# O4 PRO PULSE+ e.TOOLBOX: Handbook

**INFREP**

# INTRODUCTION

The PRO PULSE + project aims to develop a new generation of production schools based on a hybrid model covering four key aspects:

- New targets, i.e. low skilled young and adults;
- New didactics, including intergenerational learning;
- New sectors/workshops, both production and service-oriented: social worker for elder care (Austria); sales representative (France); promotional services for tourist accommodation and/or products (Italy); seamstress (Portugal); interior design assistant (Turkey);
- Small-scale and sustainable structures, implementing production/service units

These four aspects derive from the PRO PULSE + partners' will to get inspiration from the "original" model of the production schools and to adapt it to new contexts, new professional sectors, new challenges and enhanced needs.

In addition to these four key aspects, two additional elements have been identified in a second time by the project partners:

- Stakeholders engagement – notably enterprises, with which strong links have to be developed ;
- Quality assurance – meaning a systemic and planned approach to assessing, monitoring and improving the quality of the production units on a continuous basis.

Together, these six core elements represent the pillars of a new model of production schools designed by the partners of the PRO PULSE + project and aiming at helping participants to build up personal, social, practical skills and competences for work and life.

At the core of this model, stands the main principle of the production schools: learning through production, which means conveying both knowledge and skills by establishing a learning environment deeply linked with concrete work situations, in order to make people feel part of a work community where their work has a real and measurable value.

This handbook, developed by INFREP, is part of the fourth output of the PRO PULSE + e.Toolbox. It aims to provide some practical instructions in order to set up a production school or smaller production units, based on the "original" model and adaptable to more "classical" VET providers: in a word, inspired by the PRO PULSE + model.

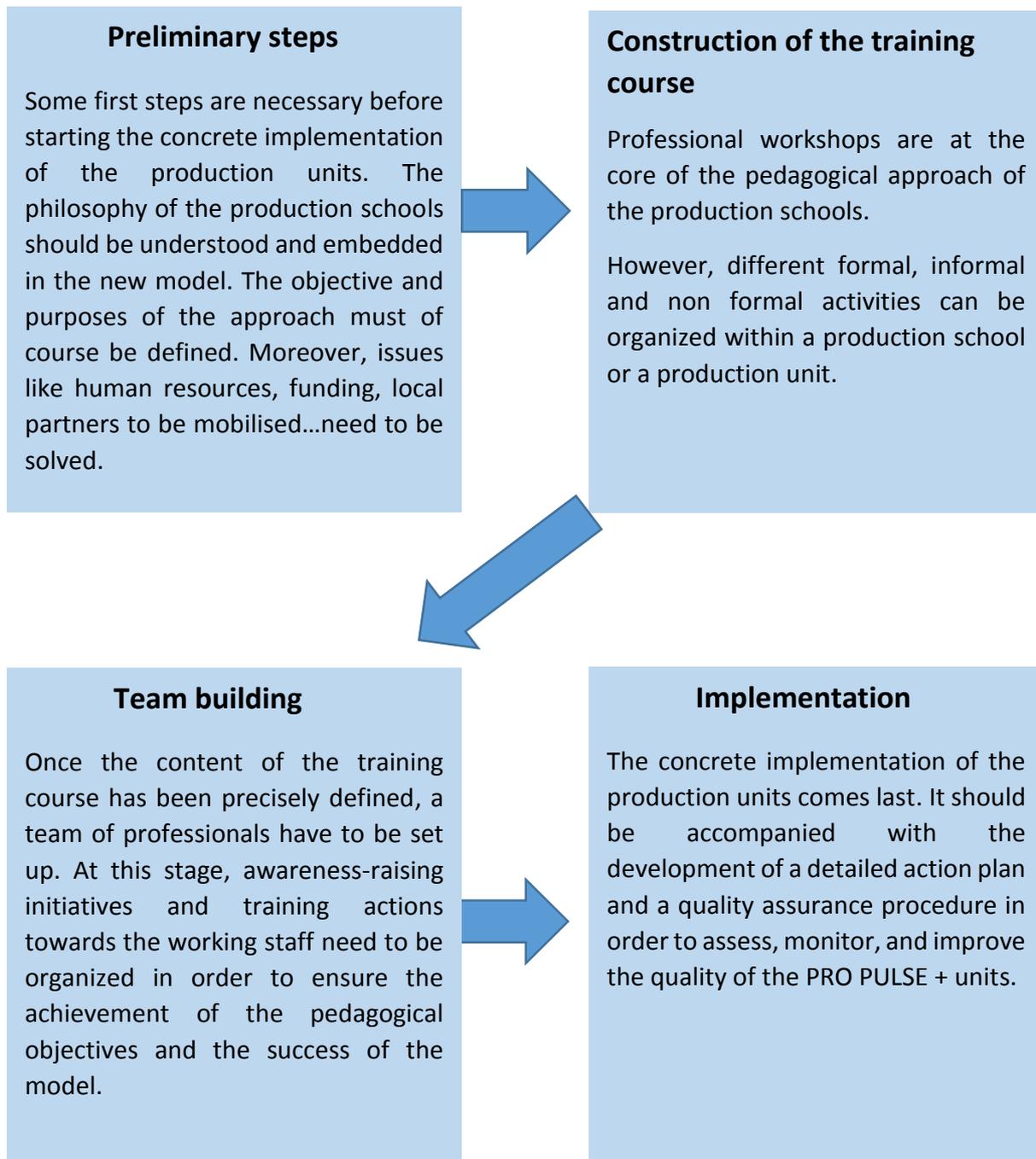This handbook is conceived as a complementary tool, in addition to the 03 PRO PULSE + model, when the readers will find background information on the PRO PULSE + model, the IO4 PRO PULSE Practical Kit, where are collected all useful resources for the practical implementation of the PRO PULSE + model and the O5 Guidelines, where the partners will find complementary practical recommendations for the implementation of the model.

