



Mindful Managers Training Programme

Intellectual Output 2

Comparative Report

August 2020



CARDET

obelisk



Funded by the
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1. Introduction

Mindful Managers is an Erasmus+ project, which has been created in partnership with four European organisations: Inova Consultancy in the UK; VAMK in Finland; CARDET in Cyprus; and Obelisk in Belgium.

The aim of the Mindful Managers project is to support public sector managers as they tackle stress and burnout in the workplace. The project aims to develop skills and competences to proactively and positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work. Participants in this training programme will be able to support their team with the management techniques; therefore, they can cascade the learning to create a large-scale impact.

The project combines a Training Programme (IO2), a mentoring programme, called Reflection Rounds (IO4) with a complimentary e-learning game (IO3). This innovatively designed training programme aims to achieve the aims of the Mindful Managers project. The training programme was piloted twice in each partner country at the end of 2019 and during 2020. The aim being to engage a minimum of 20 public sector managers in each pilot in every partner country. In total, 136 participants were trained by project partners. This comparative report will assess the effectiveness of the piloting of the Mindful Managers Training Programme across the European partnership and some of the challenges faced.

1.1. Overview of the Mindful Managers Training Programme

The Mindful Managers Training Programme consists of five training modules:

1. Connect
2. Be active
3. Take notice
4. Keep learning
5. Give

Similar to many health and wellbeing habits, the partners chose to adopt a format that embodied the '5 a day' concept. The aim was to create a training programme that, like its '5 a day' counterparts, was easy to implement into daily life. In addition, these modules established a diverse and innovative training programme which was relevant to the target audience.

Each module consists of 2 topics, see the table below:

Module	Topics
1. Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-awareness: connect with yourself Taking up roles
2. Be active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team building through physical exercise Relaxation techniques
3. Take notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-awareness and interpersonal awareness Asking the right questions
4. Keep learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work management Life-long Learning
5. Give	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give through positive coaching Non-violent communication

The four training sessions focused on the Connect, Take notice, Keep learning and Give modules; in addition, the Be active module was integrated into each session. Partners decided to integrate the Be Active module in each session during the Third Transnational Meeting held in Vaasa, Finland in May 2019. Due to the unique nature of the Be Active module and the exercises and activities partners developed in this module, the partnership felt that bringing parts of the module in each session would be beneficial for the training participants. Consequently, participants were able to develop a keen understanding of the five training modules and the methods of incorporating activity into their daily working life. Through this innovative training programme, participants have been able to explore stress management and mindfulness at work.

The Mindful Managers Training Programme has been built on the foundations of these five modules. The consortium collaborated to create extensive training materials and facilitator packs for the programme to be piloted in each partner country. The partnership developed a Trainers Manual and a Learners Manual. As part of the Trainers Manual, partners developed 5 annexes, 1 per each module. These annexes explain the content of each module and guide facilitators to deliver the sessions.

The length and format of the pilot training varied based on each partners' national context. This information is further explained below. This Comparative Report is based on the data from the consortium's national reports, this report gives an overview and comparison of the pilot activities in each of the partner countries. For more details on the training activities carried out in each country, see the Annexes (national reports).

1.2. Recruitment

The recruitment for the Mindful Managers Training Programme began at the early stage of the project to ensure that all interested public sector managers could benefit from the training. Recruitment formed part of the general dissemination activities of the project and started when partners first began making contacts with the target group during research for the development of the Mindful Managers Training Programme (IO2). During the initial stages of this output, the partners contacted the target group in their area in order to establish the situation for public sector managers.

When it came to recruitment for the pilot training delivery, each partner was encouraged to recruit individuals using their preferred methods and dissemination channels. These methods were varied and included, but were not limited to, posters, partner websites, social media platforms, including Facebook pages/groups, Twitter and personal contacts. Furthermore, each partner reached out to local public sector organisations within their areas in order to effectively disseminate the project. This process enabled each partner to successfully recruit public sector managers for the training programme.

Below you will find an outline of the recruitment process in each partner country:

Inova Consultancy, the UK

By registering to this event, you sign up to all four sessions. There are limited spaces available for the training, so **please register as soon as possible** to secure your place.

Come and join us for this exciting training programme!

For more questions about the training or if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Babett via email - assistant@inovaconsult.com or ring her at the office on 0114 279 90 91.

The Mindful Managers project has been funded by the Erasmus+ programme and has been developed by 4 European partners.



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Inova utilised their extensive networks of individuals and organisations within the public sector during the recruitment process. The following organisations were contacted alongside others: Sheffield City Council, the NHS, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University. The majority of the public sector participants were from Sheffield City Council and the NHS. Inova used online platforms such as Eventbrite, Facebook and their own website in order to increase interest in the training programme.

VAMK, Finland

VAMK recruited for the training programme by approaching the large public sector organisations in the area (Vaasa City; Vaasa Central Hospital; The Centre for Economic

Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres), Ostrobothnia; and Old Vaasa Hospital (forensic psychiatry hospital)). As they had some links with local public sector organisations, they were confident in this approach. They shared the information about the training and requested that some of the organisation's managers participate in the training during their working hours. In addition, they used project leaflets to spread the word.



Mindful managers –koulutus julkisen sektorin esimiehille

Aika: keskiviikko 30.10., 6.11., 13.11. ja 20.11.2019
klo 12.30–16

Paikka: VAMK Alere, Wolffintie 29–31, luokka A 157

Sitovat ilmoittautumiset mahdollisimman pian, mutta viimeistään 21.10.2019 osoitteeseen uis@vamk.fi.

