

# **REPORT FOR NATIONAL PILOT SESSIONS**

## **AUSTRIA**

### **TWO o'clock**

**2011 - 2013**

## OVERVIEW

The pilot session organised in the framework of the Two o'Clock project aimed at testing the *Teaching and Learning Advisor* (TLA) and the *Learning Coach* (LC) profiles and tools, after being adapted from the models originally developed in the UK to the needs of each country which participates in the project. The objective of the pilot phase was to gather feedback from the representatives of the target group who were selected to participate on their impression of the results presented, their added value, their applicability in individual and national context and to validate that the results contribute indeed to the improvement of the quality within the VET Organisations. Finally, feedback was also requested for suggestions or improvements that the partners should take into consideration at the finalisation phase.

The pilot sessions (one for TLA and another for LC) were held by each partner at national level, they were scheduled to last for 3 days. They were organised to include 0.5 working days for the round table and the remaining 2.5 working days for the materials. The target group originally identified for the pilots was at least 10 representatives from VET trainers, teachers, managers and staff. To carry out the sessions, all partners translated in their own language all the instruments adapted, including the transfer workshop contents.

The pilot phase in Austria was organised from the 8<sup>th</sup> until the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 for both results, i.e. the TLA and the LC materials. The overview of the findings is presented in the paragraphs that follow.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING ADVISOR (TLA)

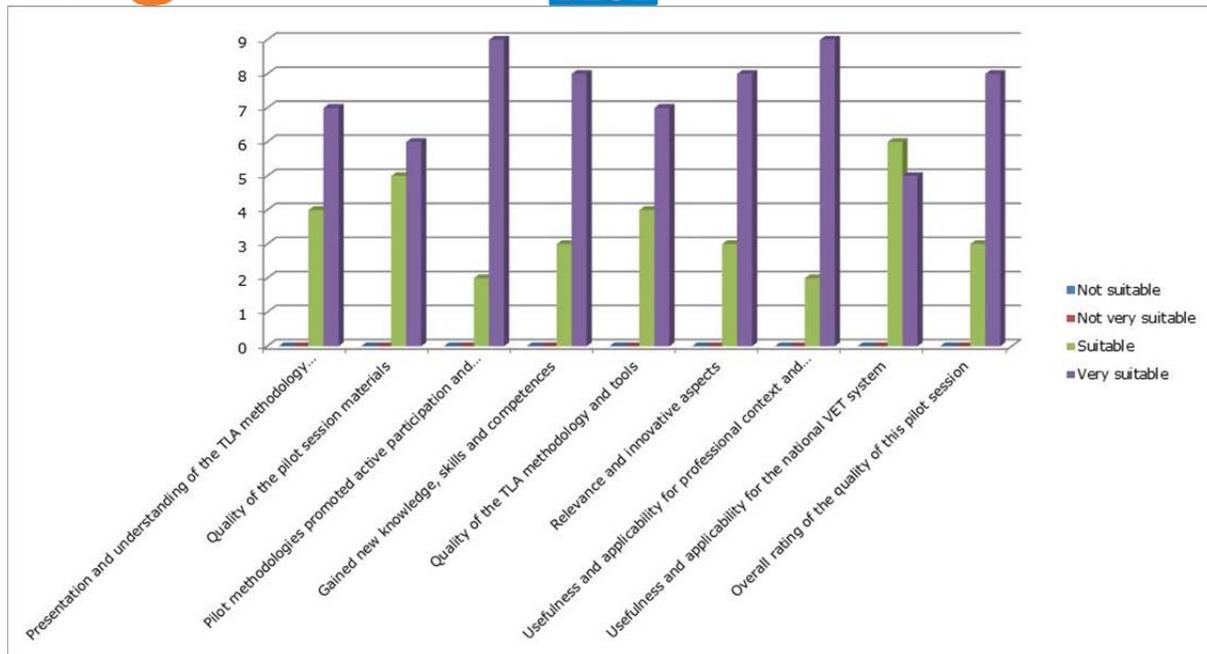
BEST organised the pilot session for the TLA from the 8<sup>th</sup> until the 10<sup>th</sup> of April at their own premises. Out of the 14 invitees, 11 participants attended, who were teachers/ trainers/ coaches/ counsellors, programme designers, HR managers and educational organisation staff. The diversity of the group provided the partner with valuable insight in terms of the applicability of the models presented and the added value in the VET organisations where it is meant to be implemented.

