENDA (continuation) Reflection and harvesting - Prototyping new approaches, methods, projects	
14h30 – 18h30	Arrivals of participants	Principles, intentions and Wishes - Connecting [with] the group Having a look at concepts and terminologies	Meeting a local organisation: exploring the local reality ETS and COMETS Training – background and context LSD groups (peer support)	(continuation) LSD groups (peer support) Around 16:00: Free late afternoon and guided tour of the centre of Dresden	(continuation) OPEN AGENDA What is still open from my learning needs that I would like to talk about/reflect upon with colleagues here? LSD groups (peer support)	(continuation) Youthpass Evaluation of the course Closing	Departures of participants
20h00 /20h30	Welcome Evening	Free	'Share your passion' evening	Dinner out	Organised evening out	Farewell Party	

List of participants

First name	Last name	Organisation
Adrià	Sonet	Amagi Projects
Alena	Smetanová	Secondary School
Alina	Besleaga	The Republican Center for Children and Youth Artico
Bára	Rodi (Blahova)	Petrklic Help
Biel	Martínez Lorca	NEXES
Daniele	Nubile	Internationalen Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk e.V.
Federico	Pozzoni	Associazione di promozione sociale Joint
Iztok	Zver	Institute ANIMA VITA
Joao Pedro	Cambeiro Barrulas	Associação Évora Jovem
Julia	Dem	MTÜ VitaTiim
Klára	Berg	Be International, Centre for International Cooperation
Lluis	Juan Rodriguez	Independent expert
Maja	Majcen	Javni zavod Mladi zmaji
Monika	Sobańska	Foundation MEDEINA, Active Women Association
Patricia	Eguía Mayor	Freelance trainer
Prokopiou	Ekaterini	Life Guidance Today - katherina Therapy
Seda	Martirosyan	Pasadena Sister Cities International
Svitlana	Korenkova (Tymchenko)	Freelance trainer
Terezia	Brüggemann (Holúbková)	Land of Harmony Foundation
Theo	Mavrosavva	Nautilus SAR
Urszula	Puchalska	Fundacja Aktrywnych Inicjatyw Rozwoju (FAIR)
Vasile	Deac	Romanian Association for Counseling and Support

Learning needs of the participants

Note: the learning needs are divided into the 4 competence. Question marks indicate those who would partially be tackled.

Connecting Policies and Educational Programmes

- To question policies
- Improve knowledge about policies
 - Understand what is relevant
 - To apply them in the projects
- Linking (youth) policies and educational programmes
- To learn more about how to gather information about youth policies
- More knowledge on all programmes and an overview of those policies
- Join expert group / influence policy-making
- Understanding the trainer's work as a political doing
- ? Influence of local political context of place where training takes place
- How to integrate it in the project in order to create a better environment for experiential learning?
- ? Understand more clearly what are the different concepts involving the political dimension in youth work
- How to cope with contrary opinions
- ? Ability to diagnose causes and effects arising from problems of educational programs and policies
- To be proactive towards such issues
- ? Understand better the rationale and intention behind the Erasmus+ How to lobby and influence its policies

Integrating Political Values and Beliefs

- Make a training more adapted to their reality, background and needs
- Dealing with difficult co-trainers – blocked or limited
- Confront own limitations as a trainer
- To take experience from my trainings
- Critical questioning of information and political beliefs
- Contrast political opinions with different perspectives

Supporting Learners in Political Thinking

- ? To support learners in developing political thinking
- Inclusion of a political dimension to support the learners political thinking
- Get information on participants' socio-political contexts
- To promote a genuine dialogue among young participants from different backgrounds
- To support learners to express their opinion
- Need to learn some methods/techniques to develop learners' attitudes

Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles

- To stand up for values and act consequently
- To plan a project/programme in order to create space and motivation for exploring democracy
- To address them in a participative way, avoiding a cultural connotation
- ? Raise awareness on how to tackle the human rights principles
- ? Explore principles of democracy, in what situations are serving and in what are they limiting

Combined: Connecting Policies and Educational Programmes and Integrating Political Values and Beliefs

- To gather information and identify diverse, independent and valid sources of information
- To accept constructive criticism
- To think critically
- To create reflection
- Rational capacity to explain and make my positions more relevant to others
- Test my personal and trainer competences
- Test weaknesses
- Stretch/ Expand/ Deepen Boundaries and Choices – personal, family, cultural, society, professional, country, era restricting...
- More solution focussed as a person, trainer, youth worker and professional
- To have a bigger overview of political dimension in my work and to frame it
- Conceptualization of what I am doing
- Representing NGO (apolitical) and integrating my own 'p'olitical values
- To understand how and to what extent I can be political oriented in my work
- Raise awareness of how I work as a trainer in the political manner
- How can I present my opinion/beliefs
- Reflect on political values and act in a responsible and constructive way
- How own political values and beliefs interfere with my trainings

Learning needs not explicitly tackled during the course:

Political Trainer

- Increase the recognition of my work and the political aspects in youth work, mobility and training

Human Rights / Democracy

- Learn new methodology for values, Human Rights and democracy principles
- Which categories and which inputs we should use concerning democracy and human rights in trainings

Learners

- How to get active political participation in their societies – not 'political party thinking, brainwashing
- How to avoid radicalisation and extremism (on all levels)
- How to raise awareness among learners with fewer opportunities
- How to have active participation of young people
- Analysis and evaluation of social impacts

Hate and violence

- How to react to sports encouraging hate and violence – make men from boys
- Methodologies and ideas to combat populist politics, right wing influence

Tools

- How to deal with language barriers
- Non-verbal communication
- Need experience of other training styles
- To better understand effective ways to communicate with young people
- Communication and dialogue skills

Outcomes – what drives me to be a trainer?