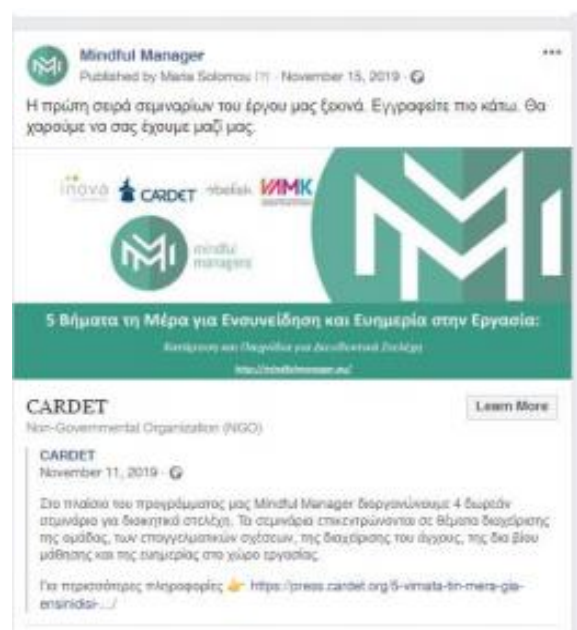
Lisätietoja: yliopettaja Ulla Isoaari, ulla.isoaari@vamk.fi

Logos: inova consultancy, CARDET, obelisk, VAMK, Erasmus+

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CARDET, Cyprus

In Cyprus, participants were recruited using a number of methods. Initially, an invitation was created, which was shared online, through CARDET's social media pages and via email to local organisations. This invitation was followed up with emails and phone calls. CARDET recruited successfully thanks to their extensive network of contacts.



Mindful Manager
Published by Maria Solomoni 171 · November 15, 2019 · 🌐

Η πρώτη σειρά σεμιναρίων του έργου μας ξεκινά. Εγγραφείτε πιο κάτω. Θα χαρούμε να σας έχουμε μαζί μας.

Logos: inova, CARDET, obelisk, VAMK, mindful managers

5 βήματα τη Μέρα για Ενσυνείδηση και Ευημερία στην Εργασία:
Βελτίωση και διατήρηση για Συνθετικές Ενέργειες
<http://www.mindfulmanager.eu/>

CARDET
Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)

CARDET
November 11, 2019 · 🌐

Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος μας Mindful Manager διοργανώνουμε 4 δωρεάν σεμινάρια για διοικητικό στέλεχος. Τα σεμινάρια επικεντρώνονται σε θέματα διαχείρισης της ομάδας, των επαγγελματικών σχέσεων, της διαχείρισης του άγχους, της δια βίου μάθησης και της ευημερίας στο χώρο εργασίας.

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Obelisk, Belgium



Obelisk has access to a vast network of local public sector organisations; therefore, they relied on this for the initial stages of recruitment. In addition, staff at Obelisk shared the programme with their connections in the public sector. An invitation and a corresponding email was shared with the possible participants. In addition, they shared this on various Facebook pages, LinkedIn and the Obelisk website. Obelisk staff also shared the programme on their personal social media channels. For the second pilot, Obelisk invited back participants,

including those who showed interest in the pilot 1 training but could not attend. To supplement the recruitment for pilot 2, Obelisk included a sample of the pilot 1 testimonials in their invitation.

2. Overview of Participants

Whilst the target group of the Mindful Managers Training Programme was public sector managers, there were some participants who were not employed in the public sector or were not managers at the time of piloting. However, as they were interested in working in the public sector or becoming a manager, they were included in the training programme. The benefit for these participants was that they were able to prepare for their future career as public sector managers.

The table below gives an overview of the numbers of training participants who were engaged during the Mindful Managers Training Programme:

Country	Pilot 1	Pilot 2	Total number of participants
UK	19	17	36
Finland	21	18	39

Cyprus	37	10	47
Belgium	6	8	14
Total	83	53	136

As the project application stated, each project partner needed to have at least 20 public sector managers who attended each pilot of the Mindful Managers training programme (in total 160 participants). The total number of Mindful Managers participants across the consortium was 136.

Considering the many challenges that partners faced due to the COVID pandemic, including national lockdowns and homeworking, 136 participants in total is good. The challenges were not just being faced by partners but also by the very learners we were aiming to engage, many who were unfamiliar with online delivery. Partners had regular discussions and updates in order to support each other. Inova, as coordinator and output leader, offered it to the partners to attend their online sessions.

After discussions in the team, Obelisk decided to record the Pilot 2 training materials as webinars in order to reach more people and ensure that public sector managers who were not able to fit the pilot delivery in their schedules can also benefit from the training. The National Agency was notified about this and Inova, as coordinator, submitted a contract amendment to ensure that the activity is eligible. As a result, more public sector managers were engaged. During the preparation of this Comparative Report, the recorded webinars had 185 views on YouTube. Therefore, partners believe that although face-to-face engagement of all 160 public sector managers was not possible due to Covid-19, with the online engagement of participants, partners have reached more people.

3. Format and Process of Training

After recruiting the participants, the facilitators, in each partner country, began planning the training for the programme. The consortium had already prepared extensive training materials and exercises which covered the five modules of the training programme; therefore, facilitators used these materials in preparation for their training delivery.

As most of the participants had full time jobs, the partners organised their training programme in a way that fitted the schedules of those who were interested in the training programme. Each partner organised their piloting based on the needs of the participants and the national context in order to engage as many participants as possible, as can be seen in the data below.

	Pilot 1		Pilot 2	
Country	Date	Topic	Date	Topic
UK	25/11/19	Connect	17/02/20	Connect
	02/12/19	Take Notice	24/02/20	Keep Learning
	09/12/19	Keep Learning	02/03/20	Take Notice
	16/12/19	Give	09/03/20	Give
Finland	30/10/19	Connect	15/01/20	Connect
	06/11/19	Take Notice	22/01/20	Take Notice
	13/11/19	Keep Learning	29/01/20	Keep Learning
	20/11/19	Give	05/02/20	Give
Cyprus	11/10/19 +	Connect	22/05/20	Connect
	26/11/19	Take Notice	22/05/20	Take Notice
	29/11/19	Keep Learning	29/05/20	Keep Learning
	02/12/19	Give	29/05/20	Give
	06/12/19			
Belgium	17/11/19 AM	Connect	3 webinars published: 08/07/20	Online webinars created
	17/11/19 PM	Take Notice		
	25/11/19 AM	Give		
	25/11/19 PM	Keep Learning		

3.1. Connect

The first module of the Mindful Managers Training Programme was Connect. It was an effective module, as participants were encouraged to make new connections and to also develop a deeper connection with themselves. Participants were encouraged to engage with different kinds of personalities on a professional level in order to improve team results and to find ways to understand why others may have different views or different approaches. A range of

theories and models were explored along with understanding where some of our views or ways of working come from. Participants were encouraged to keep an open mind and to learn how to understand and know their team. Values and culture were explored.

