

O1 – Assessment of training needs in the ceramic sector

Transnational report



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1 Introduction

1.1 The project

Co-funded by the European Programme Erasmus+, the Cerasmus+ project aims to **protect the EU traditional heritage and to modernize the ceramic sector** through 3 main objectives:

- Creating a European networking of ceramics stakeholders.
- Combining ceramics tradition with innovative design and production techniques.
- Revising and innovating vocational education in the ceramics sector through work based learning models.

The Cerasmus+ project implements as first step a field analysis to explore the needs for competences, for assuring the sector development through networking, protection of immaterial heritage and innovation.

The second step is the **design and implementation of an on-line virtual environment** addressed to ceramics key actors and stakeholders to discuss the main issues emerged from the assessment stage and to open a permanent forum and assuring closer cooperation.

Finally, the project foresees the **planning and testing of specific curricula for initial and continuous vocational training**, focused in work based learning and aimed at gaining transversal and professional competences for the improvement of the sector "value chain".

The partnership is working to work both on **initial and continuous vocational education and training**. This way, the needs for growth and development of ceramics craft will be addressed with reference to those who are going to work in the sector in a few years, as well as with reference to the actual craftsmen so to provide a systemic approach including specific activities based on WBL to enable and support step by step ceramics craft businesses to protect the EU traditional heritage, strengthen and modernize the ceramic sector value through the introduction of new learning models, of production techniques which keep together tradition and innovation, of methodologies for enhance networking between VET and ceramic craft industry. **Work-based learning** (WBL) is a powerful way to support youth employment and qualification, and human resource development in enterprises, but the potential it has to offer has not yet been fully exploited in Europe.

Moreover, the project methodology provides to build online and in presence tools for **permanent discussion among stakeholders** as policy makers, VET providers and ceramics craft businesses, social partner organisations, as well as an **impact evaluation** which will monitor how and how much the model built in the project supported VET education and ceramics craft sector coherently to their growth and quality targets.

Eight partners are realising the project activities in **6 European countries**: Italy, Spain, Finland, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary.

The CERASMUS+ project started on October 2017 and will end in September 2019.

1.2 The partnership

The project partnership includes several representatives of key actors in the fields of VET policies, education and training, ceramics craft businesses, as well as organizations developing projects and services for the ceramic sector stakeholders.

- **TUCEP – Tiber Umbria Comett Education Programme – Coordinator**
Perugia, Italy
- **Agrupacion Europea de Cooperacion Territorial Ciudades de la Ceramica**
Talavera de la Reina, Spain
- **Escuela de Arte y Superior de Cerámica de Manises**
Manises, Spain
- **Istituto Superiore Secondario " V. Calò"**
Grottaglie, Italy
- **Forssan ammatti-instituutti**
Forssa, Finland
- **Masarykova střední škola Letovice, příspěvková organizace**
Letovice, Czech Republic
- **Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących i Zawodowych im. Majora Henryka Sucharskiego w Bolesławcu**
Bolesławcu, Poland
- **Kecskeméti Kortárs Művészeti Műhelyek**
Kecskemét, Hungary



1.3 The ceramic sector in Europe

Many European countries have long traditions and culture of crafts. The crafts sector contributes to the countries' uniqueness and appeal to visitors. In addition, it boosts the regional economy as a source of local employment, social and economic stability.

In Europe crafts sector boasts of 25.3 million non-primary private enterprises, out of which 99.8% are craft and small and medium sized enterprises, employing more than 66% of Europe's workforce i.e. around 98 million people. The turnover of craft industry ranges from 25% to 55%. So, in Europe, small enterprises and craft businesses are a prominent source of jobs and a breeding ground for business ideas.

Ceramics is one of the most ancient man-made forms of art and handicraft and, over the centuries, the evolution of artistic and handicraft skills has always had a great visibility. Nowadays the ceramic technical knowledge has gradually spread worldwide, maintaining its high artistic and handicraft characteristics of knowledge, with many cultural and craft operators working in a professional, usual, continuous way, but even with many enthusiasts and hobbyists operating for fun and passion.

Both artistic and crafts parts are deeply interconnected and often ceramic art-works become objects for use, furnishing, sculptures and decorative, finding the favors of many types of public. Moreover ceramic production found a major development in some areas of "ceramic identity", creating districts and clusters of artists, craftsmen, associations, artistic schools and museums.

Today national and international networks have been built and consolidated through cultural, productive, scholastic and institutional collaborations, developing contacts and cooperation opportunities but even organizing and promoting events such as festivals, markets, workshops, symposiums, exhibitions and prices.

Despite of this strengths, today the crafts sector, included ceramics one, faces several issues such as the fierce global competition of cheaper products, loss of skills and traditions, difficulties of getting into the market, losing customer appeal of traditional crafts' products, lack of financial resources and economic capacity, as the sector is mostly dominated by micro-enterprises, self-employed or hobby-based establishments.

It is therefore necessary to face new challenges for ceramics craft sector, which need updated competences and skills based on the actual needs of productive environment. According to European perspective, WBL can meet the twin goals of improving individuals' employability and increasing economic competitiveness in the ceramics craft sector: Member States and social partners already committed themselves in the Bruges Communiqué, the European agenda for cooperation in vocational education and training (VET), to the objective of including work-based learning in all initial VET courses.

Given this context, it is really important on one hand, to protect the EU traditional heritage, on the other hand to strengthen and modernize the ceramic sector value through the introduction of new work-based learning models, of production techniques which keep together tradition and innovation, of methodologies for enhance networking between VET and ceramic craft industry.

1.4 CERASMUS+ needs assessment

As project first step, the partners performed a **preliminary field analysis to let ceramics key actors and stakeholders explore their needs for competences for assuring sector development through networking, protection of immaterial heritage, innovation.**

The field analysis has been carried out by realizing a survey among ceramics key actors and stakeholders.

