TELMS PROJECT MENTEES' QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION Report

Introduction

The TELMS (Technology Enhanced Learning Mentoring Support) project has the following objectives:

1. To develop a Teacher Peer Mentoring Programme in the effective use of ILT (Information and Learning technology) & associated learning and teaching strategies,
2. To develop a Teacher Toolkit,
3. To develop TELMS Online Platform,
4. To train 8 mentors at a transnational short-term staff training event in Northern Ireland,
5. To support the 8 mentors to establish & deliver an ILT Pedagogy Mentoring Programme to 16 teachers in the partner institutions,
6. To disseminate project outcomes across EU Member States

This short report presents the findings of the 16 teachers who participated in the ILT Pedagogy Mentoring Programme in the 4 participating countries. The 16 teachers are referred to as mentees in this report. Having participated in an intensive transnational training event in SERC, Northern Ireland 2017, each partner then delivered an ILT Pedagogy Mentoring Programme in their own institution between September and December 2017. This report captures the feedback and views of those who participated in this short mentoring programme, to establish how the programme worked and if it benefited the learners. The questionnaire for mentees was administered between February the 7th and March 7th, 2018, with 16 mentees responding.

In which country are you teaching?

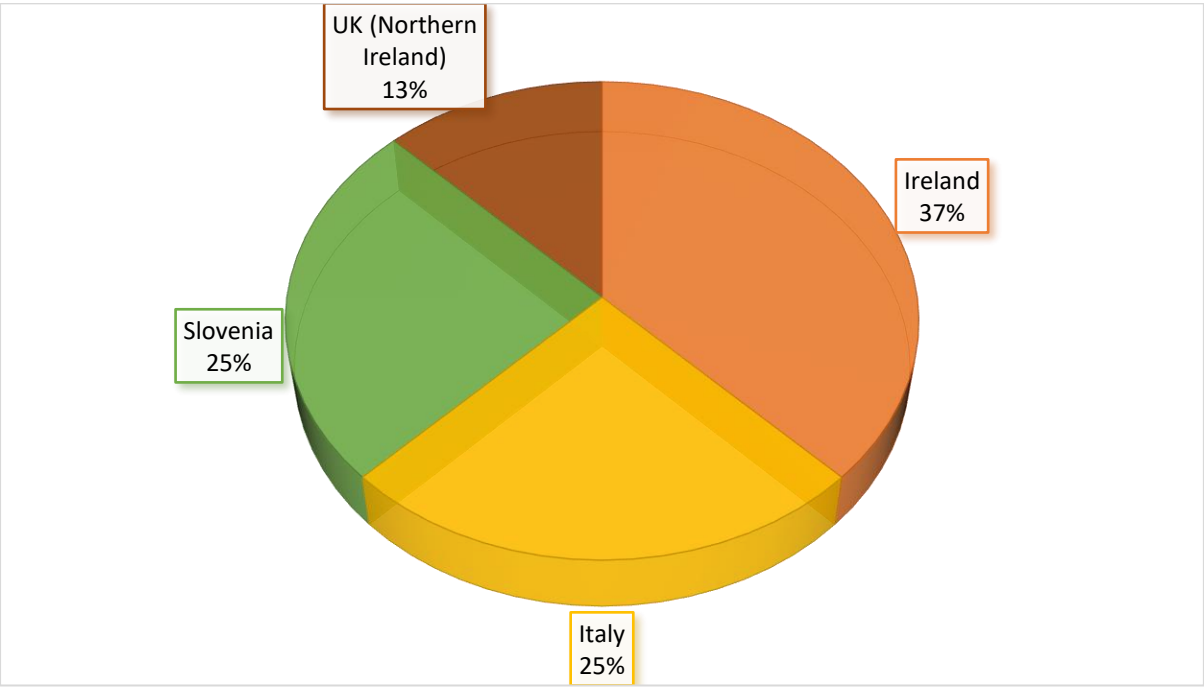

Figure 1, the countries in which teachers were teaching (N=16)

The nationalities of the mentees who had answered the question is as follows:

- Ireland 6
- Slovenia 4
- Italy 4
- UK (Northern Ireland) 2

How long have you been teaching?