In the **UK**, participants were encouraged to make connections with each other and with themselves to improve their own individual understanding of how these techniques can be utilised in their working lives and personal lives. The PERMA model and the Trust activity were used. In addition, the facilitator focused on relaxation techniques, such as breathing techniques, for the Be Active section of the session; the group practiced breathing as a form of composure and staying calm under pressure. The second pilot's Connect module also followed the same structure and utilised the same resources. During the first pilot the UK facilitator, Val Boulding, felt that there were too many resources to choose from. In pilot 2, whilst the number of resources had not decreased, Val felt more accustomed to the programme.

In **Finland**, the facilitator felt that the group dynamics were too formal at the beginning, despite the introductions. In addition, the project introduction was too long in relation to the length of the session. The participants had some positive discussions about the topics and activities. The following activity C1: Quality Mindmap was pleasant. In addition, the group completed D4: Action Plan. As part of the Be Active module, the participants completed E1: Breathing out stress and work anxiety. The breathing exercise was good. To address these concerns from the first pilot, an icebreaker was introduced at the start of the session in pilot 2. This involved looking for personal features and worked well to ease the atmosphere and allow open communication. In addition to the activities used in pilot 1, the Quadrants and the Kolb theory were touched upon in the second pilot.

In **Cyprus**, the first module was held twice and it had the same format for both dates. During the session, participants worked on “exploring” their personal traits and understanding the traits and characteristics of their colleagues. They wrote down the words that characterise them and put them on the wall and discussed with their peers. They found similarities and differences and discussed the ways they perceived those characteristics. After creating a concept map for their traits and qualities, the theory of basic qualities was presented and explained. Participants had the opportunity to experiment with the 4 steps of the diagram (basic quality, trap, challenge, and allergy) and identify relevant traits. They also created their own diagrams, with concepts of their choice. Participants also explored social roles and applied case scenarios for reflections. Towards the end of the session, participants worked on their action map, planning the course of their actions for improving their and their colleagues' work wellbeing. From the Be Active module, participants viewed the first few activities in Level 1 and planned to complete them by the next training meeting. As the second pilot was held in May 2020, all sessions now had to be held online via Zoom due to the Coronavirus pandemic. For this second pilot, the consortium felt that a more in depth introduction to mindfulness would help the participants understand the applicability of the project. Therefore, the first session in pilot 2 contained an explanation of what mindfulness and wellbeing is. Furthermore, the second pilot in Cyprus was particularly interactive through the use of online polls, virtual break-

out rooms, and by encouraging participants to download the Mindful Managers mobile game so that they could play in between the sessions.

In **Belgium**, the facilitator introduced the theme of self-awareness. The training gave participants more insight into themselves and increased their insight into their own team members in order to connect with them. The self-awareness section ensured that the managers understood how communication and relationships have an impact on the workplace. At the end of this module, managers could define their strengths and weaknesses as managers linked to various social styles. They could also better assess their employees and understand why they react in a certain way in certain situations. Finally, they also succeeded in making an authentic and sincere connection with their employees by practicing it with fellow managers. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the pilot 2 sessions had to be delivered online. After consultation with the project coordinator, Inova, webinars were developed due to Obelisk's experience of giving blended learning programmes as a training institution. Through 'Webinar Connect', viewers could learn how to be aware of their own strengths and pitfalls as a manager and also how to better assess themselves and their team to make an impact. The programme contained 3 sections: 'Trust in your team', 'Personality model- Social styles', and 'Where does it sometimes go wrong in your team and what can you do without losing connection?'.

3.2. Take Notice

The Take Notice module aims to support participants as they recognise their own strengths as managers and build on these skills to acknowledge the strengths of their co-workers. This helps them to develop strong teams where individual strengths are recognised. The tools of the module support the managers and their teams to address potential challenges. This module was well received by participants in the partner countries.

In the **UK**, the concept of mindfulness was introduced and its relevance to the Mindful Managers Training Programme was outlined. The facilitator used a strength inventory, which enabled participants to develop a deeper understanding of their own strengths and the strengths of those they work with. In addition, a mind map exercise explored personal issues relating to the topic. The facilitator has extensive experience as a yoga instructor and held a mini yoga session during the Be Active section of the class. The yoga could be integrated into daily working life and shared with the participants' colleagues. For the second pilot, the Take Notice module was implemented in the third session as the UK facilitators felt that it would be more beneficial to focus on the Keep Learning module before Take Notice. This new format ran smoothly with participants. The focus of the second pilot of Take Notice remained the same as pilot 1: self-awareness, strength inventory, mind mapping and yoga for the Be Active section.

In **Finland**, for the Be Active element of the Take Notice module, the group completed B2: Back of the Napkin and F1 Office Yoga, these were well received. The core exercises were E1–4: Coleman Raider and C1–4: plan your day. At the start, the conversations were rigid, and it was

difficult to guide the session. Participants required more theory basis. However, the atmosphere was relaxed and it maybe that the Mindful approach is a new concept along with actively engaging in activities. For the second pilot, the group were enthusiastic at first but the conversations did not get as deep as the first session. The content for this second pilot also remained the same as for the first.

In **Cyprus**, participants created a memory wall, as part of the Be Active element of the session, and reflected on the important improvement of relations within a team that such an activity can create. The emphasis of the reflections was on connecting the past with the future and on the exchange of experiences. A game of drawing memories was played, which participants enjoyed. From the Take Notice module, participants created a table with their strong characteristics and discussed the steps for guidance and training in relation to their own workplace. They proceeded to create an action plan for applying these activities with their colleagues. The session continued with some meditation activities, which participants enjoyed very much. Participants also spent some time playing the game and reflecting on scenarios which they found exciting. They also found the game to be a beneficial guide and reminder for things they need to be doing for improving wellbeing. The second pilot of Take Notice module utilised the same resources as in pilot 1. As it was held online, the use of virtual groups helped participants collaborate together on the activities. Furthermore, the session was made as interactive as possible through the use of online polls.

