

# O1 – Assessment of training needs in ceramic sector

Country: **HUNGARY**



Students from MOME, Moholy Nagy University of Art and Design on a 10 day long Woodfiring Saltglaze course at the International Ceramics Studio, 2018.  
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## 1. Introduction

The assessment of training needs in Hungarian ceramic sector has been performed by **Kecskeméti Kortárs Művészeti Műhelyek - International Ceramics Studio** through the administration to reference stakeholders of a questionnaire developed by the CERASMUS+ partnership. The questionnaire has been aimed at collecting specific data for improving the educational models by assessing the skills and abilities needed for the trainees.

The information collected at national level will be used to improve training and professional development in European ceramic sector in the future.

The International Ceramics Studio (ICS) is a ceramic art centre located eighty kilometers south of the Hungarian capital, Budapest.

The mission of the studio is to promote the formal, aesthetic and technical development of ceramics and to help foster creative skills. The studio is open to all challenges of ceramic research, design and experiment. With this in mind the ICS offers modern facilities and kilns, ample studio space and technical support. Our facilities give artists an excellent opportunity to concentrate on their work in a creative and mutually supportive environment where new and imaginative ideas can be explored and realised. The studio offers a residency program for artists who wish to work on their independently in the studios on their own projects. Parallel to this program we organise a thematic program which offers workshops, symposia, courses, talks and seminars. The International Ceramics Studio belongs to the Kecskemét Contemporary Art Studios, an organisation which is owned and supported by the city of Kecskemét and its director is dr. László Fűzi and the studio works under the leadership of Steve Mattison and Márton Strohner.

In order to assure the effectiveness of the training needs assessment, ICS involved as stakeholder institutions:

- **MOME** - Moholy Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest (staff and students).
- **NYME** - University of West Hungary, Sopron, Department of Design (staff and students).
- **PÉCS TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM** - University of Pécs, Department of Ceramic Design (staff and students).
- **Kalman Kando Secondary Art School**, Kecskemét (ceramic department staff and students).
- **KISKÉPZŐ** - Secondary School of Visual Arts, Budapest (ceramic department staff, independent producers)

As in the next paragraphs, the results of training needs assessment are coherent with the characteristics of the ceramic sector in the reference country. In Hungary the sector has undergone major changes over the last 10 years with a healthy growth in individual direct



producers making contemporary ceramic works – both artistic and functional. This has come about largely to the pioneering work of the International Ceramics Studio in collaborating closely with the educational institutions in Hungary to offer high quality facilities and courses unavailable to students normally or professional ceramists wishing to learn and develop new skills.

Several of the smaller ceramic factories closed during the period after communism but the two main industrial producers continue to fill their own niche markets - Herend with high quality, hand painted porcelains and Zsolnay famous for its lustre glaze ceramics.

Traditional hand-made craft works continue to be made in several centres in the country and fulfil mainly a market for tourists and also for tourist based restaurants and guest houses.

## 2. General information

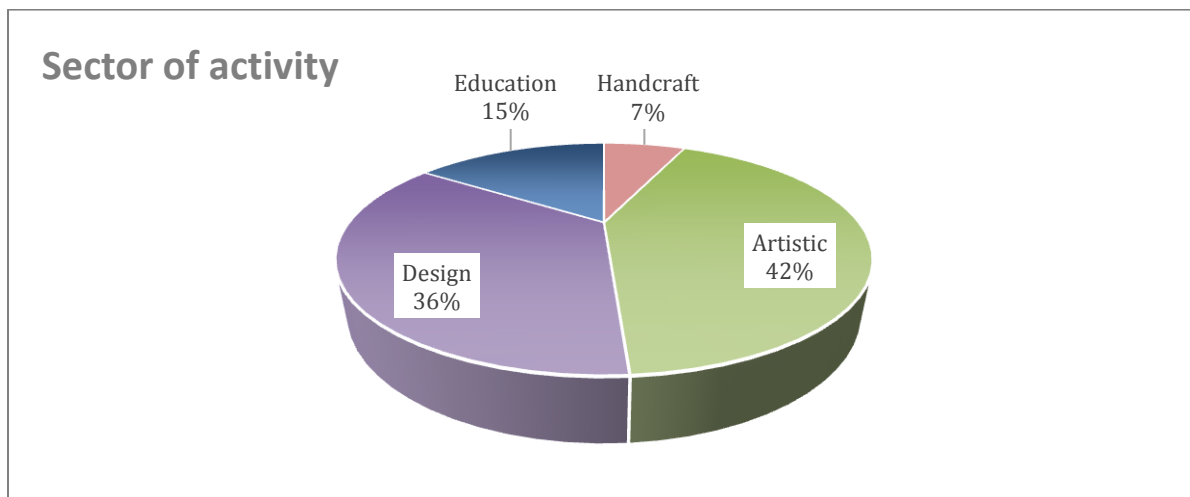
The main stakeholders and institutions contacted in order to reach the survey sample targeted for the assessment have been:

- **Independent producers** - mainly freelance artists, designers and potters were also contacted to participate.
- **All universities in Hungary** with ceramic education were contacted and invited to participate. These are the main educators of ceramics students in the country.
- **NYME** - University of West Hungary, Sopron, Department of Design.
- **PÉCS TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM** - University of Pécs, Department of Ceramic Design.
- The two leading **secondary art schools** - in Kecskemét and Budapest.
- **Kalman Kando Secondary Art School**, Kecskemét.
- **KISKÉPZŐ - Secondary School of Visual Arts, Budapest** - Ceramic department staff.

It seems fitting to all that for the future of the ceramic education that we investigate the needs and aspirations of students and teaching staff.

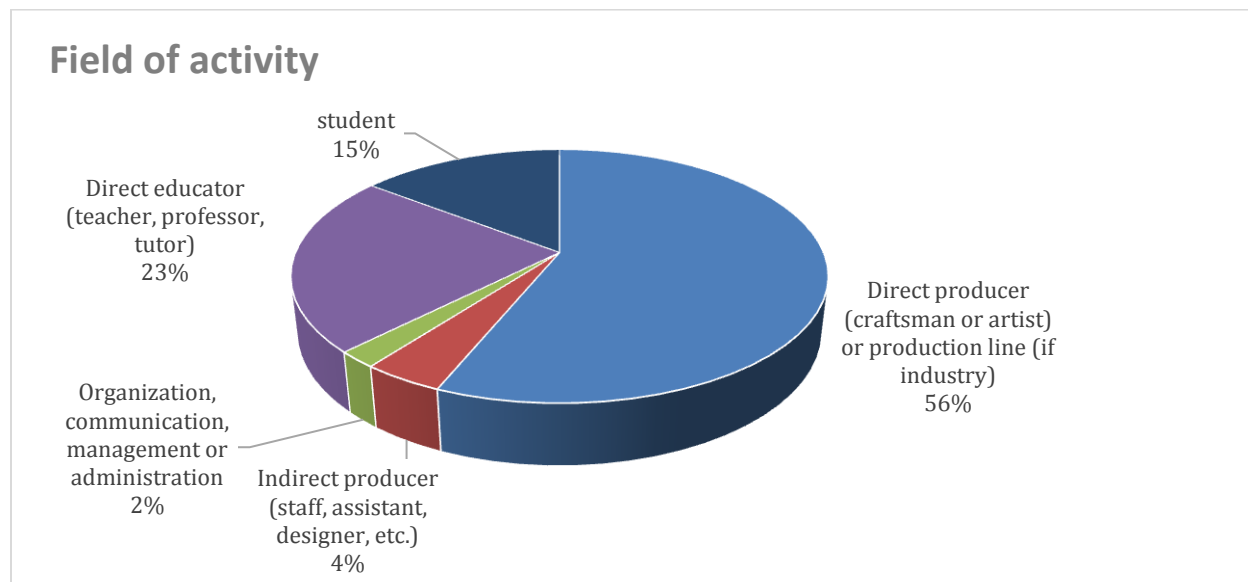
In addition the **two major industrial producers** were contacted. Herend Poreclán has its own school where it trains its own workers in the areas it needs. It is a school which teaches all aspects of ceramic production specifically to the needs of the manufactory; Zsolnay Manufactory didn't accept to participate.