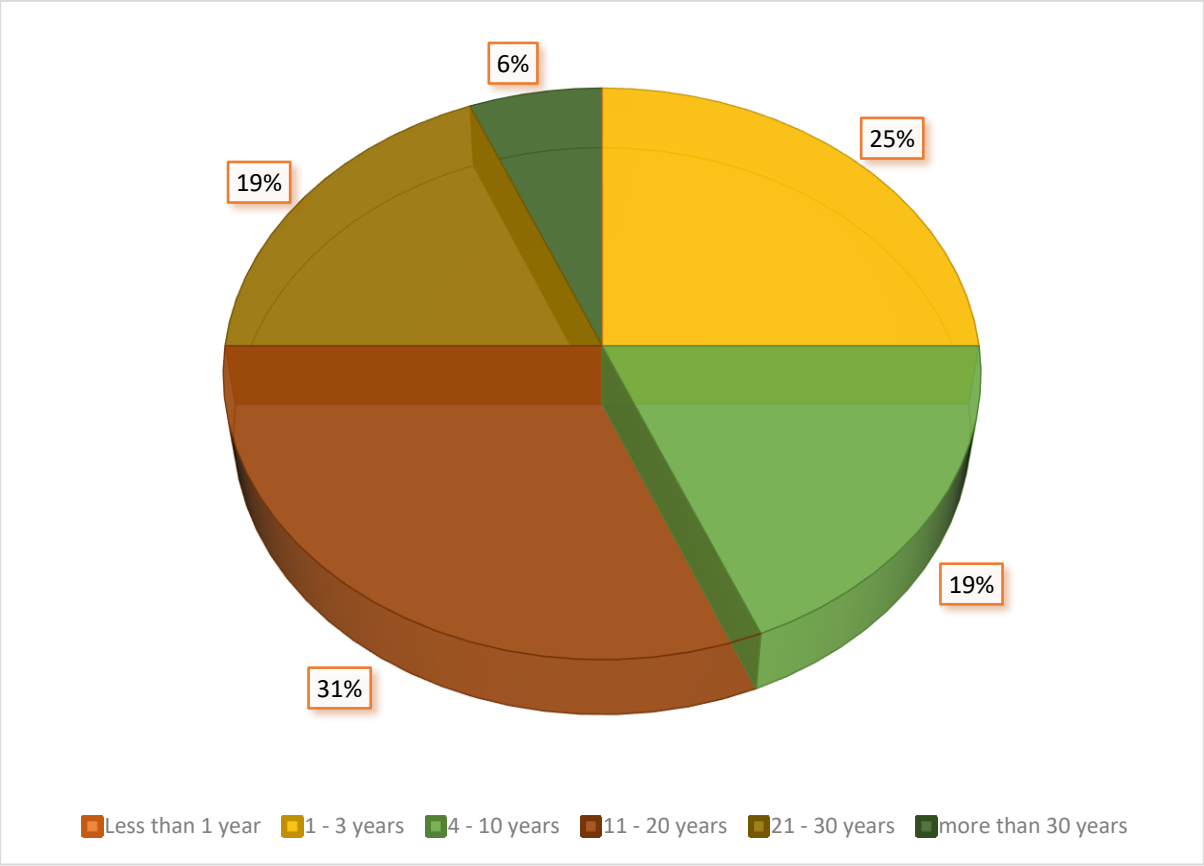

Figure 2, the length of time teachers were teaching (N=16)

The teachers that participated in this programme were very experienced with:

- 1 teacher having more than 30-year teaching experiences.
- 3 having between 21 and 30 years' teaching experience.
- 5 having between 11 and 20 years teaching experience.
- 3 having between 4 and 10 years teaching experience.
- and 4 having between 1 and 3 years teaching experience.

Therefore, the majority of teachers (12 out of 16) had between 10 and 30 years' teaching experience and thus would have been familiar with teacher professional development programmes in the area of digital technologies over those years.

Teachers Age

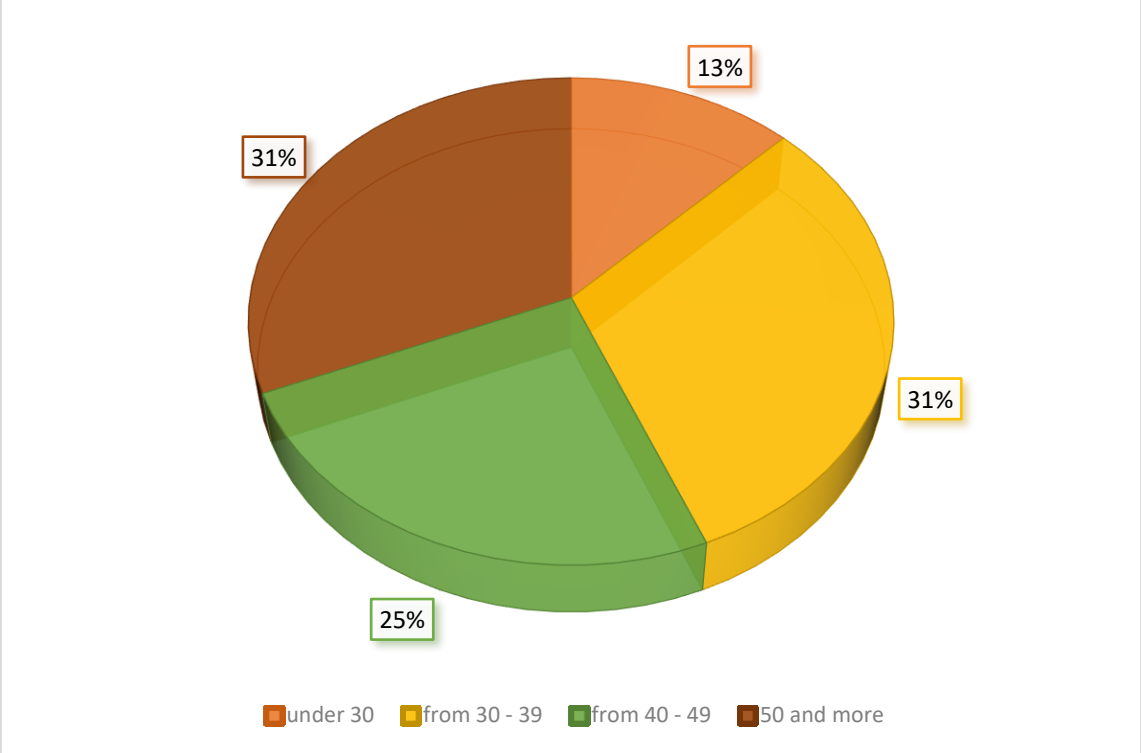

Figure 3, teacher age profile (N=16)

In line with the previous question the age profile of the group confirmed that the majority were experienced in terms of years, as well as experience with:

- 5 teachers aged over 50 years
- 4 teachers were aged between 40 and 49
- 5 teachers were aged 30 and 39 years
- And 2 teachers were aged under 30 years of age.

What subject do you currently teach?