The PRO PULSE + model, as defined by the partners of the PRO PULSE + project.

## PRO PULSE+ "learning through production"

- **QUALITY ASSURANCE** EQAVET indicators
- **NEW TARGETS** low-skilled young (16-29) &adults (45+)
- **STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT** local networks
- **NEW DIDACTICS** intergenerational learning
- **PRODUCTION UNITS** small-scale and sustainable structures
- **NEW SECTORAL COUNTRY PROFILES***

## Main stages for the implementation of the PRO PULSE + model

On the basis of their experience, the partners of the PRO PULSE + project have identified 4 main stages that should be followed in order to set up a production school or smaller **production units**.

### Preliminary steps

Some first steps are necessary before starting the concrete implementation of the production units. The philosophy of the production schools should be understood and embedded in the new model. The objective and purposes of the approach must of course be defined. Moreover, issues like human resources, funding, local partners to be mobilised…need to be solved.

### Construction of the training course

Professional workshops are at the core of the pedagogical approach of the production schools.

However, different formal, informal and non formal activities can be organized within a production school or a production unit.

### Team building

Once the content of the training course has been precisely defined, a team of professionals have to be set up. At this stage, awareness-raising initiatives and training actions towards the working staff need to be organized in order to ensure the achievement of the pedagogical objectives and the success of the model.

### Implementation

The concrete implementation of the production units comes last. It should be accompanied with the development of a detailed action plan and a quality assurance procedure in order to assess, monitor, and improve the quality of the PRO PULSE + units.

# Preliminary steps

**Getting familiar with the production school pedagogical approach**

- Collecting information

Production schools emerged in the XIXth century and exist nowadays in different European countries. These schools share a common objective: helping and enabling young people to find their way within the society and on the job market, by offering them a different way of learning, practical, concrete and individually tailored. The **pedagogical approach** of the production schools is based on the principle of "**learning through production**" – and possible sale – of goods and services, in order to to make students feel part of a work community where their work has a real and measurable value.

However, production schools are not organized in the same way in each country and often differ in terms of **pedagogical practices**. To collect information, the websites of the existing production schools are a useful tool but it might be difficult to accede to these information when an English translation is not provided.

An international organization gathering the production schools of Denmark, Germany, Finland, Austria, Sweden and France (**IPSO**) also exists and can provide valuable information on the production schools in Europe.

The partners of the PRO PULSE + project has also realised an overview of the production schools in Europe (O1), which can be downloaded from the PRO PULSE + Website.

- Crossing and selecting key elements

Some of the main aspects which characterize the production schools might sound familiar to VET providers and totally or partially reflect their approach. When dealing with the implementation of a production school or smaller production units, some of these aspects can be enhanced, excluded or expanded.