Totally, in Hungary **45 questionnaires** have been collected; respondents belonging to the following sectors: Handcraft (3); Artistic (19); Design (16); Education (7).

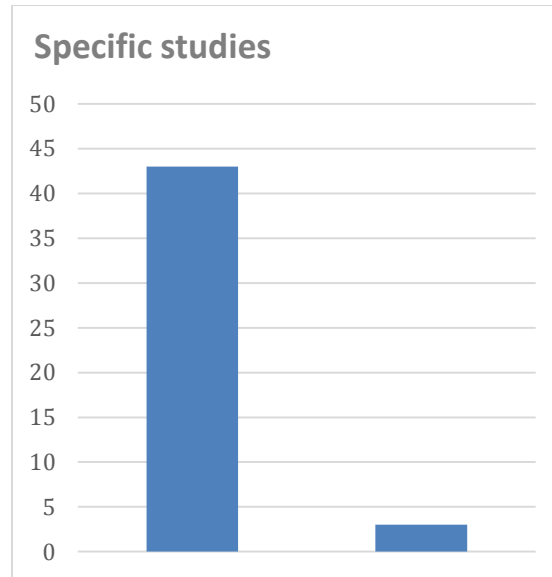


With reference to the **field of activity**, respondents can be divided in:

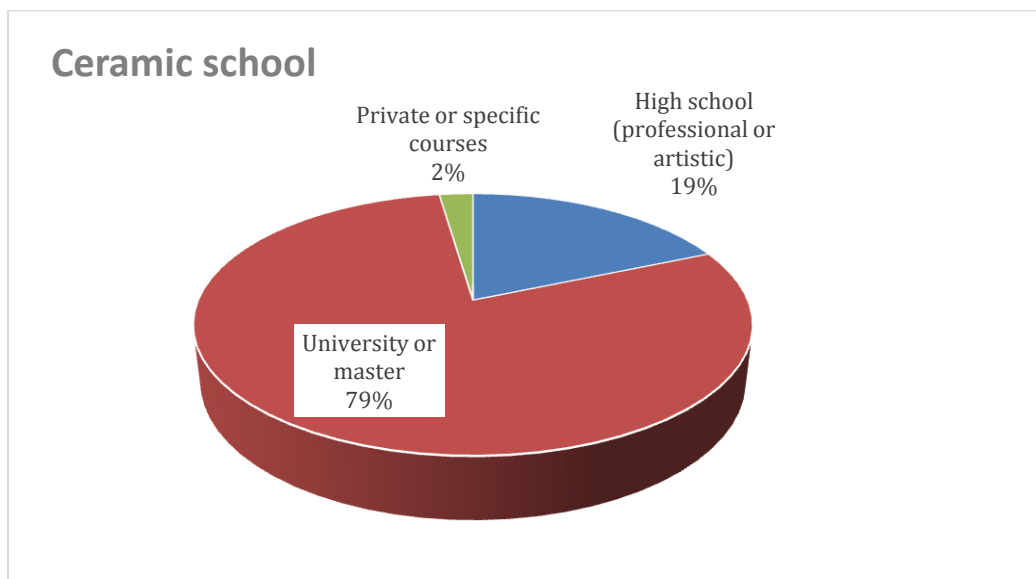
- Direct producers - craftsperson and artists - 27
- Indirect producer - staff, assistant etc. - 2
- Organisation - 1
- Direct educator - teacher, professor, tutor - 11
- Student - 7



With reference to educational level, about 93% of the survey sample received formal education or specific studies in the ceramic sectors.