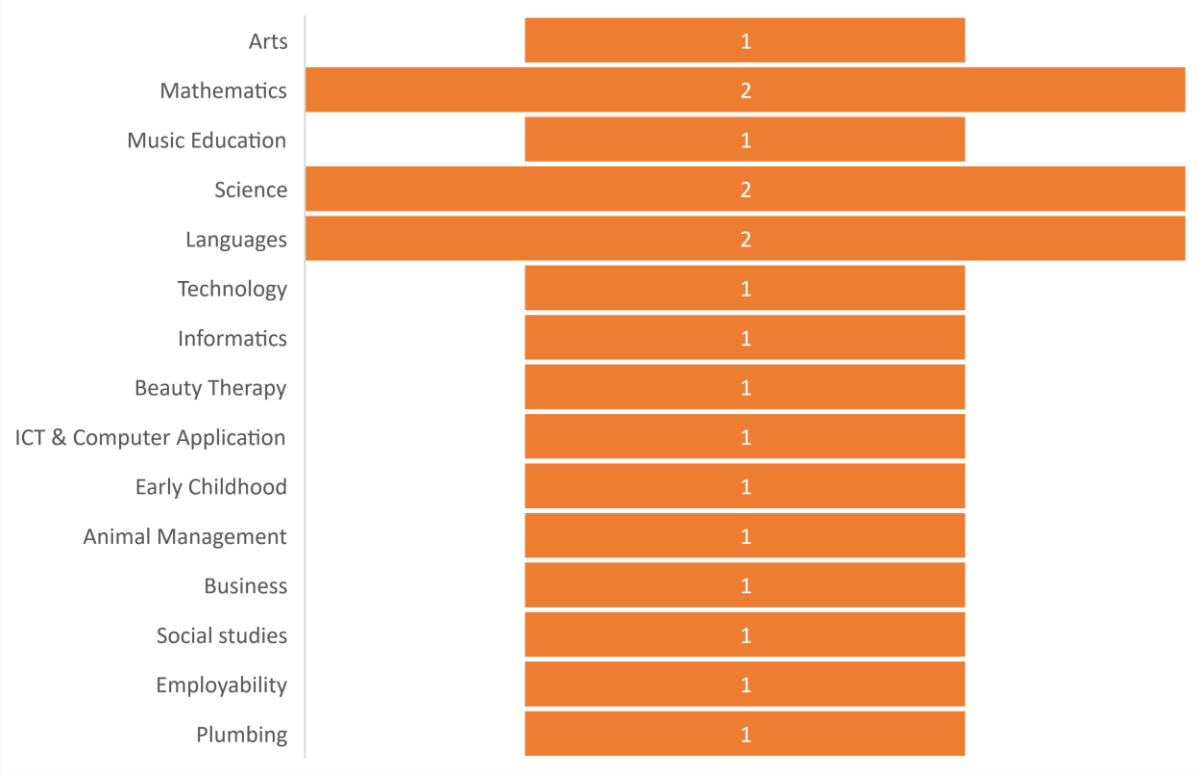

Figure 4, subjects teachers are teaching (N=16)

Figure 4 shows that there was a wide range of subjects being taught by the teachers in the study, and this included Arts, Mathematics, Music Education, Science, Languages, Technology, Informatics, Beauty Therapy, Early Childhood, Animal Management, Business, Social Studies and Employability.

Average numbers of students per class

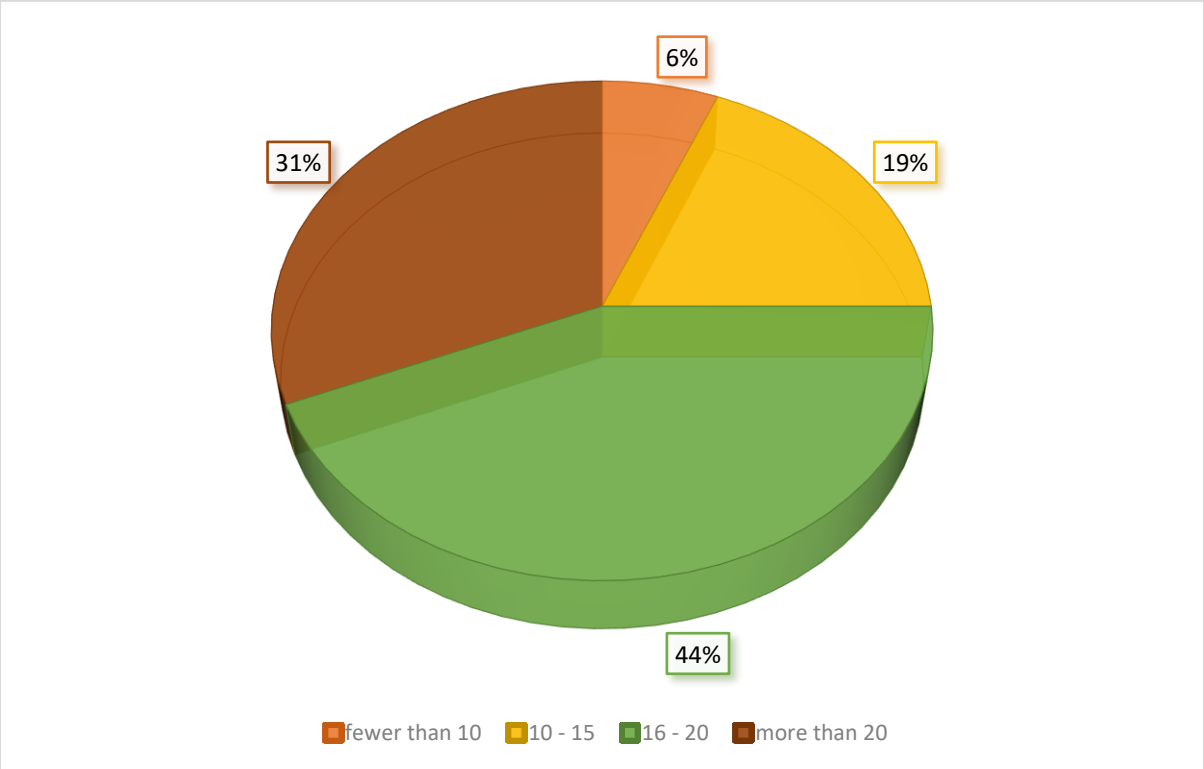

Figure 5, average student group numbers (N=16)

Figure 5 shows that the large average number of students per class was between 16 and 20 students in 44% of the case of the teachers, while in 31% of the cases there were over 20 students in the class group. In addition, it was reported that in 19% of the cases there were between 10 and 15 students and fewer than 10 in 6% of cases.