In **Belgium**, the group drew up a checklist and an action plan for starting difficult conversations with employees when there are signs of decreased resilience: how do you start this conversation? What are good questions to ask? How do you end the conversation? Do you have to take over tasks from your employee or not? What are good agreements you can make? This module aimed to support managers who have a hard time recognising alarm bells around reduced resilience. In addition, those who find it difficult to discuss this with employees. By the end of the session, there had been an increase in awareness amongst the participants.

3.3. Keep Learning

The Keep Learning module looks at the skills and needs within a workplace from different perspectives. Through this module, participants identify learning needs and pick up the best ideas for their own work and the work community. The end goal is for learners to deploy the new information in the work community.

In the **UK**, Kolb's experiential learning style theory formed the foundation for this session. The facilitator introduced the theory to the participants at the first session and referred to this at various points in the training to build on it. The session was split into two sections: Management of work and Lifelong learning, concepts which are relevant to public sector managers. In addition, there was a focus on relaxation techniques such as breathing techniques and laughter yoga for the Be Active section of the session. The evaluations show that this session was well received. The second pilot of the Keep Learning module swapped places with

the Take Notice module and was implemented in the second session (see above). Kolb's theory once again formed the foundation for the session and participants were asked to identify their own learning style. This second pilot also focused on conflict resolution and was beneficial for the managers. Finally, the Be Active section stayed the same as the first pilot and the Laughter Yoga was well received by the group.

In **Finland**, the atmosphere was relaxed, and it was easy to proceed with the training. Because the group was smaller, the discussions went better. The participants shared ideas about values at the workplace and implemented them to their own work. The following exercises were used by the facilitator: E1–4: Learning Styles; B1–4: Purpose of the job and shared values; and C1–4: Wellbeing at work. For the Be Active module, the following exercises were used: D1–4: Relaxation technique, Relaxation Technique – Reflection, Learn more, Mapping Characteristics. For the second pilot of this session the same exercises were used (including Sailing boat, Wellbeing island, Frame of thoughts and Walking outside). The Finnish facilitators thought that this was the easiest session to lead because it was the most familiar to them. However, they also found that they chose too many activities and noticed that this session worked better in Pilot 1. It was also felt that due to the background of the Finnish participants (for example, working in healthcare) and having busy workdays, it was harder for them to concentrate fully on the activities.

In **Cyprus**, the activities focused on employee skills and decision making. Participants had to choose and justify their selection of skills. The lifelong learning activities were also presented, especially the ones that involve the use of technology. In this session, the group started to cover the GROW model, which appears in the Give module, as participants encountered it through the Mindful Managers game. The facilitator started with the theory, so that they could familiarise with the concept and watched the related video from the training materials. The group then worked through some examples to understand the application of the model. Pilot 2 also focused on lifelong learning activities and work management. Participants then drafted an action plan for their teams and how best to support them. Virtual groups were used to discuss these plans to gain constructive feedback from fellow participants who all had different levels of management experience to contribute. This was interactive and highly beneficial for the participants.

In **Belgium**, the Be-active exercise was appreciated for increasing energy levels as participants had to work hard in the previous session GIVE. As the dynamics in the afternoon were lower than in the morning the facilitator adapted to make the session a bit easier to meet the needs of the group. The activities used focused on lifelong learning. Participants had to visually present what skills and competences their team members have and how these team members can reinforce each other in this. For pilot 2, 'Webinar Keep Learning' was developed. The aim of this webinar is to understand what impactful career discussions are, which will make employees grow and develop. The programme of this webinar was: 'What is a career interview?', 'Difference between coaching and managing', 'Tips and tricks: career interview' and 'Tools and techniques'.

3.4. Give

The final module, Give, focuses on the power of cooperation. Through this module, learners build connections which allow compassionate giving and receiving. Over the duration of the module, participants become aware of the impact of their actions on themselves and their team. The Give module uses mindful techniques to increase the positive impact of our actions. This module was well received by participants in the partner countries.

In the **UK**, the facilitator introduced the GROW model, which is an effective tool for providing feedback and is, therefore, useful for the participants. In addition, the group explored the theory of nonviolent communication, as established by Marshall Rosenberg. After each exercise, the learners were asked to reflect and to feedback any thoughts relating to the task and how this connected to their professional life. In addition, the facilitator focused on relaxation techniques such as breathing techniques for the Be Active section of the session, these exercises were well received as they can be easily used during daily, professional life. The group delved into the theories which support relaxation techniques and mindfulness in order to highlight the importance of practicing these activities. The second pilot also focused on the GROW model and was a positive session to end the course on. The facilitator outlined links between mindfulness and neuro-linguistic programming to help the participants understand the applicability of the project. This was a key objective the consortium worked hard on to implement into the second pilot.

In **Finland**, as part of the Give module, the facilitator used the following exercises: D1–4: Puzzle assignment, X-factor, Role play, Group discussion; F1 Situation gone bad; and A1–4: Video observation, Theory, What’s my goal?, Coach the Coachee. As part of the Be Active module, the facilitator used the following exercises: C1–4: Dancing, Feel it, Learn more, Create. This was a full day session with a lot of theory and discussions and the feedback from the final session was very positive. The IO4 Reflection rounds were also promoted and several enthusiastic managers signed up preliminary for the sessions. In the second pilot, this session was once again very exciting and popular with participants. The facilitators noted that after this session they realised that it is key to know that each group is different and some groups are more receptive to certain activities and some are more receptive to others.