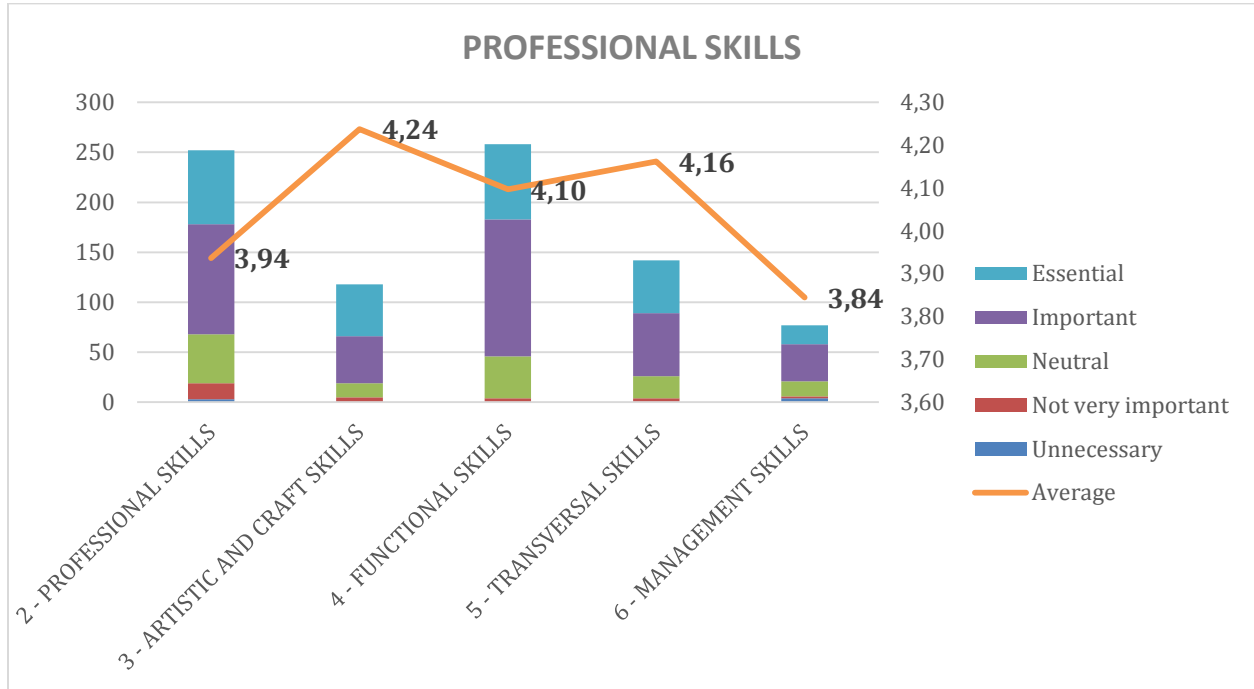
Specifically, 8 attended High school or secondary arts school, 34 attended University courses and 1 attended private courses.