How often did you use TEL with your learners before the pilot?

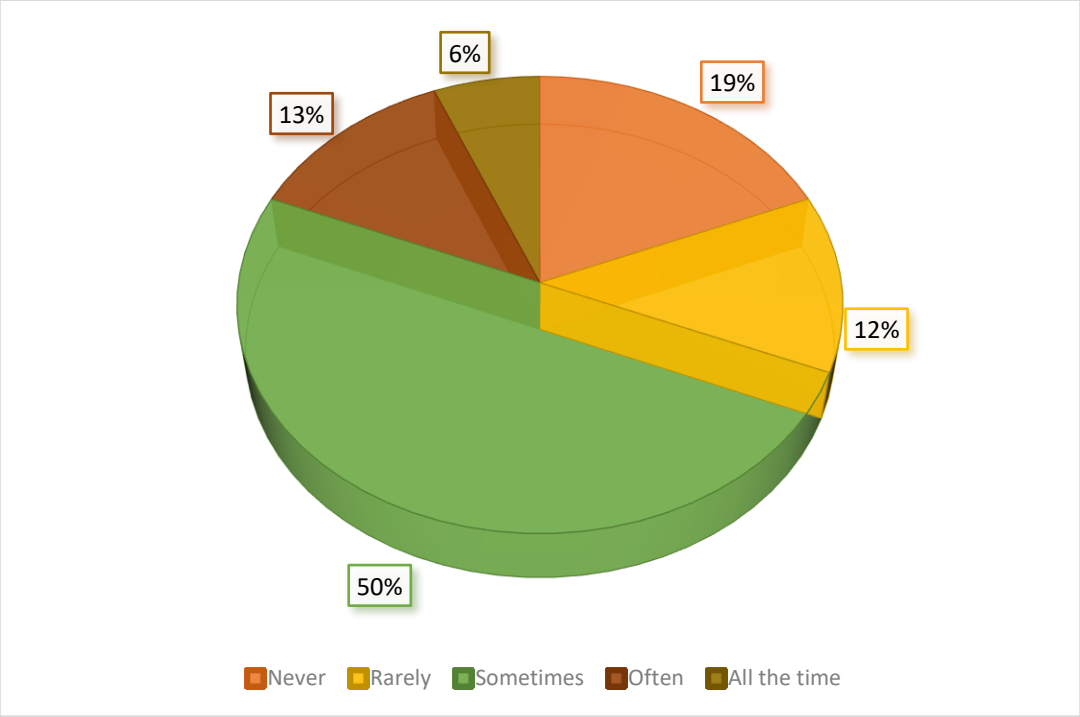

Figure 6, Frequency of using TEL with learners before the pilot (N=16)

Figure 6 shows that the majority of teachers sometimes, never or rarely used TEL with their learners in advance of the pilot. In contrast only 2 teachers reported using TEL often, while 1 teacher used it all the time (%). Therefore, the vast majority of teachers were not using digital technologies with their learners on a daily or weekly basis. This shows the need for a programme to support teachers in using digital technologies in their teaching practices.

How did you use TEL before you joined the programme?

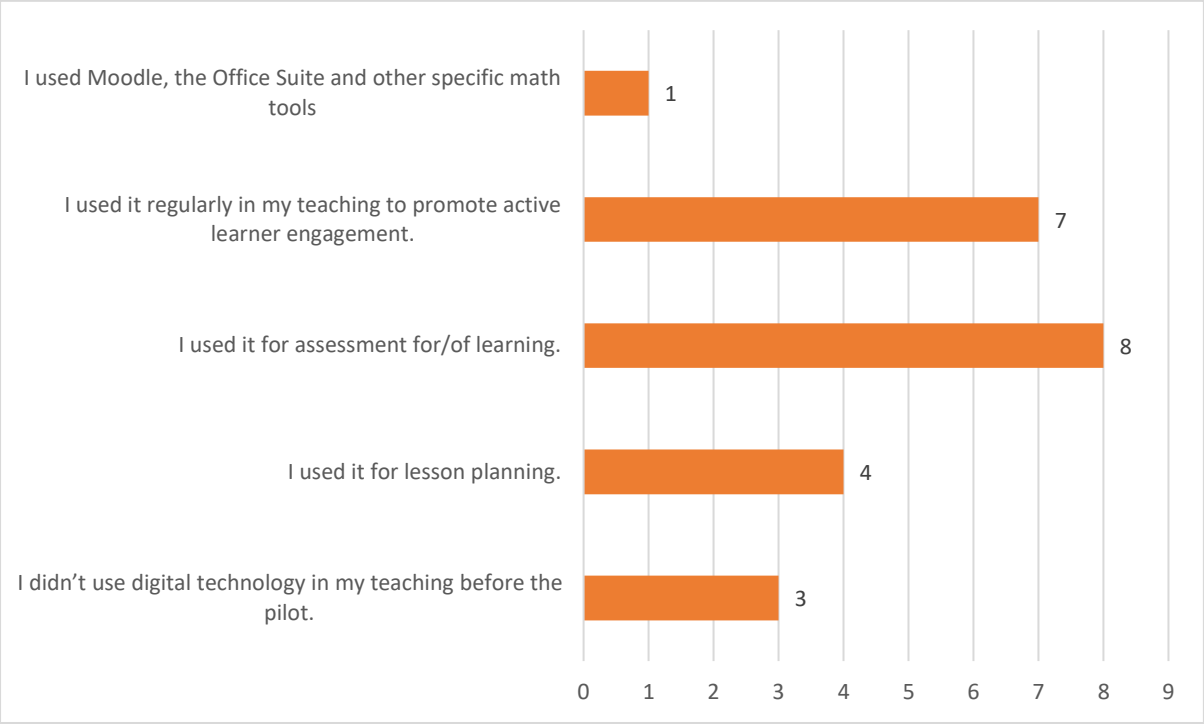

Figure 7, Reasons for using TEL with learners before the pilot (N=16)

There were a number of reasons identified by teachers in relation to the purposes they used digital technology for prior to the pilot. These were to:

- assess learning (8 teachers),
- promote active learner engagement (7 teachers)
- lesson plan (4 teachers)
- use Moodle, Office and other specific Maths tools (1 teacher)

It should be noted that 3 teachers reported they didn't use TEL at all.