In **Cyprus**, the two themes of the module provided activities for the participants for positive guidance and non-violent communication. Participants completed the activities related to the GROW model, finding them very useful for their planning and dealing with situations at work, as well as for setting goals. Participants completed some interactive tasks in groups, and also discussed skills for the future, as well as how they envision the future of their workplace. The activities enabled the people that attended the session for the first time to blend in very nicely. Participants also continued to play the game, completing missions and was a useful extra resource to accompany sessions. The second pilot took place online and included activities about how we can empower our teams and the importance of non-verbal communication. Participants were able to watch video examples and discuss how we conduct non-verbal

communication. Virtual groups were also used to allow participants to work online collaboratively and not feel isolated.

In **Belgium**, the group used the GROW model. As managers, participants may have to do expert interventions as well as coach interventions in coaching conversations. It is important that as a coach participants are aware of which intervention they should choose in order to increase their impact. This was a revelatory moment for many participants. Afterwards, participants were given the opportunity to practice the GROW model. For the second pilot, an online webinar was developed for the Give module. This explored the differences between solution-focused thinking and problem-focused thinking. The aim was to allow participants to recognise the importance of solution-based thinking which they would then be able to coach their employees on. The webinar programme was as follows: 'distinction between problem-focused thinking and solution focused thinking', 'the language of a solution', 'a mindset of solutions for your own- ZONE', 'a mindset of solutions for your team- GROW' and 'tips and tricks'.

3.5. Be Active

Whilst the Be Active module was not a standalone session, all partners included aspects of this module in each of their training sessions. This worked very well and so the module was piloted as a subsection of the other modules to encourage participants to incorporate these activities into their working life. This module is less theoretical and more practical than the other modules, so it complemented the other four sessions.

The Be Active activities were well received by the participants as they allowed for breaks during the session and reminded them to take care of physical and mental wellbeing. Moreover, the facilitators utilised exercises which could be implemented into the participants everyday working life, which they could also try with their teams.

Each partner country used a range of exercises from this module during their training programmes. For example, in the UK, one of the facilitators had experience as a yoga instructor and was able to hold a mini yoga session with the participants. Partners used a range of relaxation techniques, all of which can be used easily in the workplace.

3.6. Conclusions: Format and Process

In general, the format and process of the Mindful Managers Training Programme was well received by both the facilitators and the participants. Initially, some of the facilitators found it challenging to plan for the sessions as there was too much training material. However, by the second pilot, they were accustomed to the course and were able to adapt the materials to the needs of the learners and appreciated the abundance of resources for allowing a diverse approach and suitable adaptations. There were pros and cons to having developed so many

resources. By the time of the 2nd pilot some of the training was moved to online delivery and being able to use activities that were suited to this method was important.

In addition, some partners were able to deliver the 2nd pilot face to face, prior to any lockdown due to the COVID pandemic. Other partners were put in the position of cancelling the face to face training and rearranging as an online training course. This created many challenges with recruitment, technological challenges, public sector staff furloughed and homeworking. In addition, some of the identified participants were front-line workers facing daily challenges and long working days, which did not allow for attending the course, so some did drop out after initially registering.

Most of the partners scheduled their sessions for half days once a week. However, in Belgium, they facilitated two full day sessions (pilot 1). Each day was composed of two of the modules from the training programme. The afternoon module during the second day was lacking in energy as the participants had been working all day. This arrangement was purely down to availability of the participants who found it easier to take the full day away from the workplace.

Some of the partners scheduled the modules differently in order to track the best format for the programme. For example, in the UK, the second pilot was formatted like so: Connect, Keep Learning, Take Notice, Give. The first pilot in Belgium was scheduled like so: Connect, Take Notice, Give, Keep Learning. The Training Programme is flexible, and the partnership have been encouraged to adapt it to their own learners' needs.

The GROW exercise was highlighted as a beneficial activity for the participants. However, both the Belgian and Cypriot partners felt that this activity was very time consuming. It is important to consider timings in the lesson plan when planning any of the modules and to adapt materials and resources accordingly. The Finnish partner felt that the training sessions were too formal which resulted in them being stilted and some participants not engaging. This view was not shared by the UK partner where a less formal approach was taken. Over the course of the programme, the Finnish partners were able to establish good connections with the group. It is suggested to have a range of icebreakers at the start of each session to ensure participants are comfortable and engaged. The partners, who included icebreakers, felt the group were more relaxed and less formal in their approach to the training. In addition, it was seen that potentially a target number of 20 participants per course was too high for the training programme and that 14 would be more manageable and realistic. The lower number would ensure that all participants could share their experiences and receive more valuable peer support from the group and from the facilitator.

By the 2nd pilot, due to COVID, some partners finalised their training delivery online which created several challenges. Not all participants were keen to change from face to face training to online and many facilitators were new to this way of working too. There were other technological challenges too, for partners and learners and the national lockdowns were different in each partner country. Working together to share details of good practice was important.

4. Impact of the Training Programme

4.1. Evaluation

The UK

In the following charts you can see the participants' evaluation of the Mindful Managers training programme:

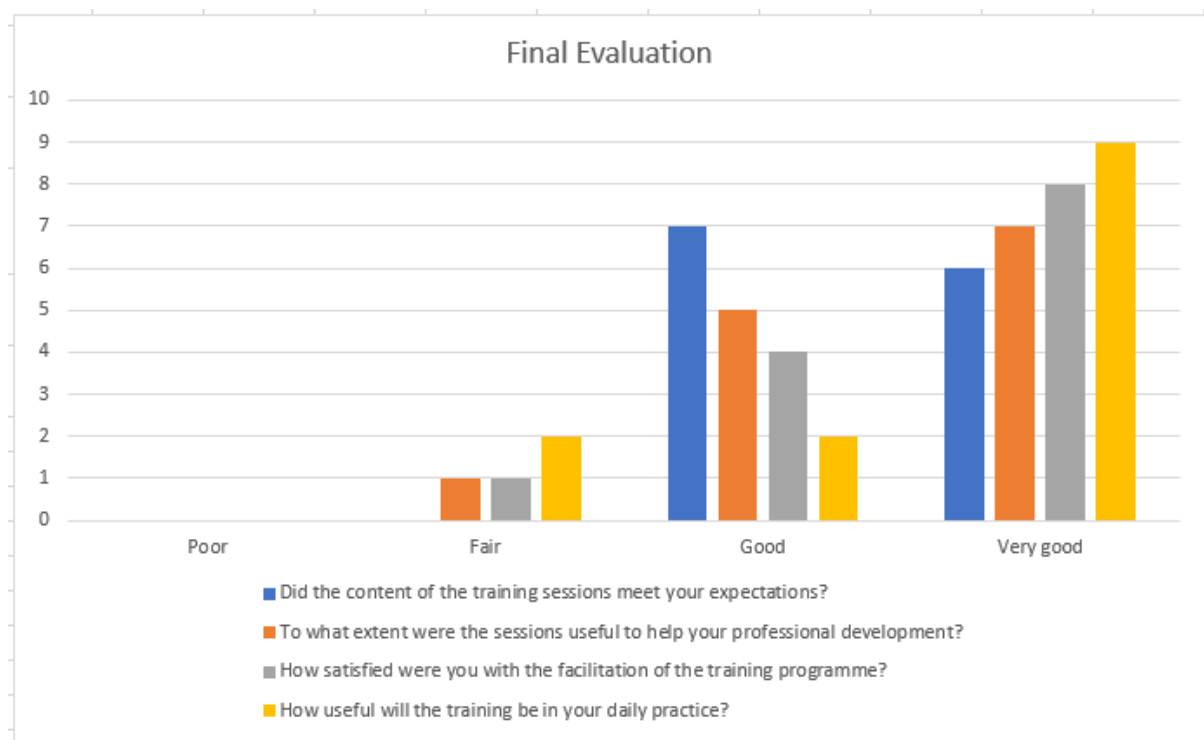


Figure 1: data from the evaluation forms of the final session pilot 1 in the UK.

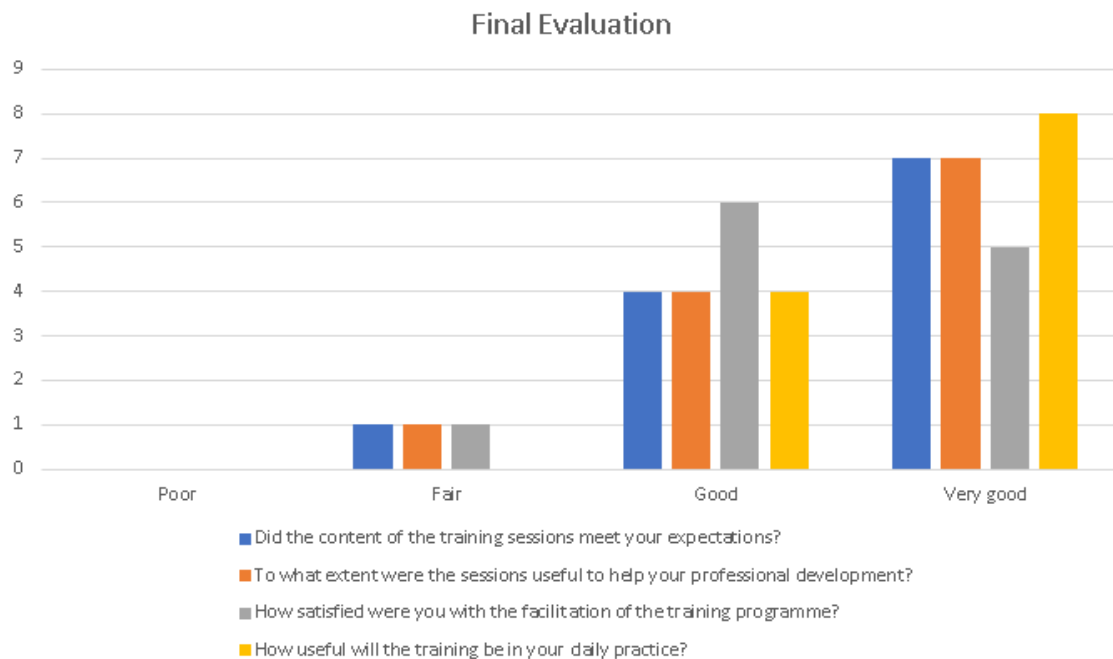


Figure 2: data from the evaluation forms of the final session pilot 2 in the UK.

Finland

In the following charts you can see the participants' evaluation of the Mindful Managers training programme:



Figure 3: data from the evaluation forms of the final session pilot 1 in Finland.