To do this, a questionnaire has been developed and administrated to about 50 ceramics craft key actors and project stakeholders' representatives for every country involved in the project. The structure of the questionnaire has been developed after specific preliminary contacts with relevant stakeholders in order to collect information about ceramics sector's needs for competences.

The questionnaire intended to determine the necessary skills for a ceramic professional and it has been structured into six blocks:

- General information defining the profile of the respondent.
- Professional skills, the abilities required to perform a position in the ceramic sector.
- Artistic and craft skills, related to the art, history and tradition of ceramics.
- Functional skills, defined as those that relate to specific professional functions.
- Transversal skills, those that relate to other different, transversal and multidisciplinary skills.

Management skills, the skills of those who exercise leadership or supervision roles.

Each block has been structured including a group of skills in order to define a profile of the single skill to be valued by the interviewees.

The questionnaire administrated is showed in **Annex 01**.

Target groups have been reached through direct contact from partnership organisations (national and European networks), networking with craft associations and stakeholder organizations already cooperating with the partnership.

After collecting survey answers, the partners worked on data systematisation through the realisation of **National reports**, documenting the results of the analysis country by country (**Annexes 05 to 10**). Then, National reports have been analysed and the collected data allowed the realisation of the present **Transnational report**, including the results of the assessment of training needs in the ceramic sector at European level.



Co-funded by the
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On the basis of these data, starting from November 2018, the partnership will build a model including specific curricula and reference educational resources for initial and continuous VET, focused in work based learning, aimed at letting ceramics professionals gain transversal and professional competences for the improvement of sector “value chain”, of models and means for valorization of urban environment, and for supporting business start-up.

2 General information

Participation

The total number of respondents has been 301 and the distribution by country is shown in the following table. More information about the countries' contribution can be found in each national report.

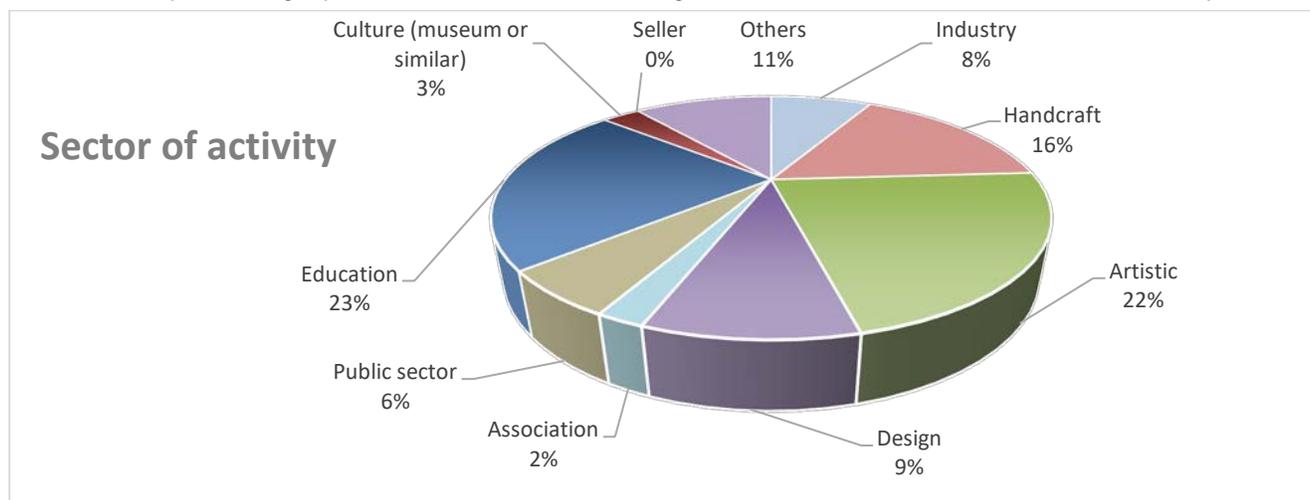
COUNTRY	Number of answers
Spain	67
Italy	57
Finland	37
Czech Republic	57
Hungary	45
Poland	23
Others	15

Participation per sector of activity

The participation per sector of activity is shown in the following graph. Organisations working in education, artistic and handcraft represent more than a half of the participants. The other half belongs to the remaining sectors.

Some target sectors as industry or culture registered a lower participation.

Anyway we need to consider that the participants' profile between countries is very different: some countries as Finland or the Czech Republic have more representatives of Education organisations while in Italy or Hungary artistic and handicrafts organisations contributed more in the survey..