What were the barriers that impacted on your use of TEL prior to the pilot ?

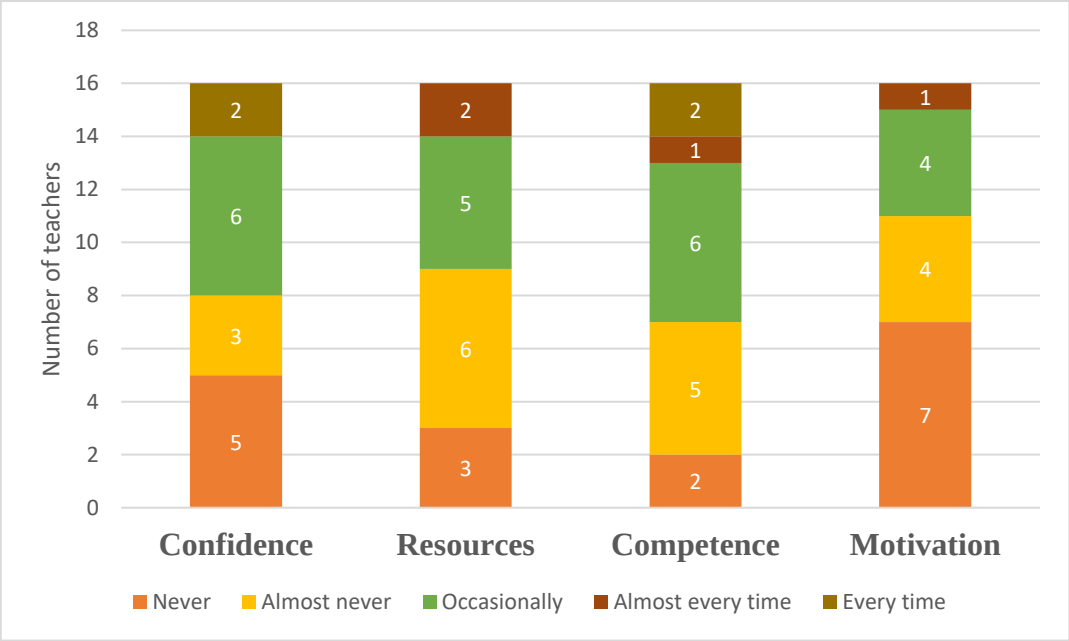

Figure 8, Barriers to using TEL prior to the pilot (N=16)

Teachers were asked to identify the main barriers the impacted on their use of TEL with their learners. They were given a list of 4 issues and asked to indicate if they were a factor in impacting on their use of TEL.

Confidence

8 teachers reported that confidence was an issue sometimes or almost every time, while 8 reported that it was never or almost never an issue in using TEL.

Resources

9 teachers reported that resources was almost never or sometimes an issue, while 7 reported that it an issue almost every time and every time.

Competence

7 teachers reported that competence was never or almost never a barrier to using digital technology, while 6 reported it was sometimes an issue and a further 3 teachers indicated it was an issue every time or almost every time.

Motivation

11 teachers reported that motivation was never or almost never an issue in using TEL, while 4 reported it sometimes was an issue. In contrast only 1 teacher reported that is was an issue almost every time.

How often do you use TEL in your classes?