- If someone you meet in the street asks you why you are a trainer, what would you say?

- Freedom to choose what you want to do, how and on what topic you want to work
- People's energy (energy of the exchange)
- Positive emotions
- Sparkling eyes – magic
- Create multiplier through awareness and change (reach as many people as possible; people in need, and everyone has at least one) Realise that we all have choices and opportunities in life and that we can get out of the box and do things
- Lifelong learning and non-formal learning is a natural development, it's life
- I can never say 'I'm a trainer', it's a never-ending process. It's all the time about learning
- Willingness to change reality by changing realities – transformative potential – the magic
- People (participants, their energy, the impact on them) – people (the feeling to belong to a community to share) - people (the wide community of beneficiaries)
- The feeling that I can influence a generation of young people that in a long-term will be the future leaders in a country or at European level → the feeling that I can influence the way young people think and change what frustrates me
- The will to support and empower young people
- Energy (it's about me and maybe I'm being selfish but I like to be close to the people and especially those who make me feel good and better)
- "I remember this training; it changed my life" when meeting participants later on or a few years later
- Empower people to be the change, to make it become real
- The fulfilment feeling (for the participants and me)
- To work in teams, work with someone, learn from each other and in good spirit (no competition)
- The fact not to have a boss who tells you what to do (beyond the obvious working framework and contractual issues)
- The creativity in the work, the challenges, and to keep on working
- Trainers are "teachers" that "teach" through emotions; we can be role models for them
- This is the best platform I found to contribute to societal changes

- To restore my hope for humanity (this is the place where I can do that)
- It's a place where I can be myself, express who and who I am
- The capacity to apply my educational background with different methodologies (that can complement each other)
- The concept of reflecting on your own, the inner-readiness
- The art of creating an magical space where people can learn to be free
- I can see my ego growing in certain situations
- It's a way to get inside other people's world perspective; it's enriching (challenging, demanding, drive me mad sometimes, but really helps grasping the world as it is)
- Beyond the impact on people, it's to hear after a few years how what we did changed people's life
- It increases my self-confidence ("positive selfishness")
- Connected to satisfaction and development
- The possibility to put people together to exchange in a peaceful environment
- To create communities (small groups, each time)
- The creativity and improvisation
- The possibility to "research" and observe, to experience people in different environments
- The possibility to each time create micro-universes
- It's a radical political act → the possibility to show a different system than a product/market based one
- Passionately believe in what I work with (said: my ego is huge and I love this concept)
- Transformation (accompanying transformation processes, of people, in people, around people...)
- The paintings – it drives me to play with colours

LSD Groups

Day 2

Questions

- What have I learned about myself this day?
- What are the key influences on me, that I identified for myself and my colleagues?
- What are the key influences I share with my participants?

Insights

- Politics is not bringing people to elections... (?) – butterfly effect
- There was a clear difference between private personal (political being) and professional (trainer) spheres
- Structure vs. chaos (split personality) - The structure leads to the role - Role (for instance trainer) - influencing others horizontally
- Holistic influences / mirror neurons (speaking about political implications in training) - more impact and influences for trainings
- Awareness came after re-starting from zero with terminology (big P, small p...) - role of trainer influences and is influenced by political values
- “Bubbles” of information, acquaintances -> similar visions to yours. How to address the dialogue with extreme diversity (e.g. neo-nazi)? Good learning point from Kutlur Buro (*note to Manfred: the organisation that came to present their work and working context of Dresden to the group, see link to their website in the script*) → empower “victims” to get bubbles together and strengthen them
- As a trainer I tend to offer like-minded tools for like-minded people and it is a conscious choice
- Developing self-awareness is a political act
- I learned that reciprocal influence is unavoidable; the awareness of it is not
- Extreme influence of being a trainer on my identity/political being
- Sometimes the context forces you to get the political being out of your training, but you can create a context that supports the political being of others
- Influence can be seen as very close to manipulation, isn't it one?
- In general, people and social problems are the things influencing us
- Emotions can have a big influence on participants
- How much do I influence my participants as political being? Is it all the same? And how to carry this responsibility?
- The way we did it (political being -- trainer being) is very powerful and fruitful
- Political being and me as a trainer can be different levels

- Being a political being is automatic. Being a trainer is not; it requires efforts to become a trainer and improve your skills
- Find no connection between trainer and a political being. I see these two areas growing and working in different ways
- General political situation and community live are influencing us and our practice
- Training experiences as trainers and trainees are influencing us

Day 3

Questions

- What did I learn about myself today?
- What is the relevance of dealing with my polarities?
- What would I like to further explore?

Insights

- Making shifts at the proper time between polarities is an achievement of responsibility
- At the beginning I was "superficial" today; I learned that it's difficult to concentrate on myself and my polarities
- Difficulty to accept both sides of polarity – Inspired to work with youth workers at psychological level
- "Learned" to use a physical approach to reach cognitive achievements
- Relevance of dealing with polarities because the political dimension in training is often connected with polar oppositions, not only inside the trainer but also outside in the participants
- I would like to explore further the political dimension related with power relations and distribution (i.e. different cultural contexts, economic background, gender of participants, etc.)
- I learned how to handle with emotions and I need some time out
- Importance of physical contact
- Losing a bit rationality and feeling more attached to people
- Difficult to give the same value to the polarities
- I would like to try this method for decision made on feelings
- I would like to explore further emotional empathy
- I learned that the model is 100% attitudes
- I learned a way to solve dilemma according to the moment
- Focus on individuals: share time, energy (in training)...
- I learnt that I have much emotional work to do. I learnt that it is important that as trainer I feel my own emotions and that I learn how to manage them to be aligned with the group energy that the moment requires

- I would like to explore more: values / blockages (how to deal when you cannot overcome something) / "nationalism" (international trainings) / further in behaviours (pragmatic and "practical" attitudes)
- To discover one's own limits or "weak points" that need to be developed in order to use them for establishing a meaningful dialogue with others
- Widening the perspectives and enlarging the possibilities of choices for acting
- Through polarities we come to a greater understanding of where we stand and why
- Dealing with polarities providing awareness of the fluctuation among the different poles and being able to use this fluctuation
- Decision-making processes supported by this awareness

Day 4

Questions

- What did I learn about myself today?
- After today, what synonyms or new adjectives would I give to the words: limits of the trainer / limits of the group?
- What was my struggle today?
- What was my insights today?
- If there was one thing I would like to tell Manfred for tomorrow...