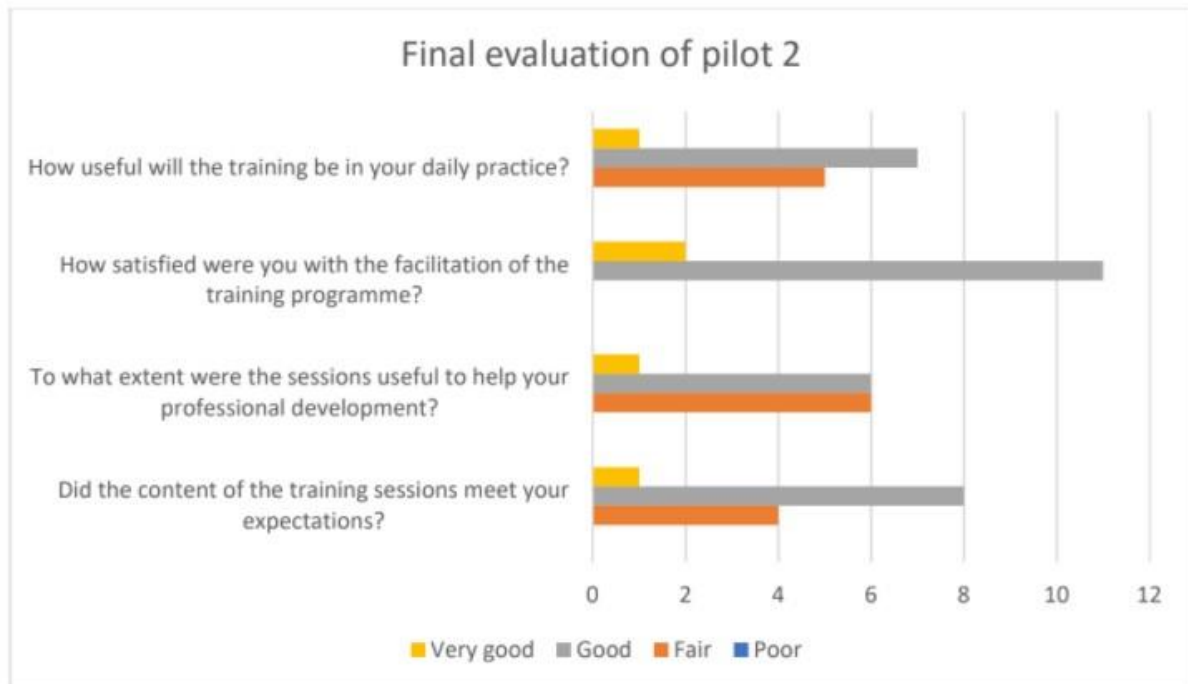


Figure 4: data from the evaluation forms of the final session pilot 2 in Finland.

Cyprus

In the following charts you can see the participants' evaluation of the Mindful Managers training programme:

	1 - min	2	3	4 - max
Overall organisation of the training session and logistics			8	34
Relevance of training content to my professional needs			9	33
Quality of materials distributed		1	16	25
Increase of knowledge with regards to the topic of today's session		1	13	28
TOTAL	0	2	46	120

Figure 5: data from all sessions' evaluation forms in pilot 1 in Cyprus.

	1 - min	2	3	4 - max
Overall organisation of the training session and logistics	-	-	-	16
Relevance of training content to my professional needs	-	-	3	13
Quality of materials distributed	-	-	1	15
Increase of knowledge with regards to the topic of today's session	-	-	3	13
TOTAL	-	-	7	57

Figure 6: data from all sessions' evaluation forms in pilot 2 in Cyprus.

Belgium

In the following charts you can see the participants' evaluation of the Mindful Managers training programme:

	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very good
Overall organisation of the training session and logistics				24
Relevance of training content to my professional needs			12	12
Quality of materials distributed			8	16
Increase of knowledge with regards to the topic of today's session			16	8
TOTAL			36	60

Figure 7: data from all session' evaluation forms in pilot 1 in Belgium.

	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very good
Overall organisation of the training session and logistics			X	
Relevance of training content to my professional needs				X
Quality of materials distributed			X	
Increase of knowledge with regards to the topic of today's session			X	
TOTAL			3	1

Figure 8: data (average) from the evaluation forms of the pilot 2 in Belgium.

4.2. Participants' testimonials

The UK

Pilot 1

"Opportunities to reflect as well as listen to others."

"Thank you for the course. I have learnt what I did not know and learning does not end."

"Very useful, engaging and yoga session was very refreshing."



Pilot 2

“The importance of working like a team, being respectful and listening to all the opinions.”

“Very approachable trainers, friendly, comfortable space to share.”

“Time to reflect on a challenge I’m having and really enjoyed the yoga!”



Finland

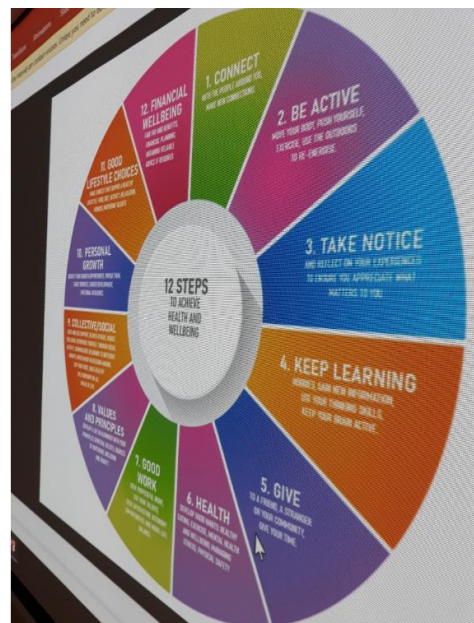
Pilot 1

”Rentoutusharjoitukset olivat ihania ja tunnelma koulutustilaisuuksissa oli rauhoittava ja hyvä.”

“*[Relaxation exercises were wonderful and the atmosphere at the sessions was calming and good]*”

“Kivat kouluttajat :) Osallistava koulutus.” “*[Great facilitators :) Participatory training.]*”

“Konkreettisia työvälineitä työhyvinvointiin liittyviin keskusteluihin, omaan työhyvinvointiin liittyvät harjoitteet.” “*[Concrete tools for discussions concerning wellbeing at work, exercises connected to own wellbeing at work]*”

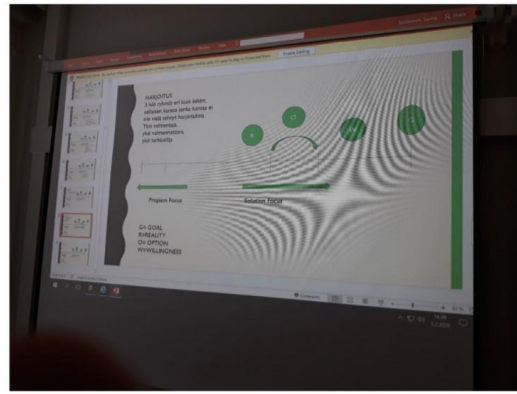


Pilot 2

“Käytännön läheisiä vinkkejä, joita pystyy viemään työyhteisöön.” “[*Practical tips, which can be transferred to own work community*]”

“Sain eväitä omaan johtamistyöhön ja erityisesti omaan jaksamiseen ja palautumiseen liittyen” “[*I got means for my managerial work and especially for my own coping and recovery*]”

“Kivat, empaattiset kouluttajat” “[*Nice empathetic trainers*]”



Cyprus

Pilot 1

“More awareness and empowerment of options and possibilities and action plans. Very well thought and organized.”