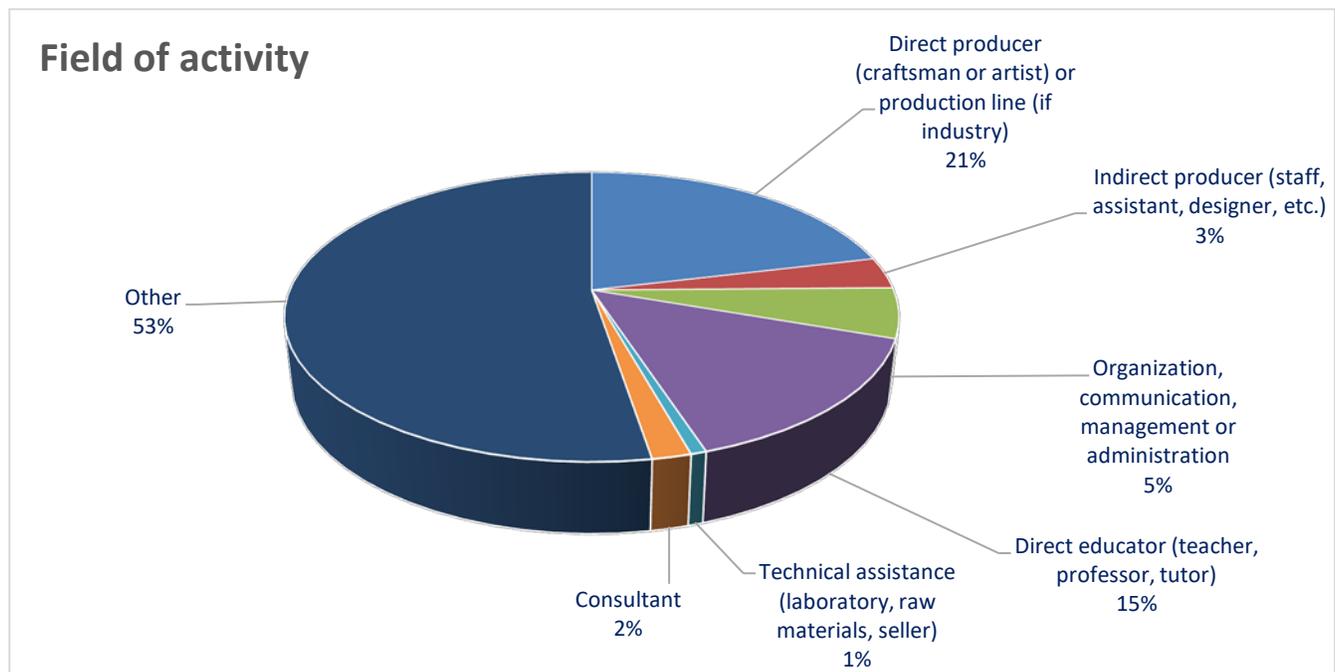


Sector/Country	Spain	Czech Republic	Finland	Hungary	Italy	Poland	Others
Industry	5	10	0	0	0	7	0
Handicraft	11	9	6	3	14	0	2
Artistic	7	8	15	19	8	0	5
Design	8	0	0	16	2	0	0
Association	4	0	0	0	2	0	0
Public sector	5	1	0	0	8	2	0
Education	16	22	9	7	10	0	8
Culture (museum or similar)	5	0	0	0	3	0	0
Seller / retailer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	7	7	7	0	10	14	0

About the field of activity, more than a half of responders have chosen the option “Other” and they have specified reference sector.

The other half are direct educators (coherently with the high number of participants from the education sector), and direct producers that represent handicrafts and artistic sectors.

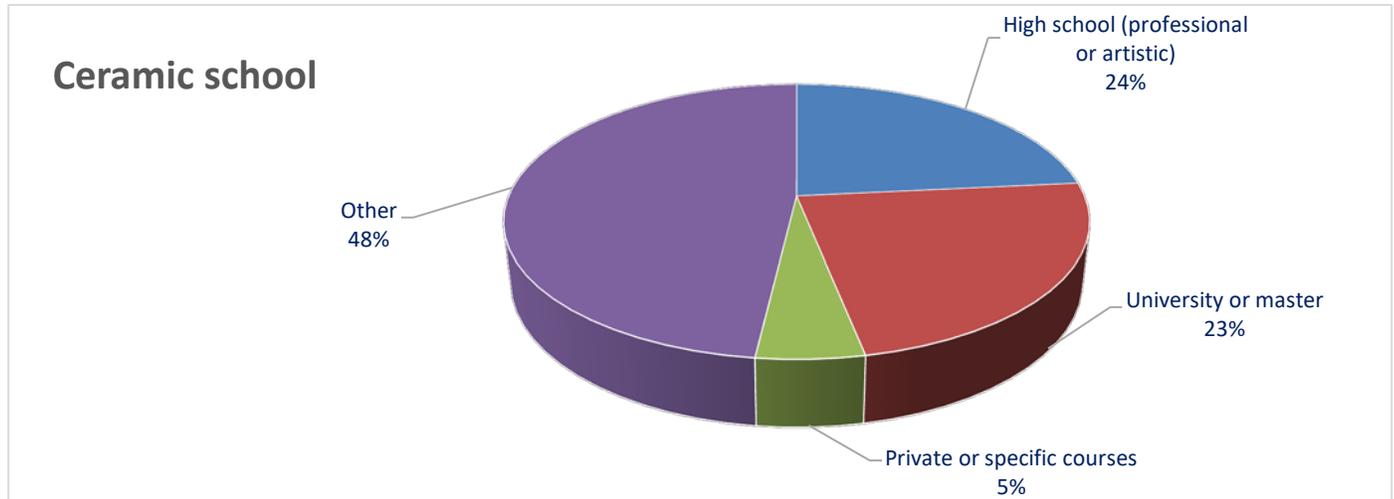
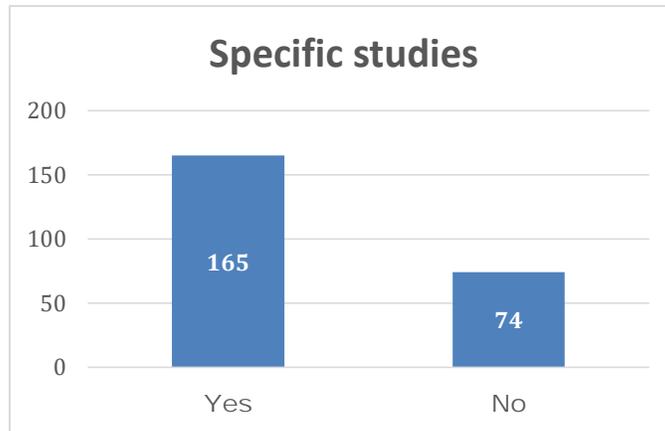
The distribution is shown in the next figure.



Participation per study's level

The following graph shows the participation per educational level.