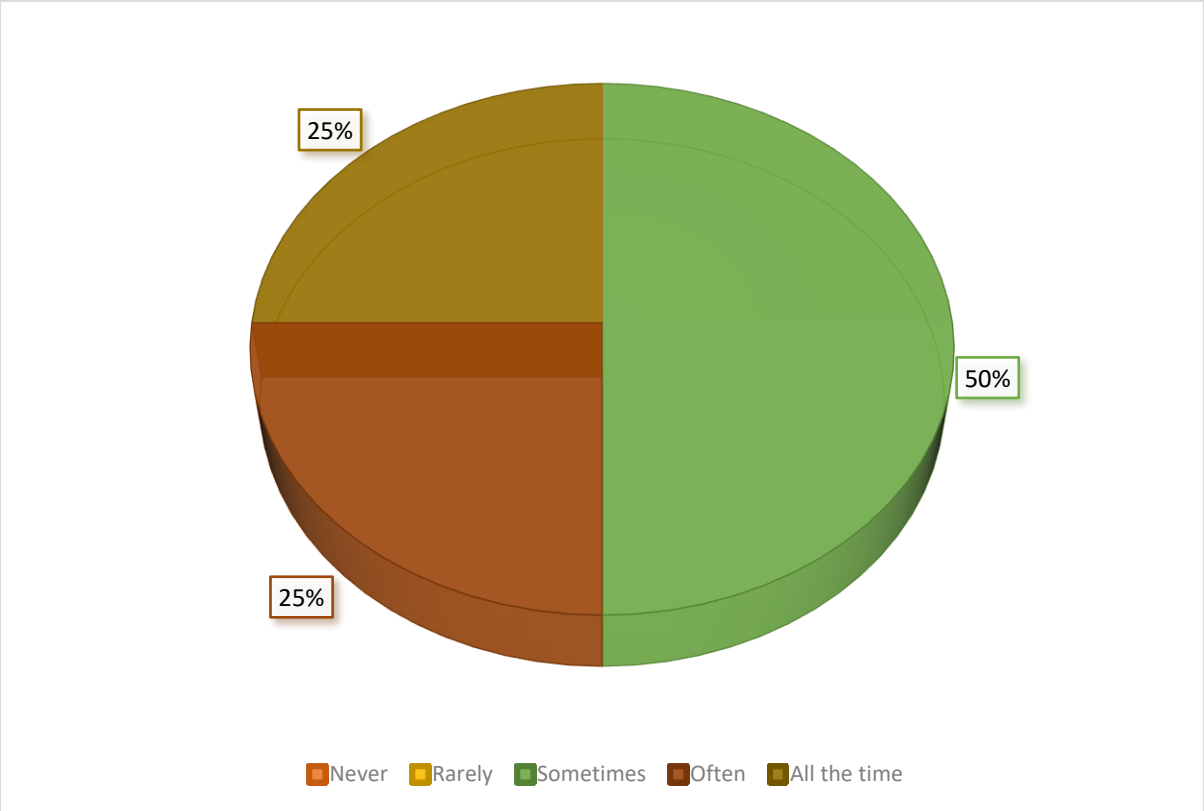

Figure 9, TEL usage having participated in the pilot (N=16)

Having participated in the pilot 25% of teachers (4 teachers) reported they now use TEL all the time in their classes or 25% of teachers (4 teachers) use it often. Furthermore, 50% (8 teachers) of teachers now use TEL sometimes with their learners. When contrasted with Figure 6 we now see that all teachers are using TEL and that the percentage of those using it often (from 13 to 25%) and all the time has increased (from 6% to 25%). Furthermore, the number of teachers reporting that they never or rarely use TEL is now zero and this is to be welcomed.

How do you currently use TEL with your learners?

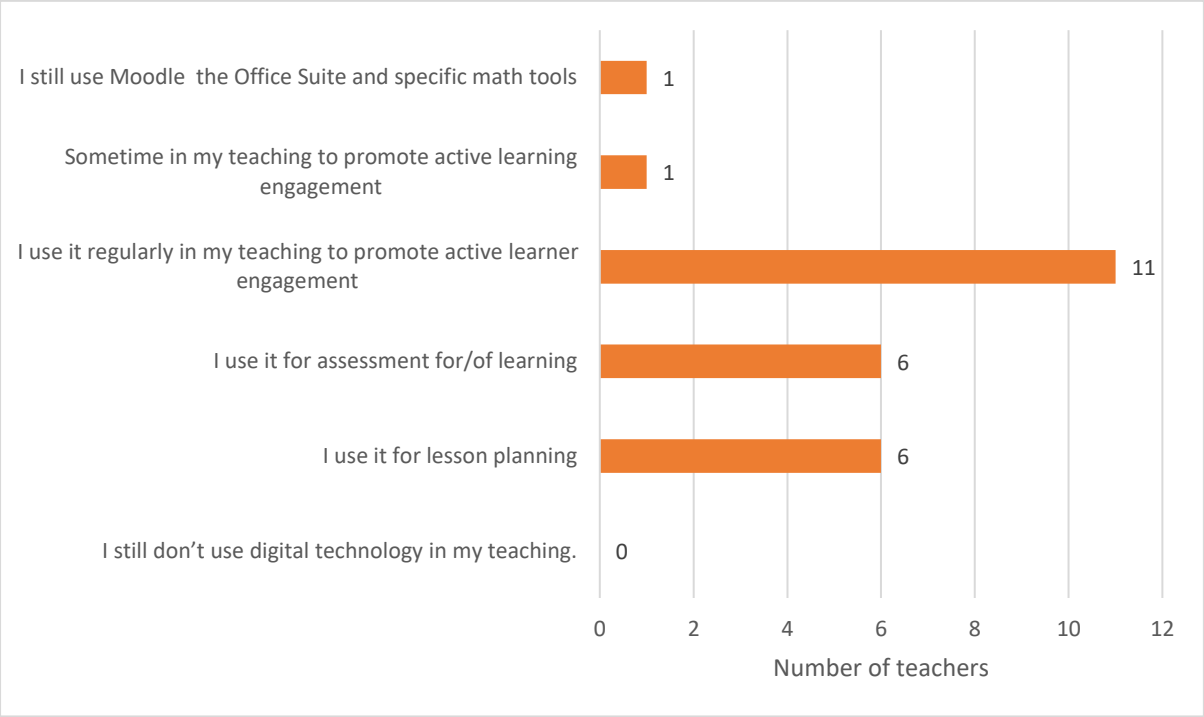

Figure 10, Current use of TEL after the pilot (N=16)

Having participated in the pilot teachers reported the following uses of technology and when contrasted with Figure 7 it shows the following changes in practice.

- 6 teachers now report using technology to assess learning (down 2)
- 11 teachers now promote active learner engagement (increase of 4 teachers)
- 6 teachers use it for lesson planning (increase of 2 teachers)

This captures a change in teacher practice and most noteworthy is the increased use of technology to support active learner engagement. There has been a sligth increase in the use of technology to support lesson planning and a slight decrease in those using it for assessment purposes. Furthermore, all teachers now report using TEL which is an improvement when contrasted with Figure 7, where 2 teachers reported they were not using technology at all.

What technologies have you used during the mentoring programme

Teachers reported using the following technologies during the mentoring programme.