Insights

- A value is neither bad or good
- Felt like 'feeling' part was missing, afternoon created some chaos, as had to destroy something that was not build up 'clean' enough
- Strong feelings came up when discussing about problems, how to handle them - will now more consider the wisdom of the group
- Morning session about the diversity to approach 'problem/difficult behaviour' greater awareness of the influence of the context, e.g. culture
- No one right approach on how to tackle 'difficult situations'
- Need to trust the group

Learning points

- Values can be egoistic
- I don't have much awareness about my limits but I can't focus now (maybe I need to be confronted with this in real life)
- It is allowed for trainers to be human being
- I should follow my conscience more, and not only rules
- I am not only a technician; also an activist and a political being
- Let things happen

Synonym / Adjective to 'limits of trainers'

- Awareness
- Possibilities
- Attitudes
- Negotiating limits
- They are relative (depend on the context)
- Fears
- Concerns
- Boundaries
- Fluid limits (non static)
- Limits of my curiosity
- Coherence of myself (me as trainer)
- Obstacles to learning process
- Challenge for learning
- Limits are like a border: you can pass through them or stay where you are

Synonym / Adjective to 'limits of the group'

- Expandable
- Relative (depend on the context)

Insights

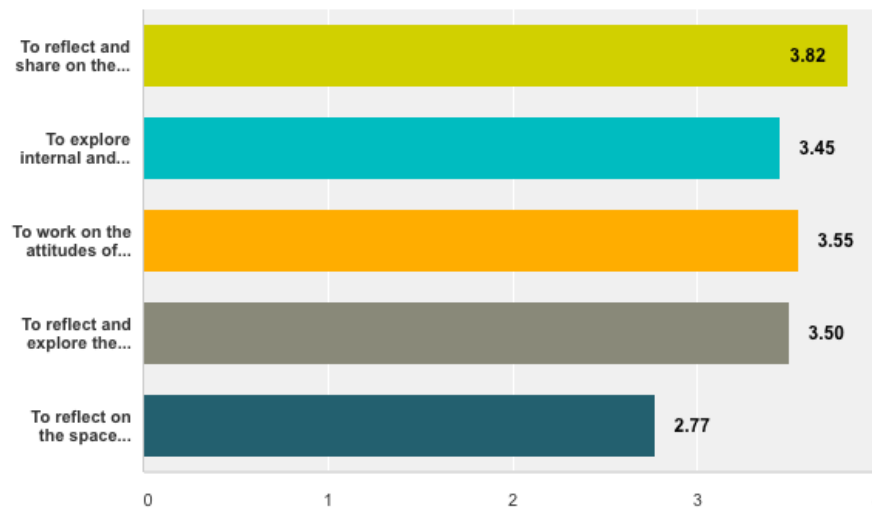
- Sudden change of mood due to an individual intervention in the group. Should I empathise so much?
- Exploring the anti-values to understand why people don't have certain values
- Quality of debates, cool group
- Analyse the value (don't take it for granted, define it according to the context before using it)
- Swallow the frog; it can be criticism from inside (*Frog thing is Spanish expression*)
- How do you apply limits, values, attitudes, influences is more important than their meaning
- You cannot save the world. Just do your best
- You should not try to do everything. Take care of yourself. Relax. You are not a hero or a robot
- I am a human being and I should allow myself to feel, even when I am a trainer

Summary of the evaluations by participants

Question 1

To what extent were the intentions of this COMETS achieved?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



Rating: 1 = not at all / 2 = partially / 3 = mostly / 4 = totally

To reflect and share on the role of trainers

This intention was achieved on a high level according to the feedback from the participants, even to the extent of going above and beyond what had been expected by some.

The intensity of reflection engaged in during the COMETS was remarked on by many of the participants. This included either clarifying or coming to an understanding of what reflection is, it was also a point for the development of new questions.

There was an expectation that COMETS would be providing a reflective learning experience and most were satisfied with the space and atmosphere provided for this. It was expressed that an important part of the learning experience was focussed on the trainers role and through the use of in-depth and personal reflection the participants were able to share and analyse their own experiences and future developments.

The sharing of experiences was highlighted as well. It was felt that there was plenty of opportunity for quality exchange on attitudes, challenges, of perspectives and situational experiences, all of which served to help define the topic. Many feel they are now more conscious of the different dimensions of youth training, including the political dimension.

'Personal development' featured quite highly for many of the participants in regards to this intention. For some it was about increasing their awareness of their internal processes that needed to be guided, their passion for being a trainer, a development of attitudes, and a deeper holistic view of themselves.

One participant stated being "more aware of how deeply interconnected and reciprocally affecting are the two dimensions of being a trainer and being a political being". For others, it was an increase in confidence or empowerment with regards to their being a trainer and their rational and emotional competencies.

To explore internal and external influences

There were some mixed reactions to this intention, though the majority were in agreement. The exceptions referred to not exploring this area in a practical way and that the reflections stayed in the air, while another participant felt that there was less emphasis on this area. However, it was also acknowledged by some that they were still in the process of grounding it all.