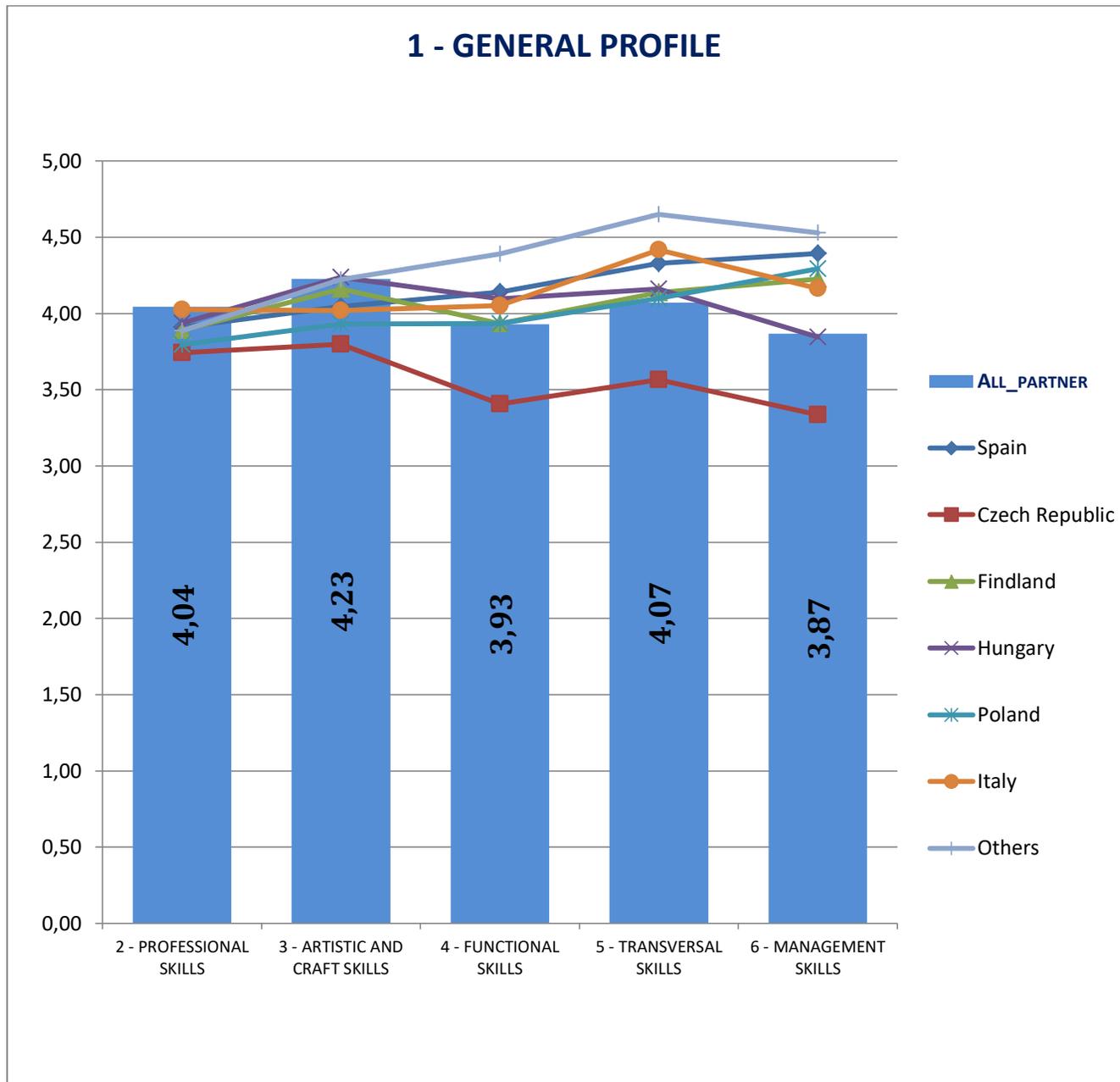
The results show that most of the respondents (about two third) have had specific training in ceramics. About these data, it is interesting to notice that, as we can see from the figure that specifies the kind studies, most of them are related to non formal education.



This situation remarks the need for including these disciplines in formal education.

3 Main results

General profile



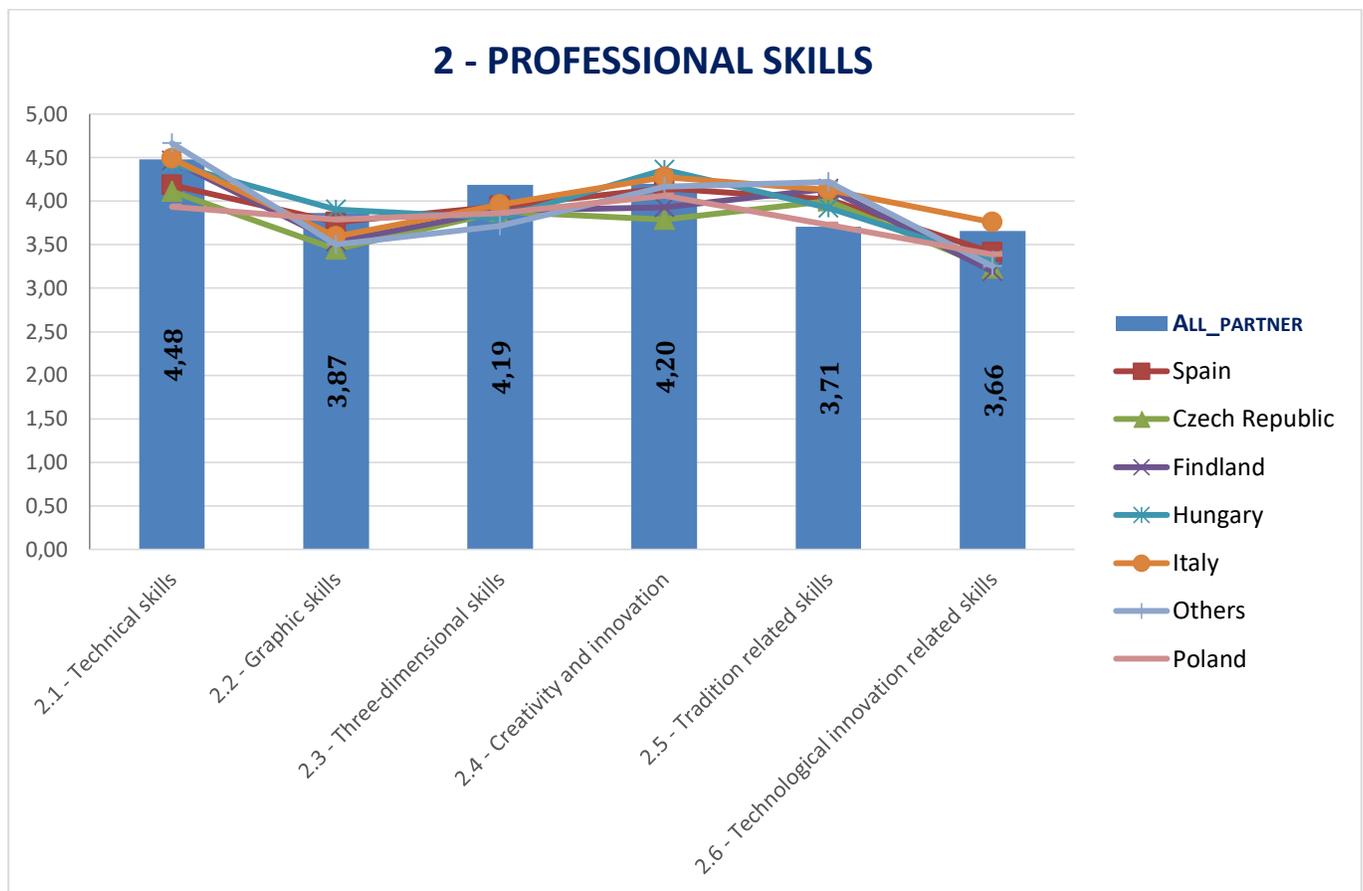
The results show that all groups of abilities have been highly scored (the minimum is 3.87) and the more valued one is the “artistic and craft skills” one. This confirms that the skills and abilities selected