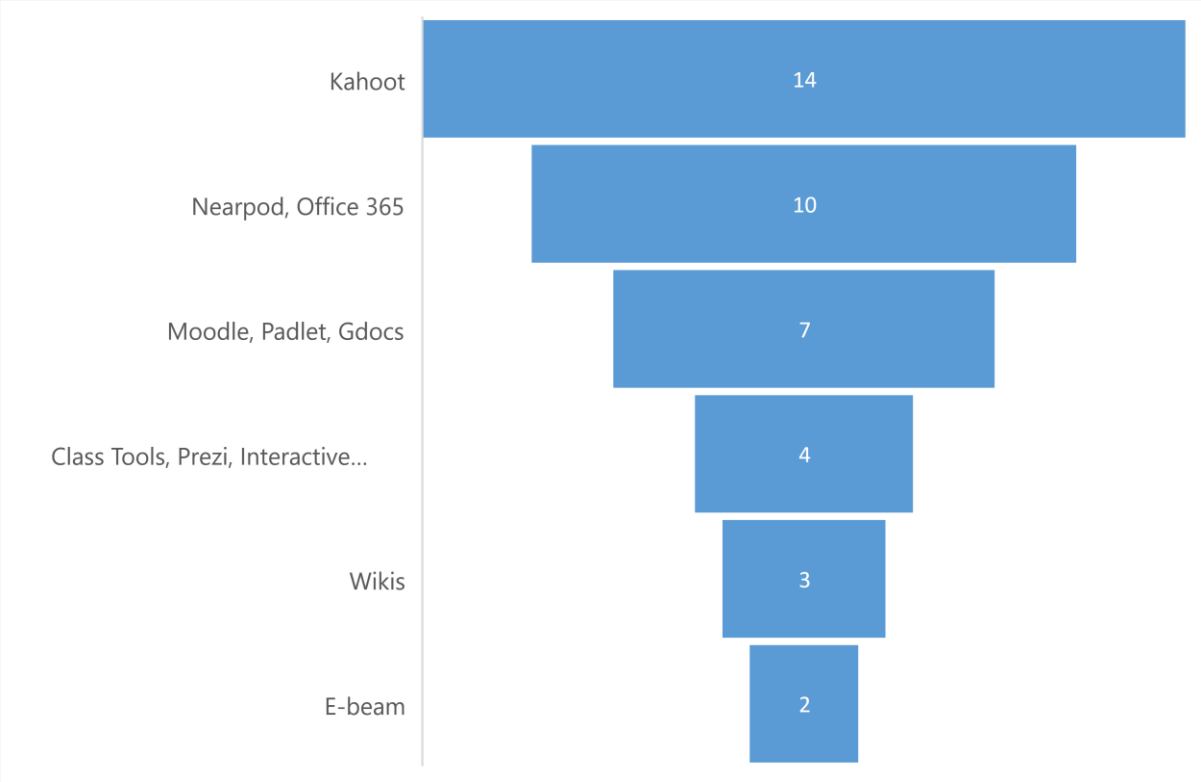

Figure 11, Technology used by teachers (N=16)

While individual teachers reported using the following tools with their learners. These included: EdPuzzle, Learning Apps, Google Classroom, Screen recording software, Socrative and Video Editing software. This suggests that teachers are using a wide range of technologies to support their learners and these decisions are most likely dictated by what software programs are available to teachers in the respective countries. It is no surprise that Kahoot features so prominently as this was showcased during the training week in SERC.

Has the TELMS Mentoring Programme helped you in any of the ways listed below?

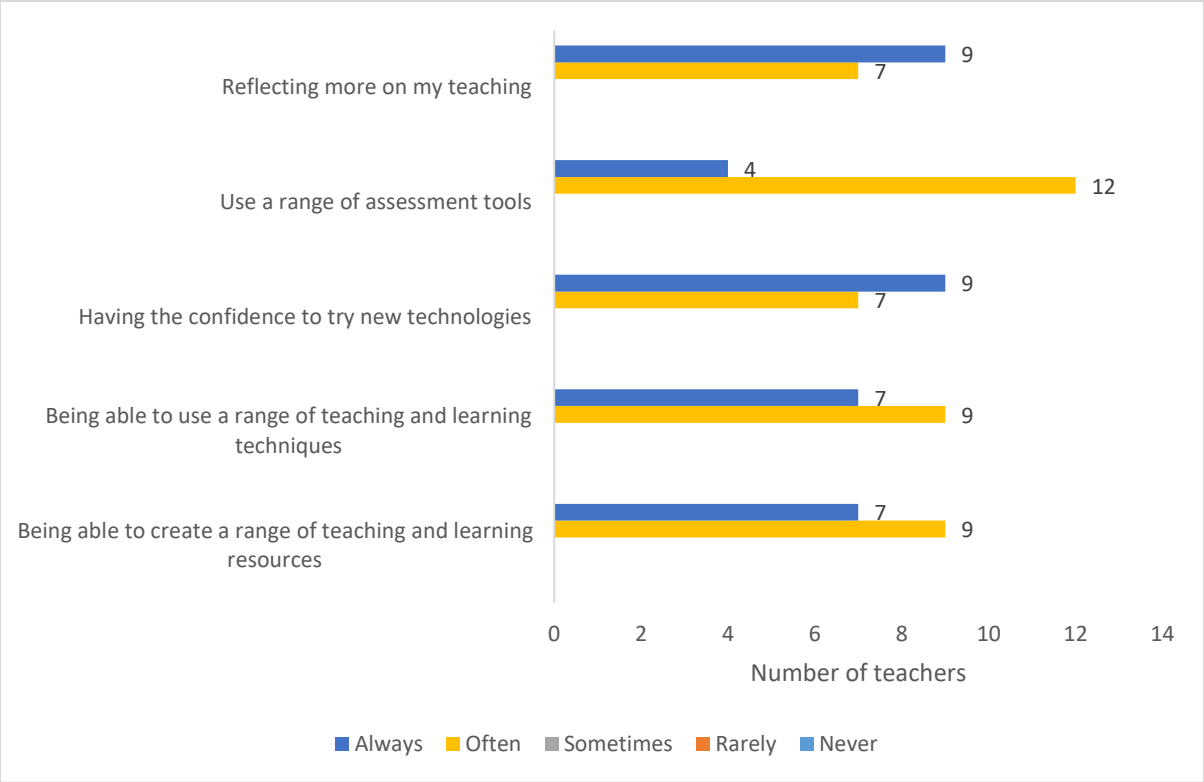

Figure 12, Ways of TELMS helped teachers (N=16)

All mentees reported that often (9) or always (7) benefited from their participation in the pilot as it helped them to create a range of teaching and learning resources. Furthermore, all mentees reported that they often (9) or always (7) benefited from being able to use a range of teaching and learning techniques. All claimed that they either often (7) or always (9) benefited from having the confidence to try new technologies. They majority (12) often have benefited from using a range of assessment tools, while 4 reported they always do. Finally all mentees reflect more on their teaching now with 7 reporting they do this often and 9 always engaging in such practices.