To give a clear example, sale, which is one of the core element of the production school system, is not applicable to all professional fields and can be replaced by simulated sale activities, volunteering activities, or simply focusing on "**learning by doing**" activities. Also, the target public of the production school can be changed or enlarged, as the partners of the PRO PULSE + project did, by opening to adult people and creating the conditions for an intergenerational learning process. New publics, such as migrants, can also be targeted.

**Define the main objective and achievements**

The step described above is closely linked with the necessity of providing a clear account of the initial situation (starting point) and identifying the objectives to be achieved: which are the challenges to be addressed? Which is the need to meet? Which gap should be filled? Which is the merit of developing such a model?

Tangible achievements should also be defined, for example in terms of new or renewed physical structures and/or pedagogical tools. Of course, more precise objectives and achievements could be defined later, during the action planning phase (cf. below).
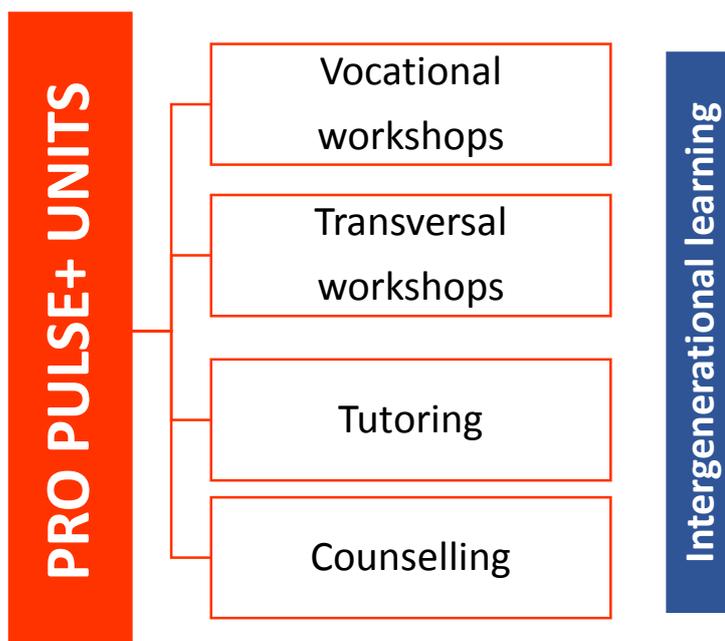
**Need diagnosis**

The implementation of a production school or a production unit starts by defining a limited geographic area and a specific sector of activity. In order to do this, an attentive local analysis is first of all required giving back the local "picture" (in terms of socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects) of the specific geographic area where the new model is going to be implemented. This picture should notably highlight labour market needs and **skill mismatch**. Besides, desk analysis about reference sector perspectives at national and local level (economic growth and job market opportunities) should be carried out, as well as interviews with companies in the sector and with other relevant stakeholders (…).

**Define one's own model of "Production Unit"**

Before setting up a production school or smaller production units/services, Vet providers have to define which will be the main characteristics of their production unit, that is the common basis (a kind of lowest common denominator) of the entire approach.

In order to do so, VET providers need to answer to the following questions: "Where do this production unit will be located and which role will it have compared to other learning services/activities? Which will be its main objective? Which resources will be necessary (human resources, physical resources, financial resources) to set it up? Which professional figures will be required? ...  This model should be defined at the very beginning and lead the practical implementation of the the production unit.

To give an example, during the development phase of the PRO PULSE + model, the partners of the PRO PULSE + project have used the visual representation below in order to further develop their model. This figure shows the four pillars of the PRO PULSE + model:

**PRO PULSE+ UNITS**

- Vocational workshops
- Transversal workshops
- Tutoring
- Counselling

**Intergenerational learning**

**Budget construction**

Precisely defining which will be the budget model of the production school or production unit is also crucial. While collecting background information on production schools in Europe, the PRO PULSE + partners have highlighted that production schools in Europe rely on different funding sources and most of the times search for a combination of public, private, and EU funding. Incomes from sales of goods can also represent a supplement. Diversifying the funding sources can therefore be a solution for ensuring the implementation and functioning of the production unit but is not necessary the best solution, especially if a VET provider decides to set up a single production unit in the framework of existing public contracts or calls for tenders. This was the case for some of the PRO PULSE + partners.