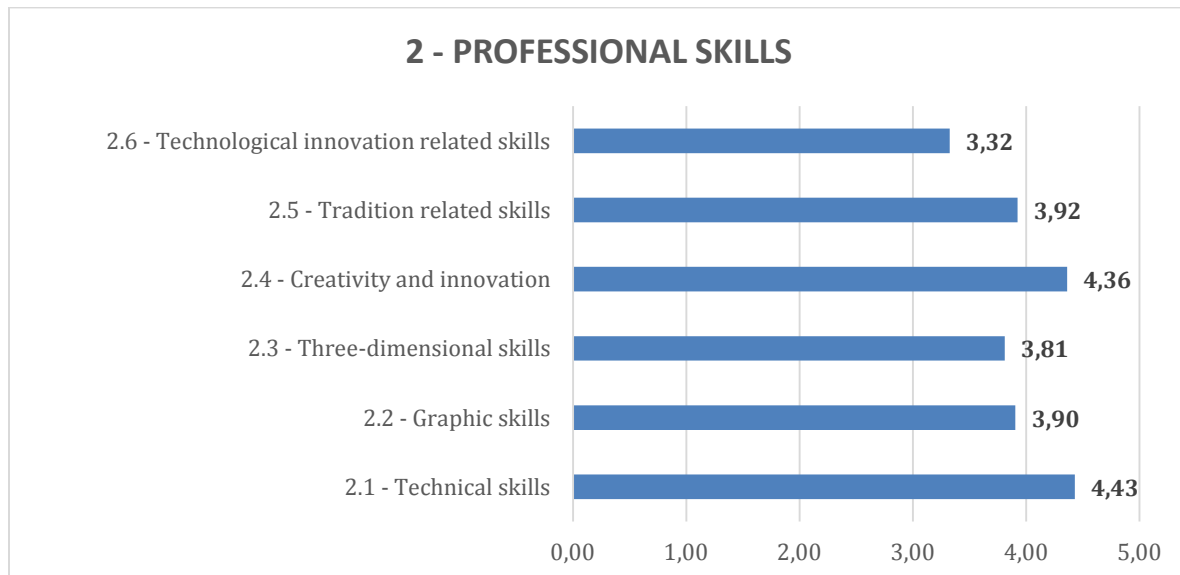


### 3. Main results

#### 1. General Profile

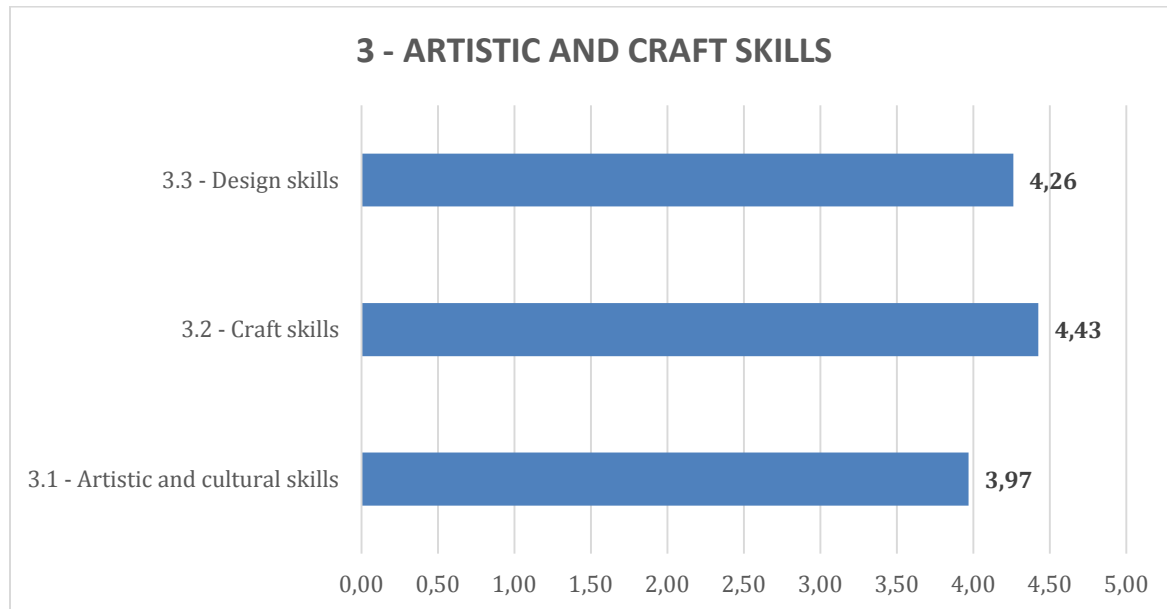


#### Question 2 - Professional skills



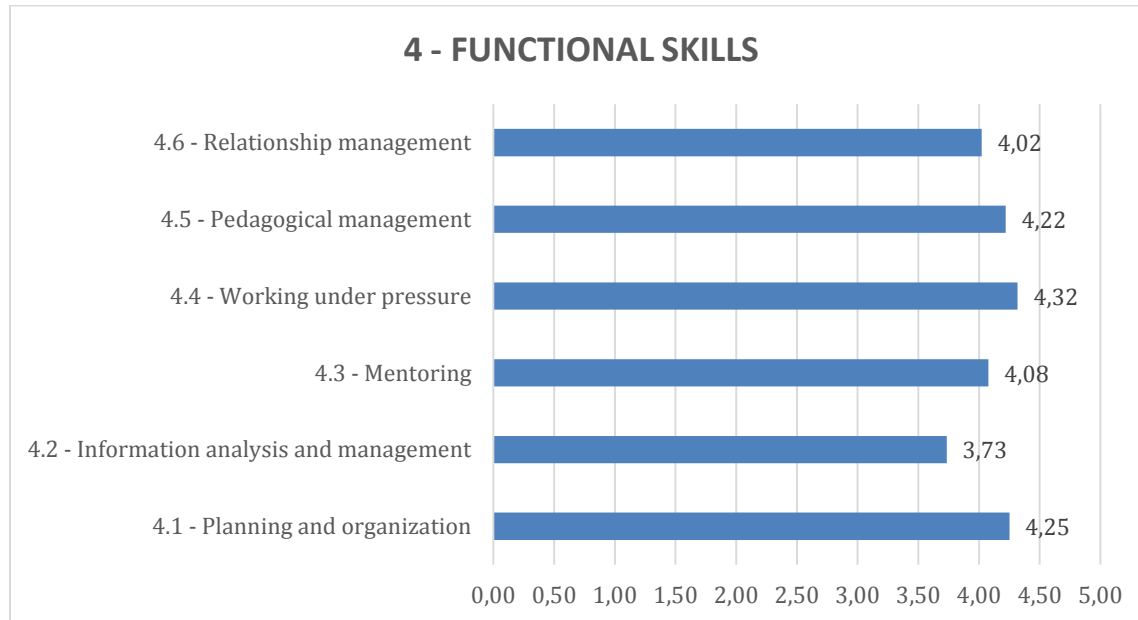
From the data collected we can evaluate that there is still an overwhelming need for an emphasis on technical skills based learning. The new technologies of 3D computer design, prototyping and printing is not as relevant to the independent producer sector and in some cases is unnecessary. Creativity and the ability to design and make new hand made products is also a high requirement.