by the partnership to be included in the questionnaire are very close to the professional profile ceramic stakeholders and key actors are looking for.

Per countries, the Czech Republic show lower rates than others especially in non-specific skills, maybe because of the high number of students with low experience in production tasks who have participated in the survey.

On the other hand, the countries different than the partner ones (mentioned as “Other” in the graph) show the opposite profile: they valued more management and transversal skills.

Professional skills



The figure above shows the assessment of professional skills: among these ones, technical skills are the most valued for the participants, followed by three-dimensional skills and creativity and innovation skills.

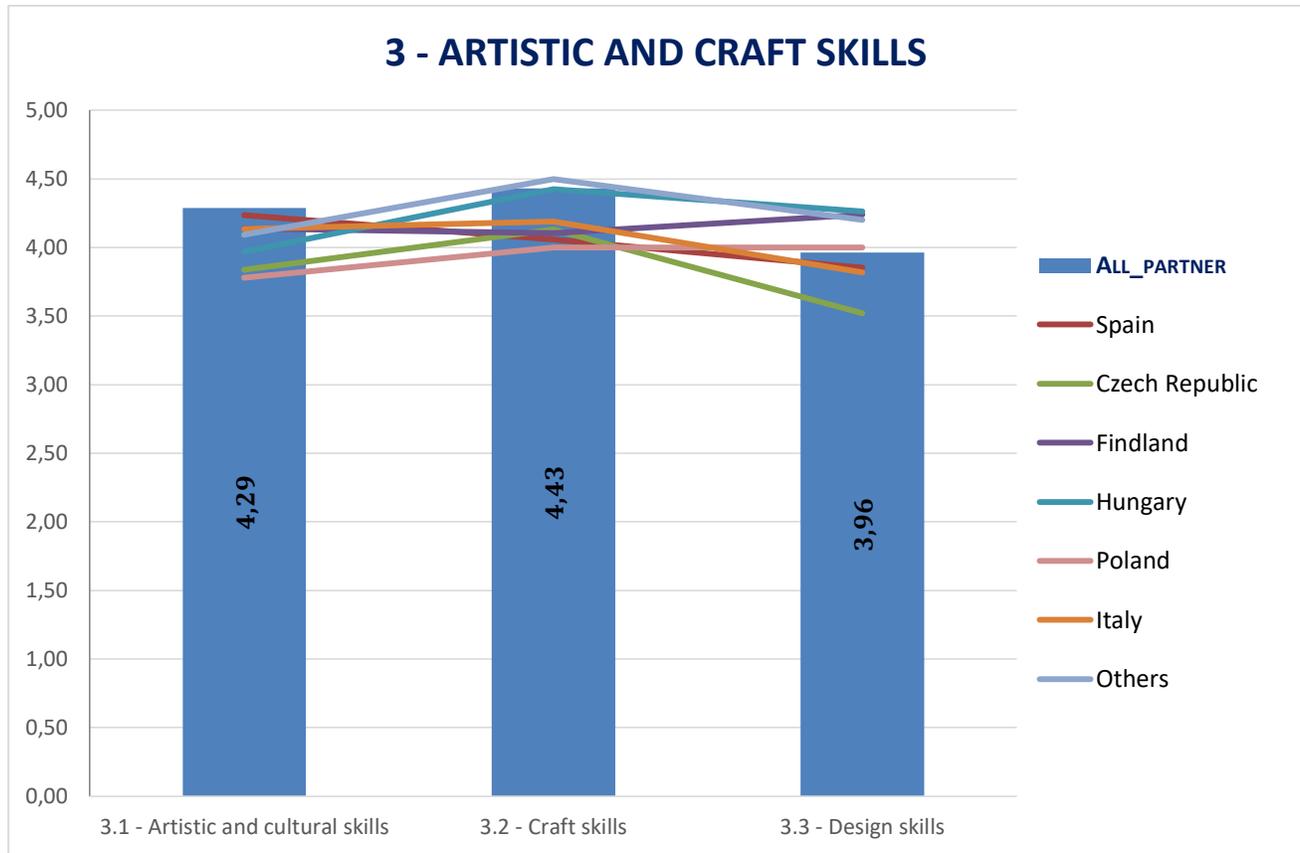
The results define a very skilled professional (all skills have been highly scored) able of planning and producing high-quality pieces and being creative and innovator when solving problems and facing new challenges.