**Networking with stakeholders**

The creation of a network of stakeholders is a critical aspect for the successful implementation of the PRO PULSE + model. This activity consists in working in cooperation with local organisations, creating strong links with local enterprises, organising formal and informal meetings with clients and partners, communicating on the innovative nature of the production schools, involving different key players in the preparation phase of the production school or production unit…

The network of stakeholders should ideally consists of a mix of public and private partnerships. Obviously, when the sale of goods and services is the basis of the production unit, the involvement of local communities is even more important.

## Construction of the training course

**Define the learning outcomes of the training**

The construction of a training course always begins with the identification of the skills that will be essential to know or to do by the end of the learning period, that is to say the learning outcomes of the training course. These learning outcomes should refer to observable and measurable:

- **Knowledge**
- **Skills**
- **Attitudes**

Learning outcomes always focus on results and reflect the desired end of the learning experience, not the means or the process, which will be defined later.

**Mapping of content and course sequences**

The development of the **learning outcomes** leads to the design of the overall training course, which will be divided in **pedagogical sequences**. To denote these pedagogical sequences, the partners of the PRO PULSE + project have used the term "workshop", in reference to the professional workshops that are at the core of the production school pedagogical approach.

Each pedagogical sequence/workshop will contribute to the achievement of a specific **learning objective** and will be composed of different **training sessions**, also composed of **learning activities**.
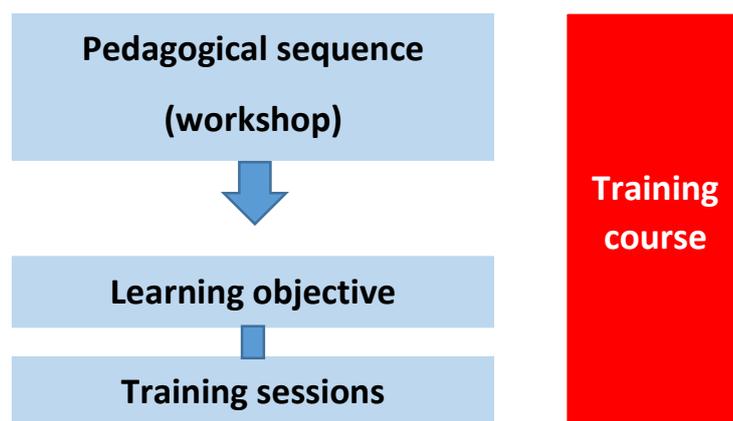


In the production unit, theory and practice should be combined and the focus of the learning activities should be job training in a work environment. Besides, the units can include:

- Vocational workshops: sectoral or multi-sectoral workshops representing fields and/occupational profiles
- Transversal workshop: covering key-skills, for instance ICT or languages, employability skills, society, culture, arts, nature, sports, well-being, etc.

Different tools can be used in order to detail the content of the training course, like the two tables below, used by the PRO PULSE + partners during the development of their model:

Table 1:

| **WORKSHOP** *title* |
| --- |
| |
| **DURATION** in hours |
| |
| **BRIEF DESCRIPTION** *of the goals of the workshop* |
| |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES** expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences |
| |

| **LEARNING ACTIVITIES** | **PRODUCTS/SERVICES** *to be developed* |
| --- | --- |
| | |

| **HUMAN RESOURCES** *profile of staff as skills required* |
| --- |
| |
| **PARTICIPANTS'** *group size* |
| |
| **RESOURCES/MATERIALS** *required* |
| |
| **SOFT SKILLS** *involved* |
| |

Table 2:

| **Training sequence : n°…** | Duration: |
| --- | --- |
| Objectives<br>  1.  …<br>  2.  … | Theoretical content<br>  −  …<br>  −  … |
| Evaluation modalities of the training sequence: | |
| | |

| Objective code | Method/group format | Training Progress | Trainer's aid | Trainee's aid | Duration |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
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| - | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| - | - | - | - | - | - |

## Team building

- Set up of the working team

The team of professional working in a production school or in smaller production units should be composed of different professional figures and ideally include:

- a managing team: responsible for the overall coordination of the unit, including quality assurance processes and external relations with stakeholders
- an administration team: responsible for the various units' teams, interface with participants, financial and administrative tasks
- a training team (e.g. trainers, teachers, **tutors**, **mentors** with relevant academic and professional background of key-skills (e.g. ICT, languages)
- a psychological team (e.g. psychologists, **counsellor**, **coach**, social worker): responsible for individual accompaniment of participants and transversal workshops on societal topics

- Training of trainers

Even if these professionals are skilled and experienced, initiatives should be organized in order to raise team awareness on the PRO PULSE + model: starting point, objectives, pedagogical approach, and so on.