“Getting to know better some of the participants. Work in teams in real life working example.”

“There is always a way to say something in a positive way”

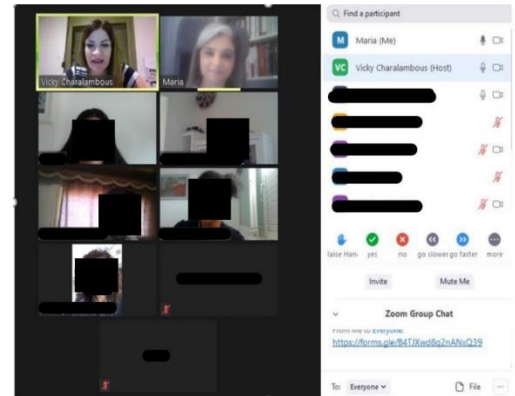
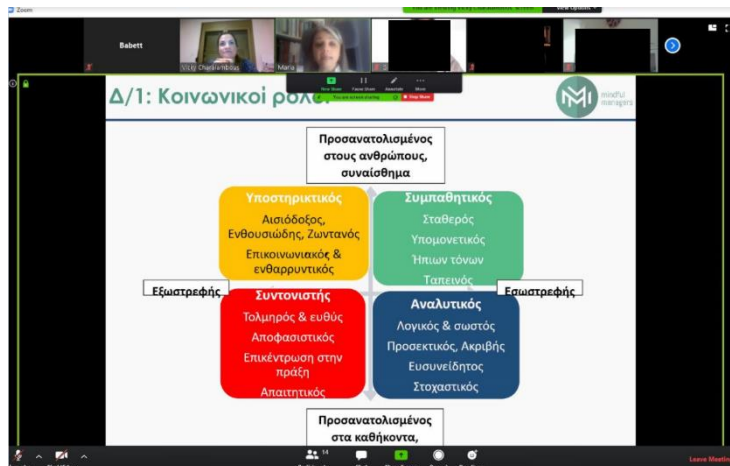


Pilot 2

“A remarkable seminar with very interesting information that can help self-improvement”

“The course content was interesting and sharing experiences in relation to the different topics”

“Extremely interesting, thank you !! Looking forward to next Friday!!”



Belgium

Pilot 1

“Directly putting the knowledge into practice”

“The program itself, with the interwovenness of the activation module, I found generally very interesting”

“It was inspiring. Reminded me to put more preparation into a conversation with a member of my team”

“Lots of opportunities for exchange with colleagues from similar, but not too similar, sectors and jobs”



Pilot 2

“Speaker is spontaneous and goes in depth, you can see that she is an expert in the content”

“I would recommend this to all team coaches or people who coach other colleagues. Especially when you have to evaluate other team members. For example: which words not to use in a evaluation interviews. I will never say BUT (smiles).”

“The tip about “cutting the elephant in pieces” was really eye opening to me. I now see problems in a different perspective.”

“Poll questions are nice because you start to think about yourself.”



5. Facilitators' Comments

As part of the National Reports for each pilot in the partner countries, the facilitators evaluated their experience of the Mindful Managers Training Programme. A summary of these evaluations is given below, more details can be seen in the National Reports.

Positive aspects of the training programme

- The Be Active exercises were well received.
- Participants were generally very positive about the training.
- The discussions that followed activities were important to the learners
- There was a good mix of practical and theoretical

Challenges of the training programme

- There was a lot of material to work through when it came to planning the sessions.
- The common thread about the whole training was missing in the beginning.

Suggestions for improvement

- Some of the materials are removed in order to reduce the time facilitators must spend planning and reading through the materials.
- Smaller class sizes (maximum 14).
- Ensure icebreaker exercises are used to set the scene and for learners to get to know each other.

6. Conclusions

To conclude, the National Reports from both pilots in each partner country confirm the success of the Mindful Managers Training Programme. Participants in the Mindful Managers programme were able to develop techniques and approaches to manage stress and burnout in the workplace. In addition, the participants felt more able to support their teams, to manage a diverse range of issues relating to workload and stress and to take a more mindful approach to daily life, in the workplace and at home. By sharing and cascading their learning to their teams a wider audience can be reached.

The training materials, created by the partnership, are comprehensive and engaging. In addition, as there are many resources prepared for the programme, facilitators can adapt the

sessions to the needs of the participants. It is recommended that all the resources and activities are kept in the Trainers' Manual to allow for this.

Each partner organisation piloted the training programme to meet the needs of the facilitators and their participants. Therefore, there were some differences in the structure of the pilots; for example, in Belgium, the Pilot 1 programme was piloted over two intensive days. In the UK half day sessions once a week were arranged and this proved successful. Another consideration could be cultural with regards to how the public sector operates in each partner country. Despite the slight differences in the format of the training programme, feedback from participants, across the partnership, was very positive and it is clear that the Mindful Managers Training Programme can be adapted to meet the needs of public sector managers in different countries and can also be adapted and transferred to an online delivery. It has been suggested that a maximum of 14 participants would be the best option for the training. However, with an online approach it is necessary to recruit higher levels to ensure attendance of between 15 – 20. These have been unprecedented times and many resulting factors of COVID impacted on recruitment. Many of the participants were interested in sharing the content of the programme with their colleagues and also registered interest in participating in future similar programmes.

In conclusion it seems there is an urgent need for programmes which aim to support public sector managers to deal with stress and burnout, especially in the current pandemic with managers facing many new challenges. Many public sector managers and staff are on the front line dealing with new stressful situations and a mindful approach will help them and their teams. In addition, the programme can be cascaded to other sectors, for example the voluntary and community sector.

7. Annexes

- UK IO2 National Report Pilot 1
- UK IO2 National Report Pilot 2
- Finland IO2 National Report Pilot 1
- Finland IO2 National Report Pilot 2
- Cyprus IO2 National Report Pilot 1
- Cyprus IO2 National Report Pilot 2
- Belgium IO2 National Report Pilot 1
- Belgium IO2 National Report Pilot 2