The profile defined is very similar for all of the countries.

Artistic and craft skills

This group of skills has been highly scored, but the design skills have been valued less than the others. This shows that producing artistic pieces is more important than usability is.

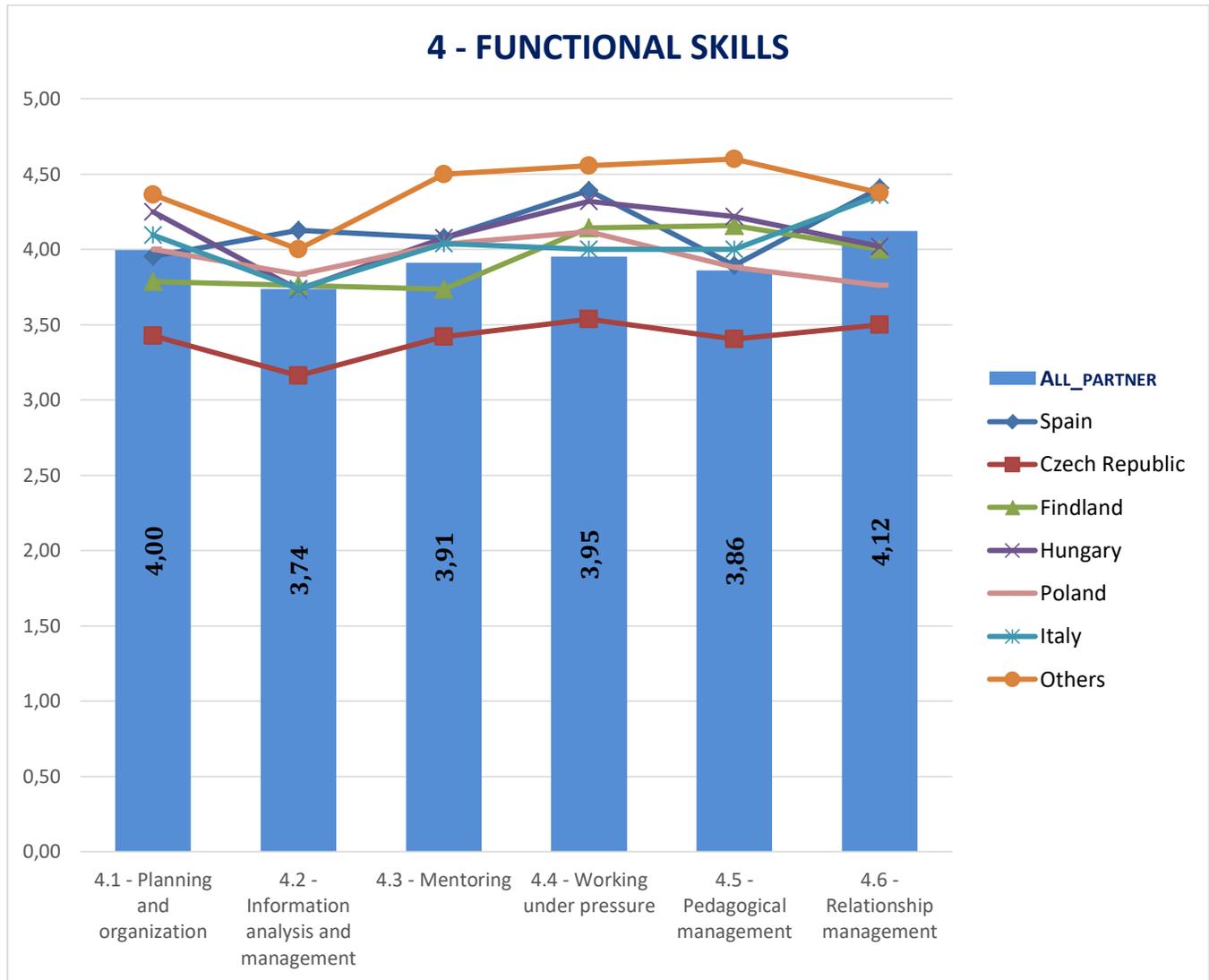
In this group, we can see differences between countries, that we could relate with the different profile of participants in survey.



According to the perspective of craftsmanship, artistic competences is valued more than functionality (design) or mastery in the execution of different techniques.