### Question 3 - Artistic and Craft skills



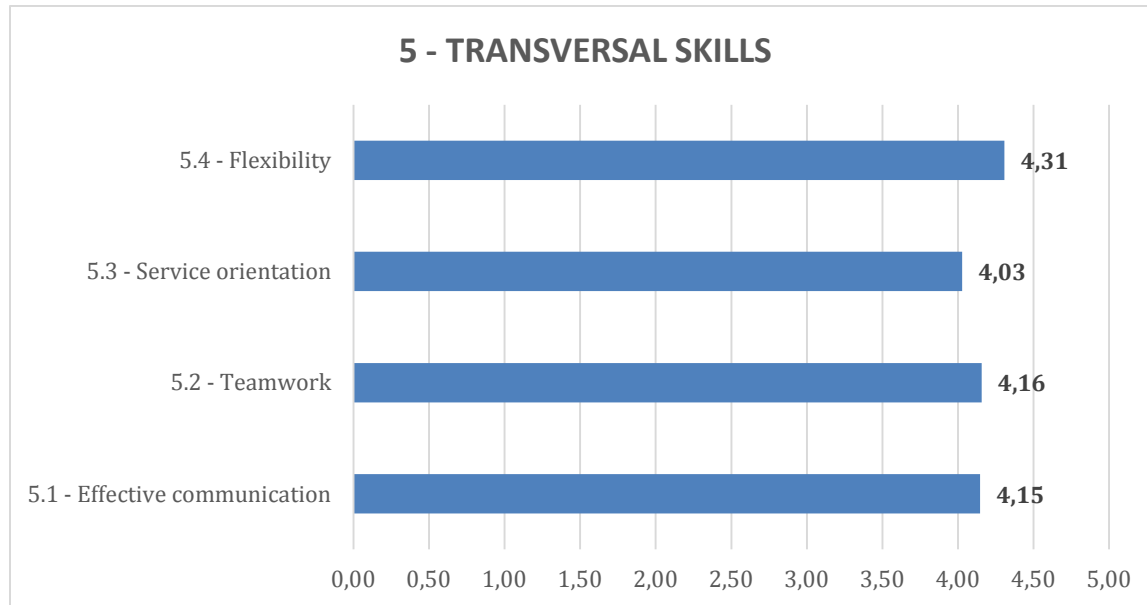
Craft and design skills are still high in all participants answers but traditional “folk arts” skills are not as relevant to the emerging ceramists and makers today. While there is still great respect for the traditional cultural skills of potters in Hungary learning about their history and geography is not a mainrequirement for the majority of contemporary works made.