For the majority there was a stronger 'yes' to the fulfilment of this intention, with a desire to continue working on the concept. It was expressed that this was seen as a starting point for putting many aspects into context and for highlighting other influences and their interdependence. For others, it was a starting point for clarifying certain motivations and being able to filter different external influences – it was felt that this was also a good starting point for keeping in mind during the rest of the COMETS.

Covering this intention gave the participants an opportunity to think about their influences and in turn who and how they influence! This provided some 'a-ha' moments for some, which helped them to understand themselves better as a trainer and as a human being. For some, it was a simple realisation of being a political being, being influenced by the surrounding world and the different internal and external influences based on values and beliefs, all working for a clearer awareness of the self and how we are affected by different influences. It was stated that having an understanding of your own personal position on something allows for making a more conscious decision between neutrality and standing.

Despite being much appreciated as a subject area, the limitations of covering it were also recognised: "the reason I choose 'mostly' instead of 'totally' is mainly connected with the fact that there are still levels of internal as well as external influences that we did not touch upon. This is, however, not a critique, but rather a reflective answer that I believe given the relatively short timeframe, could simply not be different."

To work on the attitudes of trainers

"It was my impression that this aspect permeated throughout the entire course and it was then entirely up to us to decide how impactful we would allow the experience to be for ourselves (and how strongly we connected the personal experiences of this to our work as trainers)."

This intention evoked a lot of emotional responses. There was a desire for a more practical approach from one person, especially with regards to having more examples and case studies. Another pointed out the need for some theatre practice to warm up emotional intelligence before entering the polarities exercise. For the majority, this area of work related to 'attitude' was seen as hugely helpful both personally and professionally, and an area that some of the participants would like to continue working on.

The polarities exercise, although new for most, was mentioned numerous times as a model for discovering more about own inner awareness and need for balance. This exercise more than any other took many participants on a very deep level, one person expressing "I can't recall any other training of trainers where we worked with the attitudes of the trainer in such a deep level."

Others felt that the activity allowed them to work at the level they wanted to, in a feeling of security provided by the team. Many found this whole section of the COMETS as "deeply gratifying" and that it showed how the attitude of a trainer should change in relation to the group needs.

To reflect and explore the limits of the political role of trainers

As with the other intentions one participant pointed out that they experienced this as being interwoven within all the activities. The activities within this area were much appreciated; the Spider Web and case study were specifically mentioned.

It was felt that the sessions related to this intention were an important base for dealing with limits in regards to the political role of trainers. It provided inspiration and tools to explore more with some voicing that they would continue the reflection in their local context. It was also important to others that they had the opportunity to share different points of view and that these points of view can and do change depending on the circumstance of a situation.

For some, the variety of different perspectives on the issue was very rewarding. The concept of limits touched a huge number of perspectives for the participants and a number of questions were generated;

- Do I just choose the limits I want to respect or the ones I want to overcome?
- To what extent certain personal limits are affecting my perception of the reality?
- Where do I stand, where do I put my limits, can I handle this?

One participant expressed that through focusing on limits, they experienced a form of opening-us-up to questions (reflection) rather than a thorough working-on-it. Others also expressed that they wanted to go deeper, either on personal values or simply just to have more time for this area. However, it was also pointed out that given the time restraints it was implemented optimally. Another aspect worth capturing was that one participant felt this was a difficult area for them to work with.

To reflect on the space of/for human rights and democracy

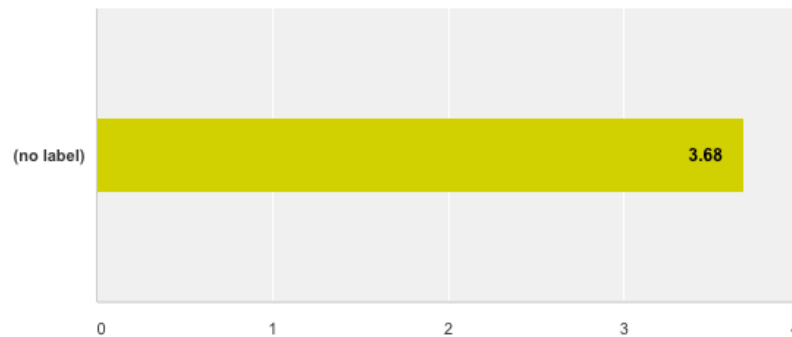
The biggest single comment regarding this intention was that it was not covered as much as many participants would have liked. Some would have liked to go deeper into it – even to the point of exploring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was pointed out that even if there was little time in the plenary devoted to this area the small groups were still beneficial. For another participant, despite it being interesting, it was found too abstract. One also expressed that they had quite different expectations regarding the topic.

Despite the above points, others felt that they had their awareness broadened. It was pointed out that the important aspects were covered. They reflected on the nature of the trainers' role with the question on whether (or how much) the trainer should be proactive towards human rights and democracy in the training setting and/or where are the limits? It was also expressed that with a raised consciousness of the subject the trainer needs to be creating a balance with it to ensure that the group as a whole is comfortable in a safe learning environment.