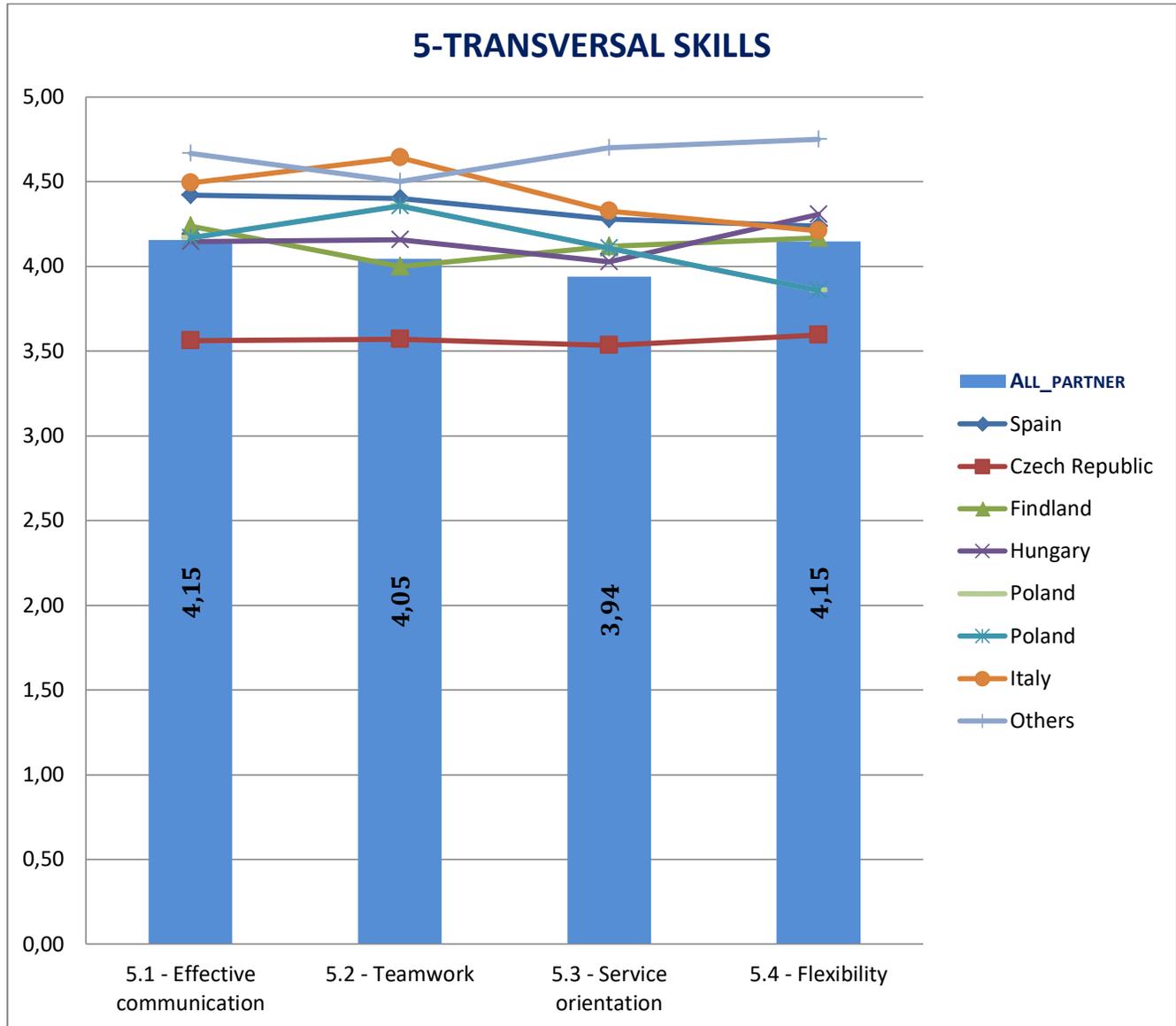
As shown in **Annex O2**, the results for this group of skills show important differences with reference to sectors of activity. This difference is more relevant if we consider the different countries due to the various profile of participants.

Functional skills



About functional abilities, they have been considered very important. It is important to notice that the Czech assessment for these skills shows a lower result comparing it to the one of the other participating countries, and the highest score for the relationship management has been achieved in Spain and Other countries.

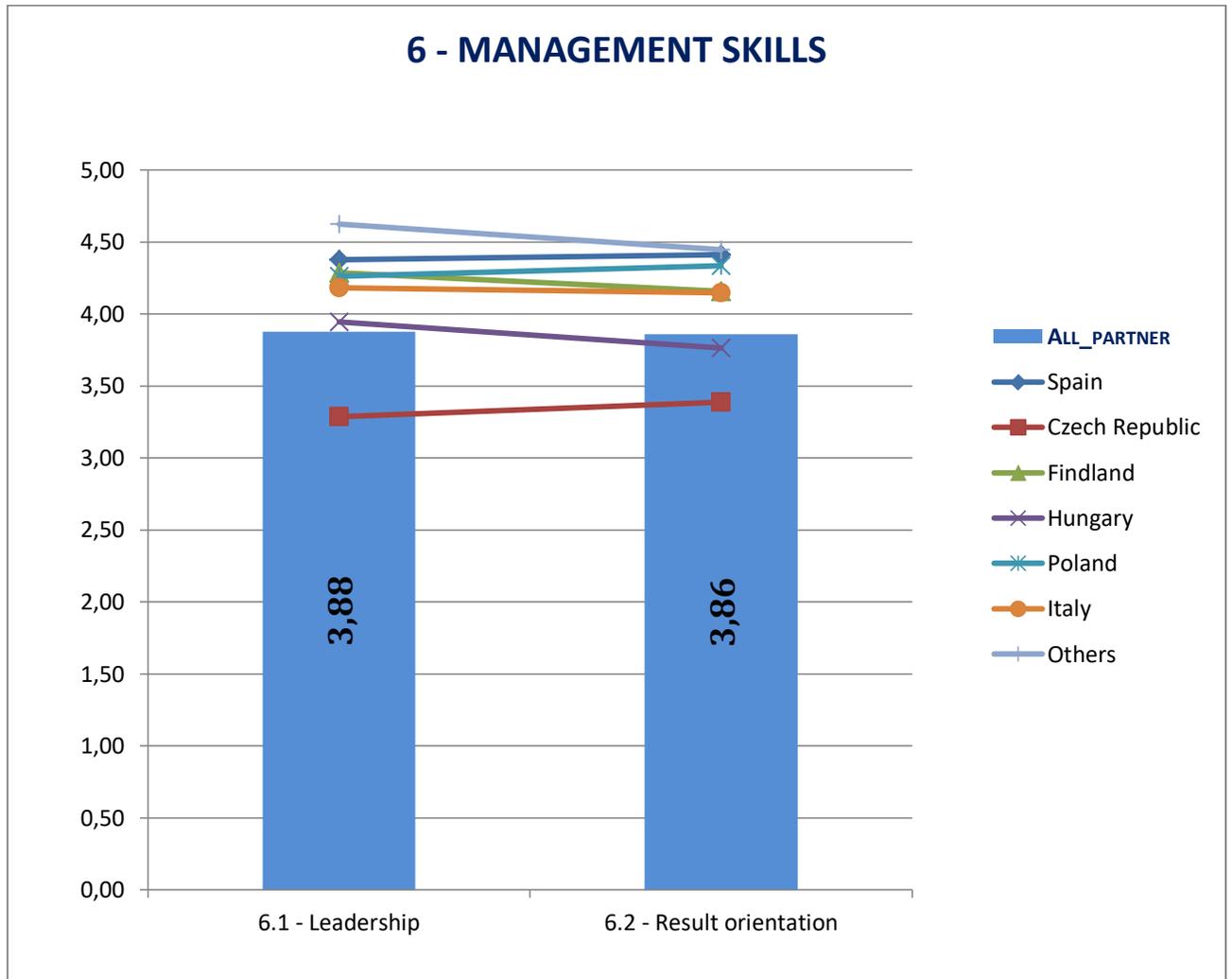
Transversal skills



All transversal skills gained a high score, as already seen in the general profile. The assessment put the focus again on the ability to maintain an active business: the relevance of taking care of relationships with suppliers and customers and, highlighting communication and teamwork, the importance of cooperation for assuring businesses good performance.