These figures show that teachers confidence and competence in using digital techologies to support FET teaching and assessment practices has been greatly enhanced by their participation in the pilot. Teachers are using technology often or always with their learners and this is in marked contrast with their practices prior to the pilot.

As you reflect on your current teaching practice what have you or can you discern in terms of learner engagement or classroom dynamics?

All mentees agree that learners' engagement and classroom dynamics changed substantially during the pilot. A number of mentees observed that some of the quieter students, those who don't often speak out in class, are now more enagaged and there is also greater engagement from those students who typically have problems paying attention and in participating fully in class. This new learning dynamic has stimulated healthy competition among learners.

Learners also report that there is now greater diversity in their learning activities and TEL has helped them to engage more with their peers, as well as increasing the use of technology to support assessment practices.

Some of the teachers comments:

»During the pilot, the class was engaged and more involved in lessons.The attitude has been more conscious.Students asked to be able to use the materials produced to deepen and to revise also at home.«

»During the pilot, students were more involved, stimulated to healthy competition. Teacher attention during the activity had also to be focused on activating a positive comparison. About classroom dynamics, students seemed less distracted, more focused, interested in the various stages of the lesson. They were impatient in the progress of the contents, gladly performed the exercises in order to have an immediate feedback.«

»The TELMS Mentoring Programme helped me being able to use some teaching and learning techniques and having the confidence to tray new technologies.«

»Learner engagement has been a lot higher since developing my new skills, classes still contain the relevant information for the units but can be delivered interactively and in a much more engaging and interesting way from the students viewpoint.«

What feedback have you had from your students since completing the mentoring process?

Mentees claim their students enjoy the interactive aspect of the class and that the use of TEL makes lessons more dynamic and motivating. Students are eager to continue with similar lessons, enthusiastic and understand many things that in a "normal" lesson they would not understand right away (for distraction or for other reasons). The use of TEL makes lessons more engaging and helps to better memorize topics. Students claimed that methodology was innovative and fun. For them it was easier to follow the lesson and to learn subjects.

Some of the teachers comments:

»Use of Technology makes lessons more dynamic and motivating.Learning actively students can immediately practice what they have just learned.The lesson looks more clearly structured and learning objectives can be better focussed on.«

»Enthusiastic. They found the final test and presentation program beautiful and fun; They understand many things that in a "normal" lesson they would not understand right away (for distraction or for other reasons); thanks to the graphs they managed to learn quickly; challenges (kahoot quizzes), images, video, and conceptual maps are the tool they prefer to study.«

»Students were enthusiastic and more motivated for lessons. They like use new technologies.«

»They are all much happier and seem to be enthused and take a more active role within the class«

Any plans for implementing TEL with your learners?

All mentees reported that it their intention to continue working as a team with their colleagues to create common lessons using TEL and to continue using the tools they already have engaged with. Lessons according to the “LEARNING BY DOING” principle will be carried out.

Their intention is also to continue with TEL method. Particular subjects have proven to be more apropriate for implementing TEL tools in future lessons than others. They will also focus on specific math arguments, not repetitive or automatisms but concepts to be examined and analyzed from different points of view.

Some of the teachers comments:

»Yes , keep implementing them and make it part of my teaching«

»My intention is to continue with TEL method. Choose some subject (the more boring ones) for implementing TEL tools in future lessons.«

»My intention is to continue on this way: working in team with colleagues, building together common lessons using TEL and all the tools already used. I will focuse on specific math arguments, not repetitive or automatisms but concepts to be examined and analyzed from different points of view.«

»I want to make it an integral part of my teaching«

»I plan to use ed puzzle and stagger out a flipped classroom approach.«

CONCLUSION

The survey clearly illustrates that the mentees' TEL practices have been enhanced over the duration of the pilot and now all of them are regularly embedding digital technology into teaching and assessment practices. The survey has found that mentees confidence and competence in using TEL has developed over the course of the pilot. The survey results have reiterated the value that being mentored by colleagues, who you trust and respect, has a major impact on teacher confidence and competence in using TEL. All the mentees indicated that they lacked confidence prior to the project, and now feel much more comfortable and ready to implement their newly gained knowledge with their learners.

Furthermore, the questionnaire findings support the the importance of team teaching and of sharing information, which is important in order to keep one's professional practice up-to-date. Such a finding supports the notion that teaching is a practice based profession where teachers are required to constantly engage in learning and in such a profession, the sharing of practice is essential. In this way teaching can be also viewed as a learning profession, where teachers are constantly learning and sharing their practice.

The overarching benefit of the TELMs pilot is that learners benefited by participting in more engaging and interesting learning experiences. The use of TEL has helped to transform learning and make it more engaging and memorable, both for the teachers and their students. There is no doubt that the pilot projects were a success and that the mentees gained valuable knowledge and skills in relation to designing and implementing engaging learning activities that utilised TEL. The greater challenge will be in taking this model and applying it to larger groups of teachers in the future. A number of the partners are very interested in expanding the project and they are keen to see how this might be achieved. Clearly a first step on this journey will be the creation and publication of a Toolkit to support other organisations implement a similar approach in their organisation.

References

Link to the original questionnaire,
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1JPRWFMcrXbAX3apd9t3ZczIEpbl4Gb7_m48OSbCSxN0/viewanalytics