Question 2

What do you think of the concept of COMETS (as support for trainers to work with the Competence Model for Trainers)?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



Rating: 1 – not supportive / 2 = partially supportive / 3 = mostly supportive / 4 = very supportive

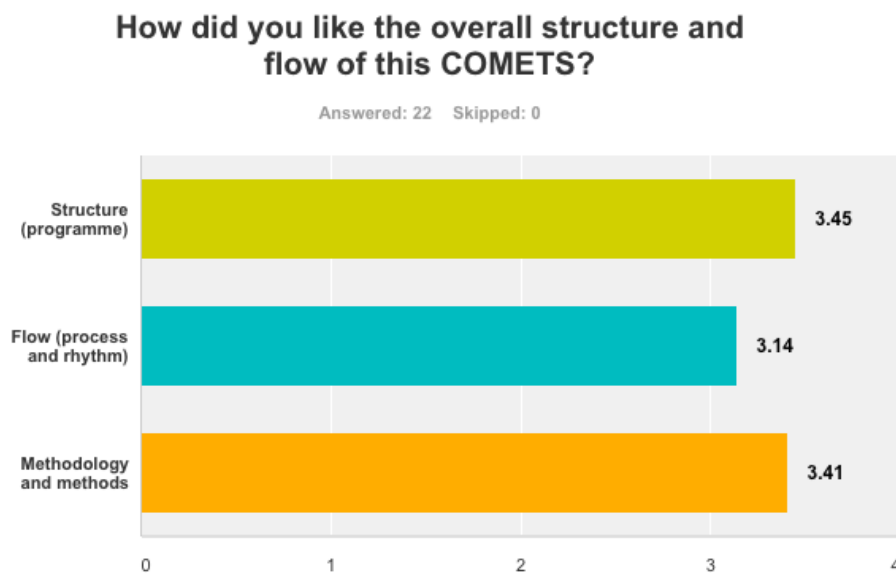
Some of the participants were either unaware of the Competence Model or simply knew about it but had not explored it. In general, most participants expressed that the Model is something they would like to see being used more in their own work, more youth work trainers having access to it, other sectors also being approached with it, and COMETS being more frequently organised.

Participants found the COMETS experience very strong and inspirational. The main aspect participants focussed on was related to themselves. Many comments referred to the way COMETS worked for them as a group of experienced trainers. It provided space and time for them to reflect upon their work as trainers, to exchange with each other and learn new methods. Specific points raised included:

- Having moral questions / dilemmas they had never had a chance to explore or talk about before – COMETS gave space for this.
- Strengthening their professional and personal capacities through developing their understanding of the Model.
- Highlighting things about being a trainer that too often elude the awareness. Working on a holistic approach that explores morals, values, principles and ethics.
- COMETS provided the empowerment process to work and deal with all these things.

COMETS also provided discovery, and indirectly, new methodologies and tools to work with. Though some found the approach to be too abstract and or too reflective with limited links to their daily work as a trainer / youth worker. Others would have liked to see a more dynamic approach for fostering exchange and exploring deeper the experiential level. One participant expressed the need for more space for further / future steps for their professional practice. Another participant expressed gratitude that the COMETS is open for trainers outside of specific international trainer pools.

Question 3



Rating: 1 = it was packed/fast/dense / 2 = it was relatively appropriate / 3 = it was appropriate / 4 = it worked very well

Structure (programme)

Overall, participants rated the structure of the programme very highly with many picking out specific aspects that made it so. Participants were also constructively critical of some aspects including: a desire for more time to explore practical application; more case studies and using of examples from their own work; the desire for an extra day for supporting the process; less introductory time; and even a request for more reflection. Two other aspects mentioned were a need for more energy related activities (especially for passing from session / subject to another), and one participant identified a need for the session on values to have been at the beginning because for them the subject area defined the other subject areas.

In terms of the aspects that were highlighted, participants appreciated the amount of sharing the programme provided and the degree of flexibility that was ensured by the trainers. The polarities exercise, the web on limits discussion and the case study on the homophobic comment were all highlighted as key parts of the programme. Participants felt that the programme covered "[all different aspects of a multi-dimensional learning experience](#)" this was in reference to the different methodologies employed through the COMETS.

The participants also commented on the integration of Manfred into the COMETS programme through skype, a factor that was very much appreciated, especially for his inspirational insights.

Many found the programme to be dense, deep and demanding. This was a positive perspective as it was felt this was needed for this topic when working with trainers. The overall structure was also appreciated by most of the participants who found it fully aligned with the training goals (intentions), that it took a step-by-step approach, felt it was diagnostically thought through and structured according to the needs of the participants. Through creating an interactive group dynamic the participants themselves were able to respond strongly to the programme. This was credited to the professionalism of the trainers. For some there is still a lot to process for themselves with recognition that this needs time.

Flow (process, rhythm)

This aspect of the COMETS experience produced a wide range of responses. For some the flow was adequate. It was felt that it evolved nicely during the week allowing the participants to flow with each other and grow as trainers. Some of the participants felt that the flow was "[lively and challenging](#)" and that the week was made up of a good combination of elements. Things like Manfred's Skype interventions were much appreciated and a welcome addition, contributing to a better sense of flow. Other elements mentioned were the reflections, the local guest and different inputs.

Another perspective covered several different elements including a sense of confusion from time to time regarding the flow. It was commented that it felt like the flow jumped from topic to topic, that it could have moved faster and that it was not balanced in relation to the diversity of the subjects covered. One part of the programme specifically commented on was the Berne's model 'I'm ok, you're ok': it was felt that this needed more time, reflection and exploration.

A third strong viewpoint was more critical: participants felt the COMETS to be static and missing a dynamic flow. Some expressed that the intensity and use of reflection was too much and that a variety of methods would have better suited. It was also pointed out that there was almost no physical activity that made participants tired. This was echoed by another participant who stated that they felt the group energy was generally low because of the flow – though they also recognised that this reflective approach suited this level of energy in the group. One specific criticism was levelled at the guest speaker from 'Kultur Mobil' and the 'Sharing Our Passion' night, both instances were described as 'disturbing' the flow. Another element more specifically programme related was from day 4: participants felt that the closure from the COMETS subject areas to the Open Agenda was incomplete. It was felt that something was left open or it was too fast and needed more care and attention, especially when compared to the depth of the previous days. One participant also felt that the Open Agenda should have been only on the last day.