As showed in **Annex 02**, teamwork is especially valued in the industry sector.

Management skills



Management skills have been highly valued in all countries except Czech Republic and Hungary. This difference could be related to the different profile of participants, more craftsmen and artists for the Hungarian partner and more representatives of educational sector for the Czech one.

4 Main training needs

The table in **Annex 03** show the skills whose average score is higher than 4 (red shadowed), so as to be considered important in the subsequent elaboration of VET curricula. In red the table shows the 10 most valued for each activity sector.

From the analysis of the table we can observe that:

- all technical and working with pressure skills are included in the group scoring more than 4;
- none of the technological and innovation related skills, pedagogical management skills, information analysis and management one is included in the group.

As a general summary of skills, the ten most valued have been:

Number	Reference	Description of the skill	Average rate
1	10g	g. Carrying out ceramic firing according to the technical specifications and materials of the project.	4,37
2	24b	b. Knowledge of the work tools (potter's wheel, wire drawing, clay extruder, etc.)	4,35
3	24a	a. Manual and sculptural skills and competence	4,33
4	41c	c. Assuming responsibility in fulfilment of commitments acquired.	4,30
5	10a	a. Interpreting the requirements, referring both to the process and the product ordered and selecting the most appropriate and useful procedures for the realisation.	4,29
6	24e	e. Practice and experience in laboratory and workshops	4,29
7	10b	b. Defining the formal, functional, plastic, technical and material specifications of a given project or assignment.	4,26
8	50d	d. Recognising mistakes and/or failures and learning from them.	4,26
9	10c	c. Formulating compositions and preparing pastes, enamels and ceramic colours, qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate to the specifications of the project.	4,23
10	16a	a. Contributing to the development of ideas, sharing best practices based on previous experience and personal contributions as a result of their research.	4,18

Four of the top 10 skills belong to the **technical skills group** (number 10) and three to the craft skills group. This results allowed us to notice the need for an highly qualified professional, with expertise and experience in the fulfilment of the production requirements.

4.1 Main training needs per sector

The results related to the **industry sector** records the most relevant deviation from the general ranking:

- **technical skills** have been rated differently, only some skills have been considered important (rate higher than 4);
- almost none of the **craft and culture skills** are included in the group of skills scoring more than 4;
- **teamwork skills** have been one of the most valued groups.

These differences show that the industrial sector is less interested in what the professional can do by himself and more in the final result.

The **artistic and design sectors** show more interest in **creativity and innovation skills**: all these skills have been valued above 4.

Association and public ones are the sectors that value the most the functional skills, especially planning and organisation and information analysis. The **public sector** values also the skills relates to teaching as mentoring and relationship management.

The **education sector** put the focus on artistic and craft skills maybe because most of the participants are from art schools.

The **culture sector** have rated all the **transversal and management** skills as really relevant.

4.2 Main training needs per country

The table in **Annex 04** shows the most scored skills per country (marked as before).According to these results we can share some observations about main trianing needs.

For all countries except the Czech Republic and Poland, all **technical skills** and most of the **artistic and craft skills** are included in the group scoring more than 4. The artistic an craft skills including for most of the countries some of the top 10 skills already mentioned, especially in those country where the survey registered a high participation from artist and handicraft sector as Hungary and Italy.

The **graphics skills** received a low score in all contries.



Regarding **functional skills**, the **information analysis** is considered as the less important in every country; on the contrary **working under pressure** skills have been scored as very relevant except for Czech Republic and Finland. For Hungary and Spain some of the top 10 skills belong to this group. **Mentoring** is one of the top 10 skills for Other countries.

The **transversal skills** are very important for Spain, Italy and Other countries and some of them are in the top 10 group.

Specially **teamwork** has been considered very important for all countries

Spain and Other countries assessed as very important all Leadership skills. The **result orientation** is relevant as skill for all countries except Czech Republic.



5 Conclusions

As a general summary, we can say that the training competences, hypothesized when the partnership mapped the skills for elaborating the questionnaire, seems to be very close to the general needs of the ceramic sector.

The results define a **highly qualified professional**, with a high level of professional performance expected but also with a high level of non-specific (functional, transversal and managing) skills.

About the professional skills is remarkable the importance given to the **ability to define the product the client is asking for**, highly scored for all sectors and countries. Of course, all the skills relates to the **production of a quality product** should be included in the training plan. Moreover, it is worth to notice the importance given to the **creative solution of problems**.

The preferred functional skills are highly dependent on the sector. All sectors agree on the importance of **fulfilling commitments**. Education, artistic and handicraft sectors do not give the same importance to **organizing, planning and teamwork** than the others, that consider very important to manage a business.

The transversal and management skills, especially the **teamwork** and **service orientation**, have been appreciated by all sector reinforcing the importance of meeting client expectations already detected in professional skills.

These conclusions can be extended to all countries and most of the differences between them can be attributed mainly to the different contribution by sector.

- Annex 01 – Questionnaire
- Annex 02 - Complete table of survey answers
- Annex 03 – Summary of the most scored skills per sector
- Annex 04 – Summary of the most scored skills per country
- Annex 05-10 – National reports