A training period should also be organized, targeting all professional figures working in the unit, especially the training team. The training objectives and content should cover the main key aspects and key-contents of the PRO PULSE + Model, as defined by the partners of the PRO PULSE + project in the O3 PRO PULSE + Model and in the O4 PRO PULSE+ e-Toolbox.

## Implementation

The implementation of the PRO PULSE + model should start with the development of a detailed action plan. This step is crucial as the action plan offers a clear framework for the implementation of the model and helps to define an effective and coordinated action strategy.

Different models of action planning exist and can be used, but they should at least provide information on:

- Who will be in charge of which actions – defining tasks and responsibilities
- When these actions will start and end
- In which order – definition of a sequence of actions interconnected
- How – definition of human, technical and financial resources
- For which goal – identification and selection of indicators that can be used to monitor the progress and performance of the approach

The action planning should be composed of at least three stages: an elaboration stage, an implementation stage, a monitoring/evaluation stage. In addition to the action plan, a detailed budget plan should also be provided.

Using an effective action plan is part of the **quality assurance procedure** which should be followed by VET providers during the implementation of the PRO PULSE + model. This procedure, consisting in a systematic and planned approach to assessing, monitoring and improving the quality of the PRO PULSE + unit on a continuous basis, is at the core of the PRO PULSE + model as it has been defined by the PRO PULSE + partners.

# Vocabulary

| Word/expressions/acronyms | Meaning |
|---|---|
| **Production unit** | Clearly identifiable part of a school or a VET organisation where regular teaching and training activities are organized based on production (real or simulated) and/or sale of goods and/or services |
| **Pedagogical approach** | Overall perspective used to plan and implement one or more instructional strategy |
| **Learning through production** | Learning a skill, ability, etc. by contributing to the production of a good and/or service, like in a real work situation |
| **Pedagogical practice** | Methods, strategies, and/or styles of instruction |
| **Learning by doing** | Learning a skill, ability, etc. by trying to do it |
| **IPSO** | International Production School Organisation |
| **Skill mismatch** | Gap between an individual's job skills and the demands of the job |
| **Knowledge** | Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education. In other words, the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject |
| **Skills** | An ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills) |
| **Attitudes** | Tendency to act in a certain way in a particular situation or to adopt a particular way of thinking |
| **Learning outcomes** | What a student is expected to be able to do as a result of a learning activity |
| **Pedagogical sequence** | A set of knowledge or know-how structured by the teacher, with a view to contributing to the achievement of a pedagogical objective |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Skills expected to be acquired at the end of an apprenticeship |
| **Training session** | Period of training planned in time, organized for a group according to objectives corresponding to collective needs |
| **Tutor** | Professionals whose function is to transmit the agreed professional knowledge, according to a determined progression |
| **Mentor** | A more experienced individual who has succeeded within an organization and provides career support to a less experienced individual |
| **Counsellor** | A person trained to give guidance on personal, professional or psychological problems |
| **Coach** | An individual who helps people or teams for the development of their potential and their know-how within the framework of professional objectives |
| **Qualitative assurance procedure** | Any systematic process of checking to see whether a product or service being developed is meeting specified requirements |
| Intergenerational learning | A process through which individuals of all ages acquire together skills and knowledge, but also attitudes and values |
| NEET | Not in Education, Employment or Training |
| Stakeholder | A person, group or organisation that has interest or concern in an organization |
| Labour market needs | The supply and demand for labor, in which employees provide the supply and employers the demand. |
| ICT | Information and communication technology |
| Lifelong Learning | Formal and informal learning opportunities throughout preople's lives in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfilment |
| SME's | Small and medium enterprises |

| Constructivist approach | Learning and Teaching theory based on the belief that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction as opposed to passively receiving information |
|---|---|
| Skill oriented | Focusing on the completion of particular task as a measure of success |
| School drop out | A person who stops going to a school, college, etc., before finishing : a person who drops out of school |