Other aspects mentioned in relation to the flow included an appreciation for the LSD groups – though the questions set by the trainers were thought to be sometimes unhelpful. There was also a desire for a longer lunch break to be able to rest a bit more between sessions.

Methodology and methods

On the whole the methodology and methods used were appreciated, participants felt that the combination and variety used "contributed to a sound, coherent and comprehensive learning experience". It was commented that the COMETS was very "adult and professional" this was stated in relation to the lack of energisers and that the topic was clearly focussed on. It was felt that the approach taken introduced new methodologies, combined the brain and the emotions, and was participatory.

Some liked having the space for communicating with the other participants which produced a good level of peer learning. For others, the approach matched their learning style and needs. It was felt that there was a good balance of inputs, discussions, pairs work, small groups, experiencing and reflection. The trainers were complimented for the sequence of methods and for showing the importance of connecting with emotions as a support for being more focussed as a trainer. One participant even remarked that although it was stated at the beginning that there was no tool box envisaged at the end of this COMETS, they believed they did leave with a full toolbox.

The other perspective for this area was less enthusiastic. While on the whole the methods and methodology were appreciated many wanted or needed some changes. The issue of being more active and dynamic was mentioned several times, along with the need for the COMETS to have a stronger experiential dimension. Perhaps the biggest criticism here was in relation to the amount of reflection – though it was also acknowledged that the COMETS had been promoted as being reflection oriented. Several felt it was too much for them, others needed more assistance, for example, the provision of a handbook with the questions, drawings, theories, and guided notes, etc. Others wanted to have more variety of methods that they could also use in their work as trainers. In one case the participant wanted more practical discussions on how the political dimension affects or should affect their work as a trainer.

Question 4

Please share your thoughts and feelings about the "political competence" area? (things missing, redundancies, relevance, etc.)

"Very difficult but also very important topic to touch" would be a very short summary of responses to this question.

The 'p' and 'P' aspect remains a challenge for many. There was a request for more explanation to avoid the confusion with 'P'olitics and suggestions to change the name. There were attempts to define it, "the awareness of being a responsible citizen (though not defining as active citizenship)". Others wanted to address overtly the 'P'olitical competence as part of the COMETS. Some were able to recognise for themselves their role and the influence of their political-everyday behaviours and the applicability of this to their work.

As has been voiced in participants responses throughout the evaluation, the need for applicability was expressed here as well. It was felt that COMETS needed to provide time and space at the end of the week for discussions on how to link it to their jobs and how to apply what they have learned it in their practice. Some felt there needed to be more role plays and simulations to explore this – though also recognising time as a factor against this.

Another area that was highlighted was in relation to the intensity, intangibility and abstractness of the political dimension. Many remarks recognised the importance of the subject and indicated a desire to go deeper and analyse more despite its complexity – though also a recognition that some in the group were not ready for this.

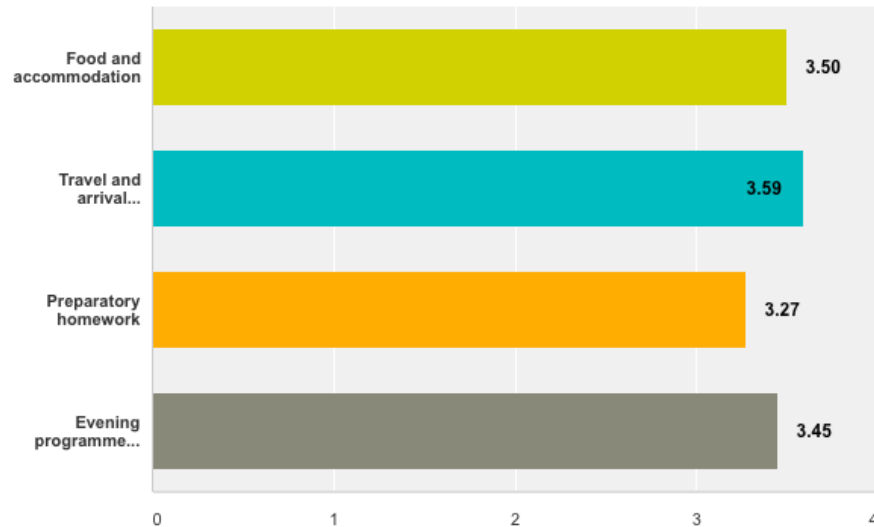
Perhaps the single biggest response was based on a personal level. Most simply remarked on the importance of the subject as a developmental area for trainers both personally and professionally. Participants shared how they were still reflecting and processing the experience, how it was the "beginning of a new journey", and how the revelation of understanding themselves as 'political beings' was important for them. Participants talked about experiencing an increase in emotional competence, how their minds were now more open, and how they were feeling more connected on a personal level with being a trainer. Another aspect of the personal was the understanding of what they will be basing their decisions on in the future.

Several respondents felt that the COMETS was more or less complete as it was and covered all the necessary aspects of the political competence area, even to the extent of seeking some kind of follow-up. On the opposite side some felt too much of the competence area was missing with one participant expressing that they felt COMETS did not actually 'train' them on this Competence.

Question 5

How would you rate the logistics and preparatory information?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



Rating: 1 = poor / 2 = good / 3 = very good / 4 = excellent

Food and accommodation

Food

Generally OK, some specific needs and wants. Need for warm food in the evenings. Wanted more diversity. Sometimes in the evenings there was not enough available. Someone else felt there was too much food and it was not healthy, fruit in the breaks would have been appreciated. The self-service approach was liked and the dinner in town very much appreciated.

Accommodation

"The accommodation was truly wonderful". Participants liked the rooms, the house as a whole and it was remarked on how clean, lovely and beautiful the place was.

Internet

Worked well

Working Space

It was felt that the working spaces available fitted the needs of the COMETS and the group. It was remarked that it was quiet, relaxing and inspirational. The lack of light in the main working room was an issue for some though the addition of the fountain gave the working space an added value.