The overall objective of the pilot phase was to demonstrate to a selected number of representatives from the target group the TLA profile, the tools to be used and the potential which is brought about by the implementation of such a model within a VET organisation. The participants were presented with the skills required to promote qualitative improvements in the field, through team management, classroom behaviour and diversity. The focus of the training course delivered was put on:

- Training styles and concepts
- Behavioural management in the classroom
- Leadership
- Emotional management
- Diversity management
- Conflict management
- Good practices

The overall impression of the participants for the TLA methodology was very positive. The majority of them consider that the methodology and tools presented are very suitable for their professional context and practice. They also believe strongly that they promote active participation and learning, two very important elements for contemporary VET provision.

The results from the questionnaire which the participants filled in at the end of their pilot phase are illustrated below. It is clear that all check points were positively scored, which was also reflected in their personal feedback which they shared with the trainers.



**Figure 1: Overview of the results from the questionnaires corresponding to the TLA pilot session**

Below is a selection of comments which were shared with the trainers after the pilot.

- We can use some of the product elements for our internal staff training and development. We can also forward this to partner organisations in our network.
- There are good elements to promote empowerment on a general level, not only following the merely pedagogical approach.
- The connection of the TWO o'clock product with the seminar on diversity management (held previously) was particularly interesting, as this is of high relevance within our organisation's work.
- It will be necessary to involve stakeholders like politicians, public authorities, decision makers in the field of VET and respective legislation in the process (also beyond the funded lifetime of the project), in order to make sure this will sustainably implemented in the Austrian VET system and practice. – However, a very good start for this and good luck for implementing further steps, which we will support.