## Question 4 - Functional skills



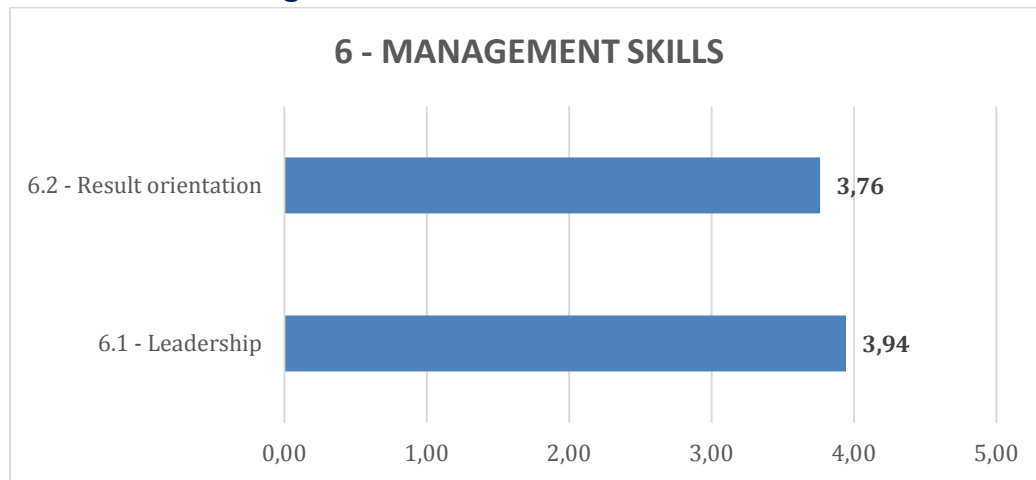
Working under pressure was an obvious front runner as this applies to all participants – whether direct or indirect producers. Skills in maintaining relationships with customers and working colleagues was also important. Providing the facilities and knowledgeable trainers for effective education experiences is also paramount to the training process.

## Question 5 - Transversal skills



Mainly seen as important especially in the areas of relationships with direct customers. This of course differs depending on the participant – whether independent artist/designer/maker or someone who works as part of a team with other professionals on the same project or the artist/designer who completes the entire process themselves. All participants found flexibility and ability to adapt an important part of these skills.

## Question 6 - Management skills



Management skills rated the lowest of the results. In most cases these skills are not seen as so important to the independent individual direct producer.

## 4. Main training needs at national level

According to the results showed in the previous paragraph, the main training needs for Hungarian ceramic sector are:

- Technical skills in materials and methods of production – small scale as opposed to large factory scale.
- Graphic skills and the ability to convey ideas two dimensionally
- Skills to make high quality ceramic objects.
- Ways to encourage creative thinking and design.
- Craft skills to make objects well.
- Instruction in the use of work tools and equipment.
- Introduction to basic business skills.
- Training in promotional and publicity skills.
- Training in management of individual working methods and planning.

## 5. Conclusions

In general all participants considered the need for managerial skills were secondary to the needs for the technical and creative training to allow them to successfully take a career in ceramics.

Most participants were already independent producers – some very successful – and a number of students who were undergoing training at different levels at this present time. It was felt important to get their input into this survey as they are experiencing this as first hand and were eager to show where the strengths and weaknesses were in their current training.

Generally it was felt that the route of 3D printing and digital technology was really more in the realms of designers and larger manufactories.

Certainly in Hungary most trainee ceramists want to have their own businesses, making and selling their own products – whether this be purely design ideas or complete ceramic objects where only they are involved in all parts of the production process.

We found that many of the professional participants were trained in one or two areas but wished to increase their knowledge of other techniques. This can be accomplished by increasing lifelong learning possibilities for this group, where they can learn new skills in a short but intense learning situation which does not take them out of their own working rhythm for long periods of time.

Students and professional ceramists can learn together in a mutually supportive and mentored environment in short courses with invited specialists to learn additional skills not available in their own universities, colleges, schools or studios. The gaps in educational areas which the schools or online media and books cannot fulfil can be successfully taught in these courses.

### **Annex 01 – Complete table of survey answers**