Travel and arrival information

Participants felt this was all good. The logistics and organisation were all very good and the information clear. Even those who experienced some difficulties with their travels were able to solve their problems quite easily. While the travel information on the Bruecke-Most web site was clearly explained, it was pointed out that the English and German versions do not provide the same information!

Preparatory homework

The participants mostly appreciated the homework. It provided a foundation and entry point for the COMETS experience in supporting a better understanding of the political dimension.

Some of the participants liked the self-assessment and found this useful. For some it was quite difficult and for others they needed to receive it just a few days before the residential. On the whole, either before or at the end of the COMETS doing the self-assessment made things clearer. However, it was clear that this was very much down to learning styles and working styles.

Other comments were based on wanting to know in advance which subtopics from the Competence the COMETS would and would not be covering, this would enable participants to better prepare themselves. There was also a request for the homework to be described with deadlines in the selection email. One participant commented that the information received was too confusing.

Evening programme (restaurant, guided tour...)

The evening out was generally highly appreciated, both the guided tour and the food at the restaurant – though only one option for vegetarians.

Most of the responses in this section while appreciating the tour highlighted that rather than a typical tourist tour it could have been a tailored tour covering the current political dimension of the city. It could have had a focus on social issues, the youth work going on in Dresden, and the role of Pegida. The tour could have been conducted by a refugee or local youth organisation...

Question 6

Any other comment? (as listed in the results)

- Thank you.
- Possibility of cooked dinner? - I understand this was German culture.... We did discuss that there was no handicap access to the building at all and it was a building used by youth... and there was handicap service in the trams (e.g.) in the town. (This was totally independent of my problems!)
- Thanks for creating this opportunity, I learned a lot during the process and I still have a lot to reflect and ideas to implement in my job!
- Thank you again!
- Thank you so much, for this wonderful learning experience and opportunity to completely immerse myself (ourselves), for a few days, into this particular and at

the same time completely unavoidable dimension of our work (on many levels :)). Wishing you all the best and looking forward to our next crossing of paths sometime in the future.

- Thank you very much for your work and commitment. It was a great experience. See you soon.
- Thanks, Gisele and Nik for the work done, it wasn't easy to put in words and to go through this big and complex dimension. Also thanks to Udo and Ingrid to organize this training and hopefully they will be more offers to join trainings in these topics in the future.
- Thank you for the excellent learning experience and great time with amazing people! ... and in amazing place :-)
- I think would be great to avoid any ideological and some politic doctrines (direct or indirectly).
- Although the venue was amazing, the Wi-Fi issue was quite limiting. Other than that, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS NEW EXPERIENCE and LEARNING PROCESS to both of you. SEE YOU SOON SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE!
- Thank you for your very professional work, it was really inspirational!
- Thanks a lot, it was a very enriching training, I particularly appreciated the combination of strong theoretical insights with exercises that include the work on senses and emotions.
- Thanks for this opportunity. Attending the course was really useful to me as a trainer, but also as a human being.
- Thanks! it was really a nice experience. The programme was very good, the trainers amazing and group also very good. I learnt and enjoyed a lot.
- I am very grateful for this learning experience. Thank you very much for this opportunity.
- Thank you and Thx to Udo for the organizational part.

Presentations



European Council Resolution on youth work (Nov 10)

- _ Develop **user-friendly European tools** (e.g. Youthpass) for both independent assessment and self-assessment, as well as instruments to recognise and evaluate the quality of youth work.
- _ Provide sufficient and appropriate **European platforms** for the continuous exchange on innovative research, policies, approaches, practices and methods.
- _ Develop **systematic assessment of competences** required for any form of training aiming at acquiring knowledge and upgraded skills.

3

European policy initiatives supporting trainers

“Quality in youth work”

- European Council Resolution on youth work (Nov 10)
- European Council Conclusion on quality youth work (May 13)
- 2nd European Youth Work Convention (April 15)
(→ CoE recommendation on youth work - published 2018?)
- European Training Strategy in the field of youth (May 15)

2

European Council Conclusion on quality youth work (March 13)

- _ Emphasis on **quality ... of youth work outcomes**.
- _ Determine the **impact of quality youth work ...** by facilitating and improving the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning at national and EU levels.
- _ Encourage ... the European and international **exchange of good practices, training, skills acquisition and peer-learning** in relation to quality focused youth work.

4

2nd European Youth Work Convention (April 15)

Common ground of youth work: **providing spaces & bridges**

Recommendations and Action Points:

- _ European Agenda for Youth Work
- _ **Improve quality of youth work**
- _ Towards a knowledge-based approach
- _ Funding
- _ Towards common ground
- _ Cross-sectorial cooperation
- _ Civic dialogue
- _ The 3rd European Youth Work Convention

5

Erasmus+: Youth in Action for youth work and policy

Youth in Action 2007-2013: Ca. 150 million € for ca. 300.000 youth worker and experts who participated in ca. 16.000 projects

Erasmus+: Youth in Action 2014-2020 offers more budget

- _ Key Action 1 – **youth worker mobility projects**
- _ Key Action 2 – **strategic partnership projects**
- _ Key Action 2 – **Transnational Cooperation Activities of NAs**

SALTO Resource Centres supporting NAs in their roles and offer also support beyond the Programme Countries and for EU youth policies

7

2nd European Youth Work Convention (April 15)

Recommendation 2: Improve quality of youth work

- _ Competence Models for and qualifications of youth workers
- _ Trainings based on agreed set of competences
- _ Adequate ways of recognition of qualifications of youth workers
- _ National recognition strategies for youth work
- _ National pathways for the professionalisation of youth worker

6

SALTO-YOUTH

Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities in Youth since 2000 ...