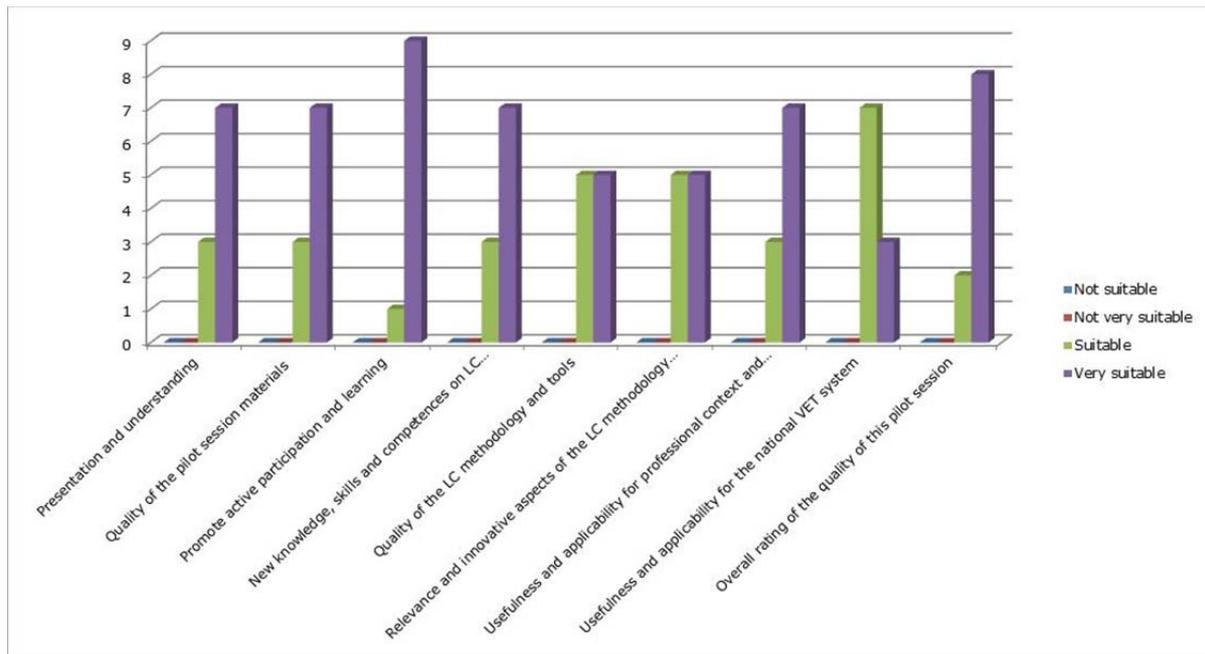
## LEARNING COACH

Similarly to the TLA methodology and tools, BEST organised the pilot phase for the LC profile on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April at their premises. Ten (10) participants attended the pilot, out of the 12 invited. They were mainly representatives from VET teachers/ trainers/ counsellors, as well as HR managers. The objective of the pilot session was to present the materials and tools that were adapted by the partners on the LC methodology and retrieve feedback on specific issues, such as applicability, added value, quality, relevance and innovative aspects, etc. Moreover, the partners aimed to gather suggestions and/ or recommendations from the stakeholders involved in the pilot phase, which would be taken into consideration during the finalisation of the project results.

The content of the training course delivered included the following aspects:

- Introduction to Coaching
- Coaching Methodology
- Diversity Management,
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Counselling and coaching techniques contained
- Johari Window

The overall impression of the participants was highly positive. They were all very involved during the pilot session and enjoyed all the aspects presented. They were also motivated to share their own experience and points of views, especially in terms of relevance for their daily work and challenges when working with learners/clients. The positive impression was later reflected on the replies to the questionnaires which were handed out to them to fill them out. The most positive replies retrieved referred to the promotion of active participation and learning, an element which is currently of major importance when delivering trainings. The remaining elements received a high score as well. The overview of the replies received is illustrated in the figure that follows (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Overview of the results from the questionnaires corresponding to the LC pilot session**

During the discussions which followed the pilot session, the participants supported the efforts of the partners to produce so valuable materials, given that they feel they can significantly benefit from such methodologies. They also emphasised the need to focus even more on practical elements and on techniques of how to pass this on to colleagues, especially the less motivated ones, and how to convince decision making persons in their organisations and beyond. Some qualitative feedback shared with the trainers who carried out the pilot session is the following:

- There seem to be similar initiatives already existing in Austria, however in “fragments” only and not using such coherent terminology and practical approaches.
- This is of high relevance for our internal cooperation among teachers, trainers, coaches and counsellors.
- Challenges for coaches among us are permanently rising and this project can practically help to some extent.
- Especially for trainers, there are more and more coaching sessions (individual and group) to be held in new programmes launched in Austria. These instructors will need more and more help – TWO o’ clock can come in for this very constructively.
- It will be important to pass on the knowledge to colleagues, in particular practical tools they can use in everyday work. Also, it should be pointed out that usually “generally interested” trainers sign up for such events, whereas those who would need innovation and support even more are more resistant. – We should ensure participation of such “colleagues in need” in follow-up events and further sessions like this one.
- We enjoyed discussing daily practice with managing staff, as they usually do not show so much interest in practical work and challenges...

- The project should be careful about providing “coaching recipes” for situations, as if there were only this concrete way for solutions – there might be others as well.
- We would enjoy receiving more information of such kind.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

As a general observation from the pilot session, the project results which were presented had a positive impact on the participants. They all evaluated very highly the methodologies presented to them, as they believe that they can essentially benefit in their everyday practice if they implement such methods and they also expressed the interest to participate in future similar activities. In specific, they pointed out they would enjoy having follow-up occasions to see how the project will develop and to further exchange practical ideas about the implementation models of the TWO o' Clock products and approaches.

Given the encouraging reactions from the representatives from the target group who participated in the pilot, BEST is currently continuing with the project activities, in order to finalise the results, raise awareness on the products and create a sustainable network of stakeholders, who will ensure that the impact of the project will be significant.