8 SALTO Resource Centres hosted by 8 YiA NAs: Inclusion (BE-FL), Participation (BE-FR), Cultural Diversity (UK), Training & Cooperation (DE), Information (SE), South East Europe (SI), Eastern Europe & Caucasus (PL), EuroMed (FR).

www.salto-youth.net: European Training Calendar, Toolbox, Toy, Otlas and much more...

SALTO Training & Coordination supports **Youthpass & ETS**

8

European Training Strategy in the field of youth

“Supporting the development of quality youth work in Europe through capacity building*”

Individuals, Organisations and Youth Systems

Fields of work

- _ European cooperation..to foster..strategies for capacity building
- _ Generating more knowledge about impact of capacity building
- _ **Competence development of trainers in the youth field**
- _ Competence development of youth workers
- _ EU level capacity tools and platforms
- _ Competence development of NA staff

→ Towards a virtual „European Academy for quality youth work“

9

European Training Strategy in the field of youth

Competence development of trainers in the youth field

- ETS Competence Model for trainers to work international
- Modular system of „ETS trainings for & of trainers“
- Biennial European Trainer Plattform „Bridges for Trainers“
- Youthpass for trainers to support recognition
- „ETS trainer pool“ to support E+: YiA NA training strategies

10

ETS Competence Model for Trainers to work internationally

_ **Under development** since 2013 - by Rita Bergstein, Gisele Evrard and Arturas Deltuva

- _ Context: **European** youth work and non-formal learning
- _ **7 competence areas** are defined, each with criteria and indicators
- _ Each criteria describes knowledge, skills and attitudes (= **competence**)
- _ (Behavioural) **Indicators** are elements that demonstrates the criteria are met
- _ **Not a „must-have“ list** of competences all trainers should possess to the same degree!!

11

ETS Competence Model for Trainers to work internationally

www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetences

7 Competence areas

- Understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes
- Learning to learn
- Designing educational programmes
- Cooperating successfully in teams
- Communicating meaningfully with others
- Intercultural competence
- *(work title) Integrating a political dimension into the trainers' work*

For individual competence development, for trainer teams/pools, for training of/for trainers providers - and hopefully also for recognition of trainers' profession (?)

12

NA "Trainer Competence Development" Project

Strategic Partnership project of NAs & SALTO RCs till 2020
(April 17: AT, CZ, EE, DE, IR, NL, PL, SI, ES, SALTO T&C and SALTO SEE)

Objectives similar as for ETS

- _ Support further development of ETS Competence Model for trainers
- _ Offer a modular system to train newcomer and advanced trainers
- _ Offer biennial European platform: Bridges for Trainers
- _ Support development and dissemination of innovative tools and methods developed under the project
- _ Support E+: YiA NAs in efforts to support trainers competence development
- _ Explore ways of better recognising trainer competences

13

NA "Trainer Competence Development" Project

Offer a modular system to train newcomer and advanced trainers
www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetencedevelopment

1. For trainers experienced / working at national level

- **Training and trainers in the field of youth:** Supporting trainers to better integrate a political dimension into their work, autumn 17 (CZ)

2. For trainers experienced at national level to work at European level

- **Training of Trainers:** 3 Seminars (NL, PL, DE), mentoring, online learning & practical training project, ToT 17-18 starts in Sep 17

3. For advanced trainers at European level

- **COMETS:** focus on 1/7 areas of the ETS Competence Model for trainers, next ones in spring 18 (AT, ind.&group learning / L2L)
- **Trainer Skill Workshop:** 2/year, short & snappy, next ones in autumn 2017 (IR) and spring 2018 (EE)
- **Bridges for Trainers,** next ones in Nov/Dec 2018 (IR) & 2020

14

Thank you very much for your
attention!



SALTO-YOUTH
TRAINING AND COOPERATION
RESOURCE CENTRE
 Erasmus+

Contact
Udo Teichmann (Udo@salto-youth.net)

15



The political dimension of training

Manfred Zentner



Why are we working with people?

- for personal benefits (emotion), for the money?
- individual vocation?
- helping others?
- influencing / changing (young) people?
- Change society / the world?



Politics or politics?

- Politics: the activities of the government, members of law-making organizations, or people who try to influence the way a country is governed (source: Cambridge dictionary). (Refers to processual dimension of decision making)
- Everyone is involved in politics (small p): shopping, media usage, mobility, interpersonal relations, values/attitudes/behaviour, ...
- Not everyone is involved in Politics (big P): active policy making; knowledge of the political system is a prerequisite of being involved,



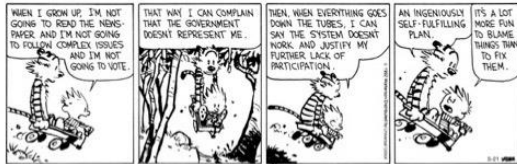
What makes us political beings? What makes us a-political?

- Can we act a-political?
- Skunk Anansie: Everything is political, yes, it is fucking political!
- Are we politically correct or incorrect when being neutral?



// What is the difference between politics or Politics in training?

- Do you do personal politics?
- What kind of “political” behaviour is inappropriate in a training? Which is needed?



// Questions

- When is an individual behaviour only political, and when is it activism?
- Is being a trainer (in the youth work context) always political? Try to bring examples of being consciously political and for being a-political.

// Where do we see the political role of a trainer?

- Be conscious of messages of symbols: clothing, music, room design, ...
- Be conscious of messages of actions: selection of participants, participation,
- Can/should a trainer be political, can s/he stop being political?
- How do/should we react on recent events (elections, campaigns, violence, protests,)?

//

Thank you for your attention

Manfred Zentner
Donau-Universität Krems, Department für Migration und Globalisierung